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Education 2010 under Attack

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Cover photo: Tyre, Lebanon – A boy searches for books in the rubble of a destroyed building.
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Foreword to the series

In situations of armed conflict and insecurity, deliberate attacks on and threats against learners, academics, teachers and education facilities are both a barrier to the right to education and a serious protection issue. These violent incidents involve the use of force in ways that disrupt and deter educational provision, putting educators and learners at risk in environments that should be safe, secure and protective.

The international community has made a commitment to achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015; wherever they occur, attacks on education threaten the realization of those goals. UNESCO, tasked with the global coordination of EFA, has a mandate to promote full and equal opportunities for education for all, and this includes those whose access to education is threatened or prevented by targeted violence.

In order to protect and promote the right to education whenever learners, education personnel and educational facilities come under violent attack, greater knowledge and deeper understanding are required. Precise and detailed information about the extent of attacks, both current and over time, is needed but by itself is insufficient. More research must be conducted in order to generate better analysis and understanding of the causes, means and impacts of attacks on education. Moreover, there is a need for more investigation not only of possible mechanisms to undertake rigorous monitoring and reporting in this area but also of prevention and response strategies and their effectiveness.

In view of the gaps in knowledge and information about attacks on education and about how education can be protected from attack, UNESCO has commissioned a series of publications to research and analyse these issues. Its aim is to enhance global understanding of the nature, scope, motives and impact of attacks on education and of the work that is being done by communities, organizations and governments to prevent and respond to such violence. When appropriate, the publications also

provide recommendations for action by a variety of stakeholders at local, national and international levels.

Part of a sustained global campaign to prevent and respond to attacks on education, this series is aimed at supporting and strengthening the work of practitioners, researchers, policy-makers and all those concerned with securing the full range of quality educational opportunities for all.

Mark Richmond
Director, Division for the Coordination of UN Priorities in Education
Education Sector
UNESCO

Education 2010 under Attack

A global study on targeted political and military violence against education staff, students, teachers, union and government officials, aid workers and institutions

By Brendan O'Malley

Commissioned by Mark Richmond, Director, Division for the Coordination of United Nations Priorities in Education, Education Sector, UNESCO

Generous support for this report has been provided by the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar, UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education

Dedication

■ Dr Jacqueline 'Jackie' Kirk

© The International Rescue Committee



Dr Jackie Kirk, in an undated photo in Afghanistan, was killed when Taliban fighters fired dozens of bullets into an International Rescue Committee vehicle.

On 13 August 2008, heavy gunfire from the Taliban took the lives of Jackie Kirk and three other International Rescue Committee colleagues - Mohammad Aimal, Shirley Case and Nicole Dial - during their drive home in a clearly marked IRC vehicle.

Jackie's contributions to IRC's programmes were invaluable. Her work focused on improving teacher practice and student well-being, increasing girls' access to education, preventing and responding to sexual abuse and exploitation, and gender mainstreaming.

"We are stunned and profoundly saddened by this tragic loss," said George Rupp, President of the International Rescue Committee. "These extraordinary individuals were deeply committed to aiding the people of Afghanistan, especially the children who have seen so much strife. Words are inadequate to express our sympathy for the families and loved ones of the victims and our devoted team of humanitarian aid workers in Afghanistan".

Jackie is described by friends and colleagues as brilliant, generous, passionate and deeply committed, and as a tireless advocate on behalf of children affected by conflict. Her contributions to emergency education were vast and far-reaching and the legacy of her work will last for many years to come.

This report is dedicated to two education aid workers who lost their lives while working to protect the right to education.

■ Ms Perseveranda 'Persy' So

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On 9 June 2009, UNICEF Pakistan Chief of Education Perseveranda So (with sunglasses) stands with teachers and children at a UNICEF-supported school in Jalala Camp for people displaced by the current crisis, some 30 km from the city of Peshawar, capital of North-West Frontier Province.

Ms Persy So was killed in a suicide bombing at the Pearl Continental Hotel in Peshawar, Pakistan, on 9 June 2009.

As Chief of Education in UNICEF's Islamabad office, Persy devoted her life to lifting knowledge up and pushing ignorance down. She was passionately dedicated to ensuring every child's right to education, regardless of gender, race, colour or creed. In the end, she gave her life to that cause.

In spite of her exceptional professional achievements, she remained humble and always shared credit with her colleagues.

Persy was extremely committed to serving the children of Pakistan. When approached for a senior position with UNICEF in another region, she turned down a very attractive offer, stressing emphatically: "I have not yet completed what I wanted to build for the children of Pakistan".

Persy had a rich career of 20 years in education, gender and development both within and outside UNICEF; and was wholly dedicated to her work for children. On the day she died, she was hard at work in the IDP camps of north-west Pakistan, where thousands of children have been forced to leave their homes, to ensure they did not suffer the further loss of missing out on an education. She was one of the best education workers that UNICEF had; they are at a loss as to how they will replace her.

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1. Introduction

 On 12 November 2008 in southern Afghanistan, two motorcyclists rode up to a group of 15 girls and female teachers walking and chatting on their way to Mirwais Nika Girls High School, Kandahar. Some of the girls were wearing full burkhas, others just their school uniform of black coat and headscarf, with their faces exposed. When the motorcyclists threw a liquid over them, Atifa Biba, 14, screamed as she felt and smelled her skin burning. The liquid was battery acid. One of her friends quickly tried to wipe the liquid from her face. But she, too, was sprayed and as she called for help, the attackers struck again. Another girl, Latefa, 16, rushed to help her older sister, Shamsia. “One of them threw acid on my sister’s face. I tried to help her and then they threw acid on me, too,” she said.

The attack left at least one girl blinded, two permanently disfigured and two others seriously hurt. As news of the attack spread, countless more became afraid to walk to school. Atifa’s aunt, Bib Meryam, said the family was now considering keeping her at home.¹

The incident was covered prominently in the pages of the international press and stirred world opinion. It showed that the issue of attacks on education has lost none of its ability to provoke shock at the lengths to which armed groups, armed forces and political elements are prepared to go to further their political aims. The attackers were reportedly paid 100,000 Pakistani rupees (\$1,187) for each of the 15 girls they were able to burn.²

1 Clancy Chassay, “Acid Attacks and Rape: Growing Threat to Women Who Oppose Traditional Order,” *The Guardian*, November 22, 2008; Suzy Austin, “Schoolgirls Hurt in Afghan Acid Attack,” *The Metro*, November 13, 2008; and Aljazeera.net, “Afghan Girls Scarred in Acid Attack,” November 12, 2008.

2 United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, A/63/785-S/2009/158* (March 26, 2009).

Three years ago, UNESCO commissioned *Education under Attack* (2007), the first global study on targeted political and military violence against education staff, students, teachers, union and government officials, and institutions. It did so in response to the shooting of Safia Ama Jan, a champion of women's rights in Afghanistan, outside her home in Kandahar in the south of the country. Ama Jan had risked her life under Taliban rule to teach girls in defiance of bans on girls receiving education and women working; since 2001, as Director of Women's Affairs in her province, she had worked tirelessly to get girls back into school.

Following her assassination, then UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura urged the national and international community to stand united against the forces that would seek to destroy the efforts made by people like her. "We must do our utmost to defend and ensure the security of those who are working in this vital area," he said.

UNESCO was concerned with attacks on education for three reasons: the threat to the right to life, the threat to the right to education which also enables the fulfilment of other basic rights and fundamental freedoms, and the threat to the achievement of the Education for All goals.

In an effort to raise awareness about attacks on education and to better understand the nature and scale of the problem, Mark Richmond, Director of the Division for the Coordination of UN Priorities in Education in UNESCO's Education Sector, commissioned the global study. It covered the ten years to 2007, and found that the reported number of targeted attacks on students, educational staff and institutions seemed to have risen dramatically in the three years from 2004 to 2006.

Since then there have been thousands more reported cases of students, teachers, academics and other education staff being kidnapped, imprisoned, beaten, tortured, burned alive, shot, or blown up by rebels, armies and repressive regimes; or recruited or sexually violated by armed groups or armed forces at school or on their journey to or from school.

The effects on education of such incidents will be felt long after the funerals have taken place, through loss of teachers and intellectuals, flight of students and staff, fear of turning up to class, grief and psychological trauma among students and personnel, damage to buildings, materials and resources, and degradation of the education system through staffing recruitment difficulties and halted investment.

This report is a follow-up to *Education under Attack* (2007). Its remit is to track the extent, nature and impact of incidents from January 2007 to July 2009, as well as



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A chair dangles precariously in a bomb-damaged school in Gaza following Operation Cast Lead, 2009.

the measures that have been taken to increase protection for students and education personnel and to reduce impunity for perpetrators.

Its findings are disturbing. The sheer volume of attacks on education documented demonstrates that the demolition of schools and assassination of students and teachers is by no means limited to supporters of the Taliban fighting in the hills of Afghanistan. Education has been attacked in at least 31 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America over the past three years.

Sinister new tactics have emerged - from abducting children from schools for training and use as suicide bombers to mass poisoning of classes. Some incidents have resulted from new trends such as the blurring of the line between military and aid operations in Western military campaigns, others from age-old strategies of wearing down the enemy by destroying their infrastructure.

There are two interesting findings: first, that it is possible to negotiate with rebels, even rebels who seem ideologically opposed to education, to end attacks and re-open schools closed by threats; and second, that giving local communities a sense of ownership of the education process, and of the defence of schools in particular, may reduce the risk of attack.

Research into attacks on schools and universities is still at an early stage. Many aspects of this multi-faceted phenomenon have attracted little attention, and there is much scope for more extensive investigation and deeper analysis. So far, for instance, very little research has been carried out into why particular armed groups regard schools or even schoolchildren as legitimate targets and why so many governments persecute academics in their own universities. Almost no research has been carried out on the impact of repeated attacks on education systems, as opposed to individuals and buildings. And research into the effectiveness of protective measures and negotiations with armed groups is very limited.

Reporting of education-related attacks was pioneered in certain countries by organizations such as Human Rights Watch, and internationally, by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The launch of *Education under Attack* (2007) put the issue on the international agenda as a distinct subject. Since then, the importance of defending education has been reinforced at a series of international meetings and conferences, and most notably by the debate on Education in Emergencies at the United Nations General Assembly on 18 March 2009, where Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary-General, said: "Protecting children and teachers is a moral imperative as well as a matter of international law".

There is now a growing putative movement of UN agencies, international and national NGOs, and experts concerned with education, human rights, child protection and international law who have taken an interest in this subject. They are searching for ways to ensure that parties in conflicts respect schools as sanctuaries and zones of peace and that those who perpetrate attacks are pursued, prosecuted and punished. The web of interest needs to be widened further to draw in military leaders and ministers who have a say in the conduct of conflicts and therefore an important role to play in the protection of education from attack.

In the meantime, *Education under Attack 2010* takes a deeper look at the nature and extent of the problem today and its impact on education and fragility; and highlights opportunities for positive action to be taken in the years to come.

2. Terms of reference

The definition of attacks on education has been modified slightly since the 2007 report to take into account recent developments. This study, therefore, focuses on targeted violent attacks, carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious or criminal reasons, against students, teachers, academics and all other education personnel, including: support and transport staff, from janitors to bus drivers; education officials, from local civil servants to ministers of education; education trade unionists; and education aid workers. It includes night watchmen, police officers and soldiers attacked while guarding education institutions and personnel or on their way to or from guarding them. It also covers targeted attacks on educational buildings, resources, materials and facilities, including transport.

“Violent attacks” refers to any actual or threatened hurt or damage by use of force, such as killing, torture, injury, abduction, illegal incarceration, kidnapping, laying of landmines around or approaching educational buildings, burning of buildings, and assaults with any kind of weapon from knives to bombs or military missiles.

It includes forced recruitment of child soldiers, voluntary recruitment of child soldiers under the age of 15 and sexual violence where it is part of a political, military, or sectarian attack on students or education personnel at or on the way to or from a school or other educational institutions, or while taking part in or conducting an educational activity elsewhere.

“Violent attacks” also encompasses both actual and threatened looting, seizure, occupation, closure or demolition of educational property by force; as well as prevention of attendance at school by armed or military groups.



Security forces line their weapons against the school wall at Dwarika Middle School, India, on June 7, 2009.

For instance, it includes the closure of schools or their takeover for military or security operations by state armed forces or armed police, or by rebel forces, occupying troops or any armed, military, ethnic, political, religious, criminal or sectarian group.

It also comprises the imposition of political programmes in schools and education institutions under threat of force by armed groups.

The common thread is that these are incidents involving the deliberate use of force in ways that disrupt and deter the provision of education.

Mostly, such attacks occur in conflict-affected countries. But many, particularly in higher education, occur in non-conflict countries, particularly those governed by repressive regimes.

The terms of the study do not include collateral damage, for example, where teachers are killed or schools damaged accidentally by general military violence rather than by attacks deliberately targeted against them.

The study does not include non-politically motivated gun, knife or arson attacks by students or individual adults, such as the killing of 15 people by 17-year-old former student Tim Kretschmer at Albertville High School, Winnenden, Germany, on 11 March 2009.³ Nor does it include general violence or unruly behaviour between students or between students and teachers.

There are grey areas that test the definition of attacks on education. For instance, there may be little information available as to whether suicide bombs exploded outside a university gate, as occurred with devastating consequences at Mustansiriya University, Baghdad, on 16 January 2007, killing 70 students and injuring 170 others,

3 Cable News Network (CNN), "Major Deadly Attacks at Schools," March 11, 2009. Other similar incidents in the reporting period include: the killing of ten people by the 22-year-old student Matti Juhani Saari at Finland's Seinajoki University of Applied Sciences on September 23, 2008; the killing of seven students and the principal by 18-year-old Pekka-Rid Auvinen at Jokela High School, Tuusula, Finland, on November 7, 2007; and the killing of 32 people by student gunman Seung-Hui Cho in the United States' worst campus shooting, at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, on April 16, 2007.

were intended as an attack on education or on civilians in general; in this case, they are presumed to constitute an attack on the university because they appear to be intended to kill large numbers of people in a place where students are likely to gather.

The study does not cover the killing of the spouses, children or parents of education victims unless there is clear evidence that they are being targeted as a means of threatening a student, teacher, academic or other education personnel.

The seizure of children for recruitment as child soldiers while attending school or school activities, or on their way to or from school, is a direct attack on education. It is precisely because children can be found together in large numbers at school that many abductions for the purpose of recruitment take place during attacks on schools or while students are travelling to or from school. From the perspective that all children have the right to education, the abduction or recruitment and use of children by armed groups or armed forces from homes or any location, where it deprives them of, or disrupts, their access to education, is also an attack on education.

The study includes the use of educational activities or facilities to encourage voluntary child soldier enlistment. Schools can easily be converted into military training grounds and in some situations curricula have been manipulated or political re-education programmes have been imposed to encourage such enlistment.

The inclusion of sexual violence refers to acts carried out by armed groups or security forces against students or education personnel either at or on the way to or from, or as a result of abduction from, the education institution or during educational activities.

In the case of teachers or academics, assassinations at home are also included in situations where there is an official order, published threat or pattern of tracking down and killing such personnel outside of the place of work. In such circumstances, it is reasonable to assume these events are not random killings of civilians. For instance, in Afghanistan many threats issued to teachers are placed by the doors of their homes.

The occupation of school and university buildings by armed groups or security forces, or their use as a military base, constitutes an attack on education



Koindu's primary school was completely destroyed during Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war. Rebel soldiers used it as a base and training ground - and they used its books and wooden furnishings as fuel for fires. Virtually nothing was left after the war but shells of roofless buildings.

© USAID/L. Larrigue

because it both prevents the use of the facilities for providing education and turns them into targets for attack.

For the purposes of this study, “school” denotes a recognizable education facility or place of learning. “Student” refers to anyone being taught or studying at any level, from kindergarten to university, or in adult learning, in both formal and non-formal programmes.

3. Executive summary

■ The scale of the problem

The first global study on this problem, *Education under Attack*, published by UNESCO in 2007, found that the number of reported attacks on education had dramatically increased in the preceding three years. Some of the worst-affected countries at the time were Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Nepal, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Thailand and Zimbabwe.

Education under Attack 2010 finds that systematic targeting of students, teachers, academics, education staff and institutions has been reported in a greater number of countries since then.

Attacks intensified dramatically in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Thailand, according to reports:

- The number of attacks on schools, students and staff nearly tripled in Afghanistan from 2007 to 2008, up from 242 to 670;⁴
- In Pakistan, 356 schools were destroyed or damaged in one small region at the centre of the battle between the Army and the Taliban;⁵
- In India, nearly 300 schools were reportedly blown up by Maoist rebels between 2006 and 2009;

4 Figures supplied by UNICEF.

5 Figures supplied by Executive District Office for Elementary and Secondary Education, Swat District.

In Thailand the number of attacks on schools quadrupled between 2006 and 2007 to 164, then fell right back in 2008, although killings of teachers, students and security escorts for teachers continued.

Very high numbers of attacks during short military operations in Georgia and Gaza were also reported:

- In Georgia, 127 education institutions were destroyed or damaged in August 2008;
- In Gaza, more than 300 kindergarten, school and university buildings were damaged or severely damaged in three weeks during Israel's Operation Cast Lead at the turn of 2008-09.

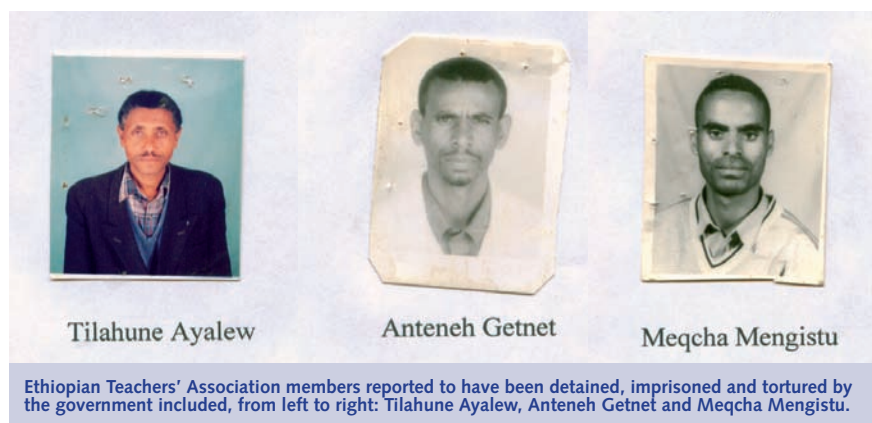
Attacks on teachers, students and teacher trade unionists continued to be a matter of grave concern in Colombia, Iraq, Nepal and Thailand. For example, in Iraq, 71 academics, two education officials and 37 students were killed in assassinations and targeted bombings between 2007 and 2009. In Colombia, 90 teachers were murdered from 2006 to 2008.

In 2008, the UN estimated that more than 250,000 children remained in the ranks of armed forces or groups. Voluntary or forced recruitment of children from school, or en route to or from school, by armed groups or security forces for combat or forced labour from 2006 to 2009 was reported in the following countries: Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand and Zimbabwe. Fear of recruitment deprived children of education in Sri Lanka and Venezuela.

Sexual violence against schoolgirls and women continued as a common tactic in some conflicts and reached critical levels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with 5,517 cases of sexual violence against children in Ituri and North and South Kivu in 2007-08.⁶ Incidents of sexual violence resulting from abduction or attacks at schools or education facilities, or on the journey to or from them, were reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Myanmar and the Philippines.

6 United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, A/63/785-S/2009/158 (March 26, 2009); and Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Taking the Next Step: Strengthening the Security Council's Response to Sexual Violence and Attacks on Education in Armed Conflict," April 20, 2009.

Teacher trade unionists were singled out for assassination, false imprisonment or torture in Colombia, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe.



Incidents of persecution of academics continue: a survey of Scholar Rescue Fund applicants found them most common in sub-Saharan Africa, Iraq and the West Bank and Gaza over the period from 2002 to 2007.⁷

Mostly, attacks occur in conflict-affected countries or under regimes with a poor record on human rights and democratic pluralism. From 2007 to 2009, state forces or state-backed forces have either beaten, arrested, tortured, threatened with murder or shot dead students, teachers and/or academics in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Iran, Myanmar, Nepal, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Turkey, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

■ Data challenges and definitions

Without a global system for systematically monitoring or gathering verified data, all figures on attacks come with a statistical health warning that they are compiled from disparate information sources of varying quality – media, human rights reports and some UN monitoring. Many may not have been verified. In addition, there is no agreed common data set enabling accurate analysis of trends across countries.

7 Henry G. Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2009).

Nevertheless, the types of education attacks reported over the past three years include:

- Mass or multiple killings or injuries caused by explosions, rocket and mortar attacks, gunfire or mass poisoning;
- Assassinations or attempted assassinations;
- Injury and beatings of targeted individuals;
- Abductions, kidnappings, forced disappearance, illegal imprisonment and torture;
- Indiscriminate and targeted violence against education protestors;
- Sexual violence by armed groups, soldiers or security forces against schoolchildren and teachers;
- Forced/unforced recruitment and use of children under 15 years old as soldiers or suicide bombers - including abduction and recruitment from or on the way to or from school, or recruitment that denies access to education;
- Destruction of education facilities by remotely detonated explosions, mortar and rocket fire, aerial bombing, burning, looting, and ransacking;
- Occupation or use of educational facilities by the military, security forces, armed police or armed groups; and
- Threats of any of the above attacks.

All attacks involve the deliberate use of force in ways that disrupt and deter provision of or access to education.

Two disturbing new tactics are the apparently increasing number of direct attacks on schoolchildren, particularly in Afghanistan and Thailand, and the alleged mass abduction of children from schools in Pakistan to become suicide bombers.

■ **Motives for attack**

Developing a deeper understanding of the motives for attacks on different targets is vital to any attempt to prevent education being targeted in the future. Analysis is hampered by the lack of high-quality monitoring or reporting, based on large numbers

of face-to-face interviews, in many conflict-affected countries, and by the suppression of information in situations where the perpetrators are repressive regimes.

From the available information, the motives for attack tend to fall into the following categories:

- Attacks on schools or teachers as symbols of the imposition of an alien culture, philosophy or ethnic identity;
- Attacks on schools, teachers or students to prevent the education of girls;
- Attacks on schools, teachers, universities and academics to prevent any education;
- Attacks on schools and universities as symbols of government power opposed by rebels;
- Attacks on schools, universities, education offices, students, teachers, other staff and officials to undermine confidence in government control of an area;
- Attacks on schools, teachers or students in revenge for civilian killings;
- Attacks on examination halls and examination transport or ministry or local district offices and officials to undermine the functioning of the education system;
- Abduction of children and some adults to fill the ranks of rebel or armed forces or provide forced labour, sexual services and/or logistical support;
- Abduction for ransom;
- Sexual violence by members of armed groups, soldiers or security forces as a tactic of war or due to disrespect for gender rights;
- Attacks on students, teachers or academics for involvement in trade union activity;
- Attacks on students and academics to silence political opposition or prevent the voicing of alternative views;
- Attacks on students and academics to silence human rights campaigns;
- Attacks on academics to limit research on sensitive topics;

- Occupation of schools for security/military operations by security forces/armed forces/armed groups and attacks on such schools because they are occupied or in military use;
- Destruction of education institutions by invading forces as a tactic of defeating the enemy;
- Destruction of education buildings in revenge for, or to deter, mortar, rocket or stoning attacks launched from inside them or nearby.

Attackers may have multiple motives. In Thailand, for instance, Muslim separatists in the three southernmost provinces may attack schools and kill teachers because schools are the main symbol in a village of the power of the government they oppose, and are easier to attack than other targets. But they may also be targeting them because schools are seen as imposing an alien language of instruction (Thai), religion (Buddhism) and history (Thai national history) as part of a policy to assimilate Muslims in a previously autonomous area.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the gender motive behind many attacks is underlined by formal and written threats from the Taliban to close girls' schools or end classes for girls. But while 40 per cent of schools attacked in Afghanistan are girls' schools, 32 per cent are mixed schools and 28 per cent are boys' schools, suggesting other motives are also at play.⁸ Similarly in Pakistan's Swat territory, from 2007 to March 2009, 116 girls' schools were destroyed or damaged but so, too, were 56 boys' schools.

In higher education there are multiple motives: students and academics may be attacked to silence criticism of government policies or behaviour, prevent promotion of human or minority rights, limit academic freedom or prevent political pluralism. In many cases, the work of persecuted scholars is seen as a threat to the government, and their international contacts and ability to influence students are seen as a source of power that needs to be curbed.

Education aid workers may be attacked because the lines between military operations and aid work have become blurred and they are not seen as neutral, or because armed groups are specifically opposed to the type of education they are supporting. Increases in incidents may also reflect the greater emphasis on giving aid to conflict-affected or fragile contexts.

8 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009).

■ Short- and long-term impacts

The physical effects of the bombing, shelling and burning of school and university buildings include loss of life and injury, as well as the loss of places in which to learn, learning materials, equipment and school furniture, research materials, computer data, management information systems, specialist laboratories, and transport vehicles.

Much harder to measure are the psychological effects of the murder, disappearance and torture of students, teachers and other staff and the destruction of institutions that are supposed to be protective. Such effects can include trauma, fear, insecurity, demotivation and despondency.

Public knowledge of repeated incidents and threats of attack gleaned from word of mouth or the media can spread fear throughout a region. Typically, children will be afraid to go to school, parents will be afraid to send them and teachers will be afraid to go to work.

Where incidents occur, schools may be closed in tens or hundreds for anything from a week to months or even years, in some cases. In Afghanistan, 670 schools remained closed in March 2009, denying education to 170,000 children. In Pakistan, the Taliban's ban on girls' classes, issued in Swat District in December 2008, led to the closure of 900 state and private schools, depriving 120,000 girls of their right to education.

In the longer term, governments may be reluctant to re-open, repair or resupply schools until threats have passed. They will struggle to recruit new teachers in areas where teachers are targeted for assassination, with serious consequences for the quality and number of staff recruited.

Attacks on aid workers can lead to the removal of aid workers from a given area or even the country, with the loss of expertise and supplies that came with them.



A boy covers his face after returning to his damaged school in Batticaloa District, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka, in 2007. The school was evacuated when the Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) forces, a separatist guerrilla group, exchanged fire in the area.

Attacks on education trade unionists undermine the development of good-quality education provision by denying teachers a say via their professional body – their collective voice – in how education is run.

Attacks on academics undermine the quality of higher education provision and restrict its contribution to economic, political and human development by inhibiting the growth of ideas, destroying intellectual capital and deterring bright minds from pursuing an academic career.

Attacks on education targets, therefore, are not just attacks on civilians and civilian buildings. They are an attack on the right to education, including the right to a good-quality education; an attack on academic freedom; an attack on stability; an attack on development; and an attack on democracy.

We already know that there are strong correlations between fragility and low access and achievement in primary education – for instance, over half of children not in primary school worldwide are found in conflict-affected countries.⁹ Just as the World Bank has argued that provision of education, particularly for girls, is the single most effective intervention that countries can make to improve human development, the reverse is also true: attacks on primary schools, particularly girls' primary schools, and the degradation of the education system that results from persistent attacks and fear of attacks, are particularly damaging for development. The prevention of attacks on education and the strengthening of the right to education at all levels, therefore, can also be viewed as important contributions to tackling conditions of fragility.

However, currently, monitoring and reporting pays too little attention to the impact of attacks on education systems, such as the negative effects on teacher retention and recruitment, or the detrimental narrowing of the education vision, placing limits on the knowledge or content that can be researched, taught or applied.

■ Prevention and protection measures

Education under Attack (2007) reported on a range of measures taken to prevent or increase resilience to attacks, including posting armed guards at schools, providing armed escorts for transport to or from school, encouraging community defence of

9 Save the Children, "In the Wake of Recent Emergencies, Save the Children Calls on the UN General Assembly to Prioritise Education for Children Affected by Conflict and Natural Disasters," March 18, 2009.

schools, providing distance learning where it is too dangerous to attend classes, relocating schools within community homes to make them less visible targets, and providing rapid repair and resupply of educational materials.

Capacity-building is needed to help countries improve their protection and recovery measures.

Since 2007, the case for involving communities in the running and defence of schools and in negotiations over the re-opening of schools has been strengthened by research and a successful initiative in Afghanistan. Community defence initiatives have been encouraged in Afghanistan since June 2006 and involve mobilizing local people to deter or resist attacks. School protection *shura* (councils) have been established where school management committees did not exist.

The CARE study, *Knowledge on Fire*, which involved more than a thousand field interviews, found that in two provinces, Balkh and Khost, 12 per cent of people said attacks had been prevented.¹⁰ Some communities had negotiated with the potential attackers or gained “permission” to continue teaching. Others had banned strangers from entering their village, hired night guards, or patrolled schools themselves when threats were issued. In some cases, they fought with attackers.

The CARE research suggests that where there is clear community involvement in the running of community affairs, the schools or their defence, schools seem less likely to be attacked and negotiated prevention seems more achievable. For instance, villages with a Community Development Council reported far fewer attacks on schools.

In the cases analysed, measures taken by the community seem to have sent a strong message that the schools are “for the people and not for the government”, so should not be targeted as a symbol of government. By contrast, where schools were built without the community requesting them, or rebuilt by international forces, they were thought more likely to be attacked.

Similarly, negotiations to re-open 161 schools in southern Afghanistan that had remained closed due to the threat of attacks succeeded because they addressed the feelings shared by the community and the armed opposition, the Taliban, that schools were imposing alien (anti-Islamic) values.

Afghanistan’s Minister of Education, Farooq Wardak, appointed in late 2008, first encouraged religious and village leaders to mobilize support among local people for the re-opening of schools. He then invited influential local people from across the

10 Glad, *Knowledge on Fire*.

spectrum, including supporters of the opposition or anti-government elements such as the Taliban, for consultations to find out why schools have remained closed.

Some objected to using the term “school”; others feared the curriculum or regulations were anti-Islamic. So the government allowed the word “school” to be changed to “madrasa”. It also permitted communities to nominate a locally trained teacher of their choice to join the school's staff and ensure that nothing anti-Islamic was taking place. Further, it challenged people to root through the curriculum or textbooks, reassuring them that anything found to be anti-Islamic would be changed. These compromises increased local people's sense of ownership of schools and the curriculum.

By March 2009, 161 schools had re-opened compared to 35 in 2007-8. And in the crucial first month of term, when schools are particularly vulnerable to attack, there were no violent incidents.

Another example of successful negotiations to avoid attacking schools has taken place in Nepal. In a “Schools as Zones of Peace” initiative, Maoist rebels and government forces and civil society groups negotiated and agreed to abide by codes of conduct for each school that prohibited attacks on, abduction from, or military use of schools. It was piloted successfully during the conflict in two districts and scaled up after the ceasefire, when ethnic fighting continued.

Again, the negotiations seemed to succeed because the process was facilitated by the community, there was buy-in from the armed opposition, and there was local leadership of schools. The additional advantage in Nepal was the Maoists' public commitment to universal education. More research is needed into similar initiatives in order to establish what conditions can encourage negotiation of respect for schools as sanctuaries or zones of peace.

Further research is also needed into whether the inclusion of education in peace agreements in countries where education has been a target for attack is a useful way to encourage measures that will reduce the risk of future attack and remove education as a source of tension.

Education can become a force for peace instead of a target for attack, if it is directed towards the promotion of tolerance, understanding and respect for local culture, language and identity, and is run in a fair and inclusive way. Giving parents a say in the running of schools is one way to achieve this. Ensuring transparency in the running of institutions and, in higher education, upholding academic freedom are critical factors.

■ Monitoring and reporting

As Nicholas Burnett, UNESCO's then Assistant Director-General for Education, argued in the UN General Assembly debate on Education in Emergencies (18 March 2009), monitoring is essential because without it the resulting silence on the issue can serve to legitimate attacks. "Without monitoring, we cannot denounce, and without denunciation, we cannot act to protect education and to end impunity," he said.¹¹ In addition to assisting reporting, monitoring can act as a deterrent or be a useful tool for negotiations.¹² Such documentation is also vital for improving rapid response, recovery measures and efforts to prevent future attacks.

Currently, there is no global monitoring system for attacks on education. However, there is a growing international monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM), established by Security Council Resolution 1612, for grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict. Among the six violations monitored under this resolution are attacks on schools. Until August 2009, the MRM only operated in countries where conflict parties are listed for widespread recruitment and use of child soldiers, although once listed the other five violations can be monitored. Even then, not all countries where significant levels of recruitment or use of child soldiers are reported have been listed: India is a prime example. As a result, the mechanism to monitor attacks on education via the MRM currently exists only in 14 countries, compared with 32 countries listed in this study as having experienced attacks on education between January 2007 and July 2009.

In September 2009, the grave violations of killing and maiming children or rape and other grave sexual abuses were also made triggers for listing.¹³ Given that all six violations are to be monitored wherever listing is triggered, this expansion of criteria may benefit the monitoring and reporting of attacks on schools because it may widen the number of countries being looked at.

However, the reality is that the non-trigger violations in general, and attacks on schools in particular, seem to get far less attention. Few recommendations have been made on how to improve protection of students and schools.

11 Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO, (panel address, UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or Natural Disasters, New York, March 18, 2009).

12 Ibid.

13 This followed the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1882 on children and armed conflict. See Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, "UN Security Council Breaks New Ground to Protect Children in War," August 4, 2009, <http://www.un.org/children/conflict/pr/2009-08-04218.html>.

Monitoring is carried out by MRM Task Forces at country level, comprised of willing partner organizations and coordinated by UN Country Teams. The resulting reports are sent to the UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict which makes recommendations and instructs the Secretary-General and the parties on what action should be taken by them – in time-bound action plans.

So far the action plans have only addressed the problem of child soldier recruitment and use; and of the 141 recommendations made by the Working Group between February 2008 and February 2009, only six related to attacks on education, according to Human Rights Watch.¹⁴

In addition, there has been serious underreporting of attacks on schools, students, teachers and other education staff in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on children and armed conflict.

In March 2009, the annexes to the Secretary-General's 8th Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict listed parties to conflict from the following countries: Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda.¹⁵ Of the other countries with the most serious problem of attacks on education during its reporting period (September 2007 to December 2008), developments in Georgia, Iraq, Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Thailand were also reported; but there was no mention of India, Iran, Pakistan or Zimbabwe.

Currently the MRM Task Forces appear to be seriously underreporting the extent of attacks on education even in situations where parties are already listed for recruitment or use of child soldiers. There is little information in the Secretary-General's reports on Thailand, for instance, minimal amounts from Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and very little on Somalia and Sudan.

An interesting finding of *Education under Attack 2010* is that this is not due to the lack of a wide definition of attacks on education in the requests for data sent out by the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. These explicitly request the Task Forces to provide information not just on attacks on education buildings, but also on the killing and injury of teachers, students and other education staff. The Security Council Working Group instructions to Task Forces also tell them to include information on occupation or forced closure of schools, and assaults against school personnel.

14 HRW, "Taking the Next Step."
15 *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, March 26, 2009, A/68/785-S/2009/158, annexes.

The lack of information on attacks seems instead to be due to a lack of involvement of education-oriented UN organizations and NGOs in the Task Forces and the absence of a community of practice of reporting on education attacks.

One way to rectify this problem is to make attacks on schools another trigger for listing countries and issuing time-bound action plans.

Even without that, “action plans” on reducing attacks on schools can be concluded, even signed, in all but name. If education organizations were to participate in the monitoring by joining or supporting the work of MRM country-level Task Forces and to push for action, such commitments could be made under the remit set by the Security Council.

But there is also a need for programmes to support capacity development for education-oriented organizations to enable them to monitor attacks and support protection and recovery.

Attacks on trade unionists, higher education students and academics, education officials and education aid workers are not covered by the MRM because it applies only to violations against children in armed conflict. Currently there is no systematic mechanism for gathering information on attacks against these groups, many of which take place outside conflicts. International cooperation is needed to establish effective monitoring of the full range of attacks on education.

■ Tackling impunity

The problem of lack of prosecution of those responsible for attacks on education has vexed the international community since the publication of *Education under Attack* (2007). Key questions raised in the UN General Assembly debate (18 March 2009) included: What more needs to be done to ensure that perpetrators are actually investigated, tried and made to pay a heavy price? Is the lack of progress due to gaps in the coverage of attacks on education by international law or the monitoring processes that can inform investigators? If not, what can be done to ensure that the law is used to investigate such attacks and prosecute perpetrators?

The advice of legal experts is clear on this point: most attacks on education are already adequately covered by existing laws and conventions, even if there is not as much visibility in the wording as exists for attacks on hospitals.

There is, however, a strong argument that the conversion of education buildings to military use should be banned, as it is for hospitals and churches, because perceived military use is often used to justify attacks.

For most education attacks, the challenge is not how to ensure they are covered by law but how to create awareness that they are covered and how to build up pressure for the law to be respected and applied.

Possible measures to take include:

- Referring more cases concerning perpetrators and commanders (who have known or ought to have known a war crime is taking place or failed to stop it taking place) to national prosecutors and where appropriate the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court;
- Researching and monitoring the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms in reducing impunity for education attacks;
- Training troops, officers and military lawyers in the laws of war and the conduct of troops in relation to protecting education from attack and protecting the right to education;
- Monitoring the compliance of officers and troops with national and international law in relation to protecting education from attack and protecting the right to education;
- Monitoring the disruption of the provision of education and fulfilment of the right to education by attacks on education, including the impact on the education system; and making the international community, military lawyers and parties to conflict more aware of the impact on victims, education systems, development and fragility;
- Entering into special agreements between parties to conflict not to attack education students, staff, personnel or buildings or their vicinity, educational processes such as exams, or other aspects of provision;
- Improving recognition of the value of education and the importance of protecting it via advocacy, the development of an internationally recognizable symbol denoting safe sanctuary status, public education on the human right to education and the laws of war, and better monitoring and reporting of attacks (as above);

- Improving victim assistance and repair and recovery of buildings and facilities in line with the duty to protect the right to education.

Better monitoring and human rights and media reporting would also pave the way for more investigations.

But the onus is also on governments to criminalize attacks on education. Radhika Coomaraswamy, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, argues that ensuring that national legislation relating to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes makes these crimes punishable under national law, with the same scope and definition as the Rome Statute, would be an important step towards addressing the prevailing culture of impunity on all grave violations against children.

The Rome Statute established the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is an important vehicle for encouraging prosecutions for attacks on education for two reasons:

First, because the Rome Statute classifies as war crimes the conscription, enlistment or use in hostilities of children under 15; grave acts of sexual violence; and attacks on hospitals and schools, and the ICC is already carrying out investigations into crimes concerning attacks on education as defined by this study in six out of the eight cases it has taken up.

Second, although the ICC tries cases only when states are unwilling or unable to do so in line with their responsibility to prevent and punish atrocities, the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor takes a pro-active stance against impunity – using its influence within national and international networks to encourage and provide support for genuine national proceedings where possible.

A useful objective for those concerned with attacks on education might therefore be to encourage ICC or national court investigations in the most high-profile situations, where attacks on schools and teachers are well publicized and the perpetrators have made public their intention to attack schools via published threats and orders (as is the case in the targeting of schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan by the Taliban, and in India by the Communist Party of India-Maoist). Evidence needs to be gathered and pressure put upon international and national courts to investigate more cases.

The starting point should be a sustained international campaign of awareness-raising and advocacy to ensure that education attacks, including attacks on higher education, are effectively monitored, investigated and addressed through the courts.

While international humanitarian and criminal law outlaw the targeting of education systems, international human rights law, concerning the right to life and the right to education, contains a “duty to protect” the public from attacks by private actors, even in times of armed conflict or insecurity. The effectiveness of these laws should not be judged merely by the number of prosecutions for failing to comply with them, but also by the extent to which positive measures are taken to uphold the rights they are designed to protect.

States should be offered assistance to enforce these laws in the name of enhancing human rights. A constructive way of doing this would be to encourage collaboration on the development of internationally endorsed guidelines for protecting education systems during war and insecurity. Ultimately, adoption of such guidelines by the UN General Assembly would send a clear statement of what actions states individually and collectively agree they should take.

This needs to be complemented by a concerted campaign to raise awareness of how international law covers attacks on education by providing guidance on protection and risk avoidance measures and engaging with the media.

The aim should be to generate a groundswell of informed international opinion to ensure that political, military and judicial decision-makers are required to be conscious of the need to protect education from attack and give more weight to that consideration in the decisions they take.

■ Recommendations

Attacks on education appear to be a significant and growing problem internationally, putting the lives of students, teachers and education staff at risk and undermining attempts to fulfil the right to education for all. Protecting education from attack is vital not only for the well-being of individuals but also for increasing development, reducing fragility and promoting peace and stability. Therefore, the study makes the following recommendations:

General principle

The international community should promote respect for schools and other education institutions as sanctuaries and zones of peace in order to protect the right to education.

On improving protection in law

- The UN should encourage international courts such as the ICC to provide an adequate deterrent to attacks on schools and education institutions, students, teachers, academics and other education staff, including education officials, trade unionists and aid workers, by actively pursuing high-profile cases relating to attacks on education.
- The Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict should help deter attacks on schools and violations against children by requesting that the Secretary-General include in his reports the names of individual commanders who have been implicated through credible evidence in attacks on education for possible referral to relevant sanctions committees or for investigation by the ICC. This requires investigations not only of individual cases but also of patterns within a particular chain of command that can establish accountability for such violations among senior commanders or officials.
- Action at the international level must be underpinned by action at national level. Governments should criminalize attacks on education in law.
- The international community should support the use of national, regional and international courts to bring perpetrators of attacks on education to account (for example via advocacy, sponsorship of legal scholarship on relevant subjects, and monitoring trials).
- Governments and the international community should consider ways to strengthen the protection of higher education in international humanitarian and human rights law.
- Governments and the international community should consider the merits of proposing an outright ban in international humanitarian law on the conversion of schools to military use and the creation of an internationally recognized symbol to denote that schools and education facilities should be respected as safe sanctuaries.
- International support should be given to produce comprehensive guidelines on the application of humanitarian law to the protection of education buildings, students and personnel; and on the measures that states must take to protect education systems. Endorsement should be sought for such guidelines from the highest possible authority, preferably the United Nations General Assembly.

- Measures should be taken to encourage better training for military lawyers, commanders and soldiers on the application of humanitarian and human rights law to the protection of education buildings, students and personnel and inclusion of the issue in military manuals.
- The ICRC and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) should encourage the inclusion of learning about the right to education and other rights affected by attacks on education within school curricula, with a view to fostering the notion of schools as zones of peace and helping students to protect themselves, for example from voluntary recruitment by armed groups.
- Governments should use every opportunity to set conditions of adherence to human rights norms, with particular reference to the rights of children, the right to education, the right to academic freedom and protection of both educational institutions and the process of education when entering trade or aid agreements with parties to a conflict.

On monitoring and reporting

- Recognizing the limited attention paid to attacks on schools by the current MRM on Children and Armed Conflict, the Security Council should demonstrate its commitment to the right to education by establishing attacks on schools as a trigger violation for UN Security Council listing of parties committing violations against children in armed conflict, requiring monitoring and reporting and time-bound action plans.
- UN agencies and NGOs strongly engaged in education provision should, where possible, join MRM country-level Task Forces or support their activities in order to help improve and broaden monitoring of attacks on education and to advocate with the Security Council and within other international fora for action plans to stop such attacks.
- Donor governments should provide targeted funding to improve the capacity of education-oriented UN agencies and NGOs to support the MRM.
- The international community should support the establishment of a global system of monitoring attacks on the full range of education targets (including students from early childhood to higher education, teachers, academics, other education staff, education trade unionists, education aid workers and education facilities), comprising:

- Annual global reporting on this problem using common data sets to enable analysis across countries and over time;
 - A publicly accessible global database; and
 - The establishment of an observatory or clearing house where data, research and reports on attacks on education can be gathered and made public.
- MRM country Task Forces, education ministries, human rights NGOs, trade union organizations and education organizations should improve their data and information collection on attacks on education to include information about the impact on education provision and quality, such as the closure of schools, enrolment, attendance and retention rates, and recruitment rates of teachers and other education personnel; the psychosocial impact on victims and affected communities; and the rate of investigations and prosecutions for attack in order to determine progress on ending impunity.

On protection measures

- The international community, UN agencies and NGOs should work with governments of conflict-affected states and governments assisting in preventing or limiting conflict to develop:
 - Mechanisms to protect threatened students, teachers, academics, education support staff, education trade unionists, education officials and education aid workers and to assist them in relocating internally or externally where appropriate;
 - Ways to rapidly reconstruct, repair and resupply attacked educational institutions in order to guarantee a zero tolerance policy towards violations of the right to education;
 - Ways to support the continuation of education in alternative places or via alternative methods and media in areas under attack;
 - Ways to support the continuation of the work of academics in exile for the education system under attack.
- The international community should consider providing funding to help capacity-building for local protection of education.
- UN Country Teams, peacekeepers and governments, where the security situation and safety concerns allow, should encourage negotiations among education and community stakeholders and parties to armed conflict to reach

agreement on respect for schools as safe sanctuaries and the re-opening of closed schools.

- In situations where there is a pattern of attacks on or abduction of schoolboys or schoolgirls on the way to or from school for recruitment as child soldiers/ forced labourers or for rape, governments should find ways to provide safe transport of students to and from school.

On reducing the risk of attack

- The UN Security Council should recognize the relationship of education to the peace and security agenda, i.e. the role that education can play in both contributing to tension and in promoting peace, and should offer support for strategies to ensure education is not a contributing factor to conflict.
- Governments and parties to conflict should work to ensure education is perceived as neutral by making certain that schools, colleges and universities are transparently run in an inclusive, non-sectarian, non-discriminatory way, and that curricula are non-propagandist and are sensitive to local linguistic, cultural and religious specificities.
- The international community, UN agencies and NGOs should devise strategies and campaigns to promote and fund inclusive, good-quality, learner-centred education in conflict-affected countries and establish respect for schools as sanctuaries or zones of peace.
- Governments should consider the merits of involving communities in the running of schools and the defence of schools as a means of reducing risk of attack.
- Governments and the international community should take into account the potential increased risk of schools and aid workers becoming targets of attack when considering whether to provide military support for education aid and reconstruction in emergencies and in post-conflict situations.

On research

- Deeper research is needed into:
 - The extent and impact of attacks on education, particularly the medium- and long-term impact on education systems, but also the impact on development, conflict and fragility;

- The extent of forced and voluntary recruitment of children by armed forces, armed groups and security forces from, or en route to or from, school or in ways that deprive children of their right to education, as well as possible protection measures;
- The extent of sexual violence against students, teachers and education personnel at or en route to or from schools and other education institutions and its impact on fulfilment of children's right to education, as well as possible protection measures;
- The extent of attacks on education aid workers, the motives for them and possible protection measures;
- Motives for attack of each type of target and the effectiveness of response strategies that address them, including the effectiveness of increasing communities' sense of ownership of both the education process and defence of education targets;
- The conditions in which negotiations to respect schools as safe sanctuaries can take place during conflicts;
- The advantages and disadvantages of including education and the protection of education in peace agreements;
- The levels of awareness among political leaders, military commanders, military legal advisers and soldiers of the application of international law to the protection of education;
- The level of response to attacks on education effected by accounting mechanisms such as the MRM on Children and Armed Conflict, the Human Rights Council and Special Rapporteurs.

On advocacy

- Further advocacy work is required to increase awareness of how attacks on education:
 - Violate existing human rights instruments;
 - Harm education systems and attempts to achieve Education for All; and
 - Undermine development, and contribute to fragility and conflict.

- UN agencies, NGOs and teacher unions should campaign for international solidarity with targeted groups and institutions and press for human rights instruments to be invoked to punish the perpetrators of attacks on education.

On media coverage

- Education organizations should engage with the media to encourage coverage of attacks and their impact in order to improve accountability and response to attacks. This should include coverage of the long-term impact of attacks on education, education systems and efforts to achieve Education for All.
- The international and national media should recognize their critical role in bringing such attacks to global attention and commit to reporting on them.
- Training and guidance should be provided to the media on how attacks on education violate human rights instruments.

4. The scale of the international problem

■ 2007 to 2009 at a glance

A comprehensive collection of country reports, with detailed event recording, was compiled for this study and is included in Annex I. The following snapshot is provided to give a sense of the global scale of attacks on education during the period of study.

Systematic attacks on schools, students and teachers appear to have intensified dramatically in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Thailand during the reporting period (January 2007-July 2009).

The number of attacks on schools nearly tripled in Afghanistan from 2007 to 2008, up from 242 to 670.¹⁶ In Pakistan, 356 schools were destroyed or damaged in one small region at the centre of the battle between the Army and the Taliban.¹⁷

In Thailand, the number of reported attacks on schools almost quadrupled between 2006 and 2007, rising from 43 to 164, but fell to just ten in 2008.¹⁸ However, the number of students, education personnel or guards of education personnel reported

16 Figures supplied by UNICEF.

17 Figures supplied by Executive District Office for Elementary and Secondary Education, Swat.

18 The Nation, "PM Plays Down Safety Concerns Ahead of South Visit," January 17, 2009.



When security forces arrived to camp at Dwarika Middle School, India, on June 7, 2009, they turned up in an armoured troop carrier.

killed remained constant, at 28 in both 2007 and 2008.¹⁹

In India, more than 300 school buildings have been reported blown up by Maoists in the past four years, including 18 in the first half of 2009 in Jharkhand and Bihar (and 50 in those two states in the whole of 2009). Dozens have been occupied for security operations including at least 37 in Jharkhand in the first half of 2009.²⁰

In February 2007, Chhattisgarh government sources claimed that more than 250 schools had been blown up in recent months.²¹ Other reports said that around 250 schools were blown up in 2006 and 2007.²²

In Iraq, 71 academics, two education officials and 37 students were killed in assassinations and targeted bombings during the reporting period.²³

The targeting of kindergartens, schools, vocational schools and universities during Israeli military operations in Gaza at the turn of 2008-2009 led to large numbers of deaths and damage to 302 education buildings.²⁴

19 Figures on deaths are non-exhaustive and compiled from press reports of individual incidents mainly by Agence France-Presse (AFP), but also by AKI, Associated Press (AP), Inter Press Service (IPS), Reuters, Xinhua, Bangkok Post, CBS News, China Daily, Children's Rights Information Network (CRIN), The Nation, New York Times, Voice Of America News, Washington Times, and from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) press releases; see also Human Rights Watch (HRW), *No One is Safe: Insurgent Attacks on Civilians in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces*, HRW report 19, 13 (C) (New York: HRW, 2007); International Crisis Group (ICG), "Thailand: Political Turmoil and the Southern Insurgency," *ICG Asia Briefing* no. 80 (August 20, 2008); United States Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand* (US Department of State, 2009); UNESCO contribution to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children an Armed Conflict, A/63/785/-52009/158* (March 26, 2009); and the Thai Ministry of Education.

20 The blowing up of schools has been extensively reported in press stories aggregated by www.naxalwatch.org; in reports by Human Rights Watch (HRW): see for example, HRW, "Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime": Government, Vigilante, and Naxalite Abuses in India's Chhattisgarh State (New York: HRW, 2008); HRW, *Sabotaged Schooling: Naxalite Attacks and Police Occupation of Schools in India's Bihar and Jharkhand States* (New York: HRW, 2009); and in reports by the Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR): see for example, ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008* (New Delhi: ACHR, 2008). For more details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

21 Indian Express, as quoted in The South Asian, "Naxals disrupt Chhattisgarh Classes, Schools Move Base," February 23, 2007, http://www.thesouthasian.org/blog/archives/2007/the_new_s_about_naxals.html.

22 The Indian Express, "Another Blow by Naxalites, This Time It's Kids' Education," June 30, 2007, as quoted in ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008*.

23 For details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

24 Ibid.

Approximately 127 nursery schools, schools and universities were destroyed or damaged in Georgia in August 2008 – most of them in Russian-led military operations, but 28 in Georgian military operations in Tskhinvali, South Ossetia.²⁵

The high rate of assassination of teachers, teacher trade unionists, students and academics remains a matter of grave concern in Colombia, Iraq, Nepal and Thailand. In Colombia, the number of death threats against teachers and the number of threats and killings of university students has risen sharply.²⁶

New threats to kindergartens and schools emerged in Argentina, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia.²⁷

In July 2009, Radhika Coomaraswamy, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, warned the Human Rights Council of the rising number of attacks on education targets. “The escalation in the number of systematic and deliberate attacks on schoolchildren, teachers and school buildings is alarming, as these attacks not only damage property and cause harm to students and teachers, but they also incite fear and limit access to education services by children. Particularly disturbing is the targeting of girl students and girls’ schools such as in Afghanistan, warranting the increased attention of, and action by, the international community”.²⁸

Less is known about how many incidents of recruitment and use of children as child soldiers, or how many incidents of sexual violence, are also attacks on education.

In 2007, an estimated 300,000 child soldiers were involved in conflicts around the world.²⁹ In 2008, the UN estimated the figure at more than 250,000.³⁰ Thousands of child soldiers have been recruited or remain in the ranks of armed groups, security forces or armies. Recruitment, forced or voluntary, deprives children of access to education where provision is available. Voluntary recruitment through indoctrination of children at school and forced

25 HRW, *Up in Flames: Humanitarian Law Violations and Civilian Victims in the Conflict Over South Ossetia* (New York: HRW, 2009); Government of Georgia, “Russian Invasion on Georgia: Impact on Georgia’s Educational System,” *Georgia Update*, October 8, 2008; “Russian Invasion of Georgia: Facts and Figures,” September 25, 2008; and United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, A/63/785-S/2009/158 (March 26, 2009), 11.

26 For details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

27 Ibid.

28 UNHRC, *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*.

29 UNICEF, “Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse: Children in Conflict and Emergencies,” last updated November 27, 2007, http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_armed_conflict.html.

30 Margaret Besheer, “UN Estimates There Are More Than 250,000 Child Soldiers Worldwide,” *Voice of America*, January 30, 2008.

recruitment via abduction or threats of force, at or on the way to or from school, are two from a range of commonly reported methods used.³¹

There is too little information available to determine what proportion of child soldiers are recruited in this way. However, there have been reports of children being voluntarily or forcibly recruited from school, or en route to or from school, over the period from 2006 to 2009 in the following countries: Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Thailand. Fear of recruitment by this method has also reportedly driven parents in Venezuela, on the Colombian border, and in Sri Lanka to keep their children home from school. In the same period, in Zimbabwe children were coerced into joining the ZANU-PF youth militia and some children were forced to work for the Army.³²

Sexual violence against schoolgirls and women has increasingly become a characteristic of conflict. It reached acute levels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2006 and continued at high levels from 2007 to 2009, with 2,727 reported cases of sexual violence against children in Oriental Province in 2008, perpetrated mainly by members of armed groups but also by soldiers and national police officers.³³ Boys, too, are victims of sexual violence in some conflicts. The UN cited the high incidence of rape and sexual violence against children in Burundi, Chad, the Central African Republic, Côte D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Somalia and Sudan as of particular concern.³⁴

As with child soldier recruitment, it is not known what proportion of incidents occur as a result of abduction from or attacks at schools or other education institutions, or on the way to or from them. Human rights and media reports and evidence provided by aid workers suggest this has occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Myanmar and the Philippines during the reporting period, but more research is needed to establish whether it is a common tactic.³⁵ An obstacle to obtaining accurate data may be the reluctance of victims to report such incidents.

31 Other methods of recruitment include abducting children from market places, from homes, or from the street. Many children are recruited in camps for refugees or IDPs, although there are no figures on how many are taken from schools in the camps or via other methods.

32 For details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

33 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009).

34 Radhika Coomaraswamy, *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*, UNGA A/HRC/12/49, July 30, 2009.

35 For details, see individual Country Reports in Annex I.

Timeline: Deaths and disruption

A deadly week in Thailand's schools: 11-18 June 2007

11 June: Two female teachers were killed in the school library on lunch break at Sakoh School, Narathiwat Province.³⁶ A male teacher was killed while buying cigarettes in Rangae, Narathiwat.³⁷ At least 110 schools in the provinces of Narathiwat and Yala were reported temporarily closed. The number of schools closed in Narathiwat was later reported to have risen to 260 schools in 13 districts.³⁸

12 June: Abdul Raman Sama, a religious teacher, was murdered in his pick-up truck in Raman District, apparently in a revenge attack by vigilantes. His death sparked a 500-strong demonstration.³⁹

13 June: Thirteen schools were set on fire in the provinces of Pattani and Yala in the south.⁴⁰ A bomb exploded near a school in Daeng, Pattani, killing one soldier and injuring another.⁴¹

14 June: A bomb exploded outside a vocational school in Narathiwat.⁴²

15 June: A roadside bomb killed seven soldiers arriving to provide a security escort for students and teachers in Bannang Sata, Yala.⁴³ Separatists also opened fire on the soldiers. It is reported that 11 schools had been burned down during the previous week in Yala⁴⁴ and that dozens of schools had come under attack.⁴⁵

17 June: One building at Baan Sripangan School, Narathiwat Province, was burned to the ground.⁴⁶

18 June: Half of Narathiwat schools re-opened. A roadside bomb injured two soldiers in a security detail for teachers of a school where two staff were shot on 11 June in Narathiwat.⁴⁷

The Prime Minister ordered the indefinite closure of all 700 schools in the three southernmost provinces, citing insurmountable security concerns.⁴⁸

36 Thai News Agency (TNA) MCOT English News, "School Close in Narathiwat Due to Violence, 3 Teachers Killed," June 11, 2007, as quoted in International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), "Weekly Report: Thailand," June 11–17, 2007.

37 Bangkok Post, "Prominent Muslim Teacher Killed in Yala," June 13, 2007, as quoted in ICPVTR, "Weekly Report: Thailand."

38 Marwaan Macan-Markar, "Thailand: Schools Prime Targets for Malay-Muslim Rebels," *IPS*, June 18, 2007.

39 Macan-Markar, "Thailand: Schools Prime Targets"; The Nation, "Raid Nabs Seven Suspected Militants," June 18, 2007, as quoted in ICPVTR, "Weekly Report: Thailand."

40 BBC News, "Schools Torched in South Thailand," June 14, 2007.

41 The Nation, "Insurgents Behead a Man in Narathiwat," June 13, 2007, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/read.php?newsid=30036763&keyword=insurgents+behead+man+in+narathiwat>.

42 TNA MCOT English News, "Bomb Wounds Soldier; Schools Set Ablaze in Restive South," June 14, 2007.

43 The Nation, "Explosion and Gunfight Kills Seven Soldiers in Yala," June 15, 2007, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/read.php?newsid=30036943&keyword=explosion+and+gunfight+t+kills+seven+soldiers+in+yala>.

44 Macan-Markar, "Thailand: Schools Prime Targets."

45 The Nation, "Explosion and Gunfight Kills Seven."

46 The Nation, "Seven Suspected Insurgents Arrested in Yala," June 17, 2007, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/read.php?newsid=30037105&keyword=seven+suspected+insurgents+arrested+in+yala>.

47 AFP, "Thailand: Bomb Injures 14 in Thai Muslim South," June 18, 2007; and Macan-Markar, "Thai Schools Prime Targets."

48 Xinhua, "Thai Southern Schools Ordered to Be Closed," Xinhua, June 19, 2007.

Teacher trade unionists are still being singled out for assassination, arbitrary detention, disappearance and torture in Colombia, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, particularly by state or state-backed forces.

Some attacks may be focused directly on the education system. For instance, on 3 June 2009, eight police officers and two teachers were killed when a bomb blew up a convoy carrying examination papers near the Algerian capital, Algiers. Guarded by police, the convoy was carrying copies of the examination paper that pupils must pass to go to high school.⁴⁹

Worrying apparent new trends are the control of schools by narco-guerrillas or their occupation by security forces fighting them, in Brazil, for instance; and the abduction for ransom or killing, or both, of school children or teachers by armed criminal groups in Mexico, Haiti, India and Nepal, as well as by Islamic extremists in the Philippines.⁵⁰

There are reports of education aid workers being targeted in some countries, although it is not known whether this merely reflects a trend towards targeting aid workers in general.

The targeting of academics in Iraq remained high in 2007 but declined significantly thereafter. However, professors are still being assassinated. New research by the Institute of International Education suggests that the persecution of academics occurs in a wide number of countries but is significantly more likely to occur in poor, politically unstable, repressed or failed states in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa.⁵¹

Separately, analysis of the individual country reports prepared for *Education under Attack 2010* (see Annex I) shows that in recent years students, teachers and academics have been either beaten, arrested, tortured, threatened with murder or shot dead by state forces or state-backed forces in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Iran, Myanmar, Nepal, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Turkey, Zambia and Zimbabwe.⁵²

Scholar Rescue in the Modern World, the Institute of International Education's survey of applicants and inquiries made to the US-based Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF), is the first attempt to provide a global report on the breadth and scope of scholar persecution around the world. It has inherent limitations, since its figures are based solely on inquiries and applications for its own support grants for relocating endangered

49 AFP, "Bomb Attack on School Convoy Kills 10," June 3, 2009.

50 For details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

51 Henry G. Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2009).

52 For details, see Country Reports in Annex I.

scholars. The SRF is not the only scholar rescue network and the figures may be distorted by factors that either restrict access to SRF information or deter people from applying for its grants. These may be linguistic, cultural, historical, technological or related to censorship and security measures. As a result, it does not represent a comprehensive global survey of the problem. Nevertheless, it does offer an indication of where many incidents of persecution have occurred.

The SRF study finds that incidents of persecution of scholars - ranging from harassment to imprisonment, violence and assassination - occurred in at least 101 countries. An analysis of 847 applications for SRF grants globally from 2002 to 2007 suggests sub-Saharan Africa was the worst-affected region (323 applicants), followed by the Middle East and North Africa (201). According to authors Henry Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth: "About five per cent of scholars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and one per cent of all scholars in sub-Saharan Africa have applied to the Scholar Rescue Fund for help during SRF's first five years".

The top ten countries by number of applicants to SRF during the period studied were Iraq (111), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (47), China (46), Zimbabwe (34), West Bank and Gaza (30), Nigeria (28), Burma (26), Cameroon (25), Ethiopia (25) and India (25). The top ten by SRF applicants per thousands of academic population were Guinea-Bissau (62.50), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (52.57), Eritrea (27.97), Liberia (16.84), Togo (12.89), Burundi (11.13), Rwanda (8.26), Cameroon (7.88), Botswana (5.67) and Mauritania (0.64).

In three out of four cases of persecution of scholars applying to the SRF, the perpetrators were government agents. In one out of four cases, the perpetrators were non-state agents such as terrorists, militias, paramilitary personnel, rebel forces and religious groups.

Two of the most disturbing trends in attacks on education have been, first, the alleged mass abduction and indoctrination of schoolchildren in Pakistan and Iraq to become suicide bombers⁵³ and, second, the targeted killing of schoolchildren so young that they could scarcely be considered a political threat, as has occurred in Afghanistan and elsewhere. What had they done to provoke their killers? They had simply gone to school.

53 Press TV, "200 Child Suicide Bombers Rescued in Pakistan," July 28, 2009; Reuters, "Pakistan Rescues Boys Trained as Suicide Bombers," July 28, 2009; Zahid Hussain, "Teenage Bombers Are Rescued from Taliban Suicide Training Camps," *The Times*, July 27, 2009; Sara A. Carter, "Taliban Buying Children for Suicide Bombers," *Washington Times*, July 2, 2009; IRIN News, "Pakistan: Child Suicide Bombers 'Victims of the Most Brutal Exploitation'," February 12, 2008; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008* (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008); and IRIN News, "Iraq: Mentally Handicapped Children Are Used in Attacks," April 10, 2007.

■ Challenges of data collection and reporting

There remain serious challenges to collecting accurate data and information nationally and providing accurate global data and analysis of attacks on education.

Currently, no global database of attacks on education exists, nor are there reliable baselines in most contexts. This makes it impossible to provide a comprehensive assessment of the growth or reduction in the number of incidents or the actual numbers of victims or incidents.

Since the publication of *Education under Attack* (2007), there appears to have been a growth in the number of human rights reports that include specific mention of attacks on education and a mushrooming of the number of newspapers and, particularly, news websites reporting on the subject. Therefore, any increase in the number of reported incidents may represent one or more of several trends: a real increase in the problem of attacks; a growth in the number of media outlets and human rights organizations reporting on such incidents; or improved access to media and NGO reporting on previously underreported conflicts due to growth in niche-interest Internet sites.

A good example of the latter is the increasing number of websites that aggregate⁵⁴ news and human rights reports from particular conflicts or security or human rights issues. These range from www.naxalwatch.blogspot.com, which gathers agency news stories on the Naxalite conflict in India, to www.iiss.org, which has an armed conflict database, to the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders' annual reports on www.fidh.org.

Education International, the federation of teacher unions that represents 30 million teachers worldwide, maintains a database of news stories and appeals, but does not have the staff to provide continuous global coverage. Also, since it relies on member organizations to provide information, its coverage depends on their commitment to the topic.

One problem, according to Dominique Marlet, EI human rights and trade union rights coordinator, is that member organizations lack awareness of human rights issues. "Some of our member organizations would spend more time bargaining for wages

54 This is an Internet media term for the provision of lists of summaries of and/or links to other publications' stories on a particular topic.

than for security issues or respect of human rights," she says. "There is a perception that that is more the role of NGOs and churches".⁵⁵

In Colombia, one of the most dangerous countries in which to be a teacher trade unionist, there is a different problem: unions may be unlikely to report murders of their members out of fear of appearing to take sides in the conflict, which could lead to reprisals.

In addition, reporting incidents raises ethical questions about preserving the confidentiality of victims who do not want their situation to become known, particularly in cases of sexual violence, or where it might put them in danger if the information were to fall into the wrong hands.

Another issue is how to ensure that all sectors of education are monitored. Currently, violations against students, staff, personnel and buildings in higher education are publicized via newsfeeds, media stories and rescue appeals, published by the Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR), the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA), the Scholarship Rescue Fund (SRF), the Scholars at Risk Network, Education International (EI) and other similar networks. But very few data are collected, the exception being the useful survey of SRF applicants and grantees by the Institute of International Education, SRF's host organization (although the study's coverage is limited as previously mentioned).⁵⁶

All reporting is restricted by obstacles such as access to areas of conflict, manpower, threats against journalists, trade unionists or NGO workers and the time and resources it takes to interview victims and witnesses.

For instance, the OCHA news website, IRIN News, which exists to provide humanitarian organizations with daily news about political, security and humanitarian developments to help them coordinate their work, provides frequent reports on attacks on education but only in certain countries. Set up in 1996 after the Rwandan genocide, it has expanded from providing twice daily bulletins to multi-media reporting including web stories, podcasts and documentary films. However, it does not cover Latin America and, although its reporting of attacks on education is strong in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it remains weak in other key countries, such as Thailand.

"Coverage of attacks on schools or education has happened by chance," says Antony Morland, a senior IRIN editor. "If a story on attacks on schools comes in we'll cover it, but it is not something we would necessarily set out to cover".

55 Dominique Marlet, Education International, telephone interview with the author, August 26, 2009.
56 Jarecki and Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World*.

IRIN sends journalists from four regional bureaux and its central bureau in Nairobi, but relies heavily on freelance reporters for coverage.

“It’s difficult for UN staff to go to certain dangerous places, because they can’t get authorization to travel there, and we wouldn’t deploy our stringers in harm’s way, as journalists have been targeted,” Morland says. “But if a freelance is passing through eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and can send a story, we’ll take it”.⁵⁷

More in-depth information can be provided by humanitarian NGOs working on the ground. However, in a complex conflict in remote and dangerous areas such as eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo – where rival guerrilla groups CNDP and the LRA are fighting the army, access is difficult and NGOs have other urgent priorities – it may be hard to keep track of education incidents and their impacts.

Where there is scant media coverage and NGOs do not have a systematic information-gathering system, they may rely on local officials and ordinary people voluntarily and randomly passing on information, and may simply not hear about some incidents. Since fighting frequently displaces groups of people, witnesses may have left affected areas to find safety.

In Goma, for example, information typically reaches UNICEF via informal channels, for instance from education officials, local leaders and NGOs mentioning incidents at meetings about other issues. “We are very sure there are other cases [of attacks on education], but in education we don’t have a mechanism to systematically document it,” Sayo Aoki, a former UNICEF education specialist in Goma, said.⁵⁸

In addition, people tend to pass on information to NGOs and UN agencies only if they think it is going to be acted upon. This might explain why there is much more information about attacks in Afghanistan, where the problem is well known and the government and NGOs are involved in supporting protection and recovery measures, than in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In many situations there is another problem: organizations often do not consistently monitor attacks on education because they have not been asked to do so.

The increased targeting of aid workers in general and education aid workers in particular, as well as the banning or limiting of NGO work in some areas by governments (as occurred in northern Sri Lanka, for example, during 2008 and 2009), can make the collection of information very difficult. In Afghanistan, for instance, by the beginning

57 Antony Morland, IRIN News, telephone interview with the author, August 25, 2009.

58 Sayo Aoki, interview with the author, June 2009.

of 2009, UNICEF staff could not travel in half of the country due to the high level of risk, and the agency had to rely heavily on local partners to carry out its work.

A further obstacle to providing accurate data is government hostility to information being made public, whether to protect its own image, to prevent information harming national interests such as tourism or development assistance, or because it is in denial about such attacks occurring.

For instance, Human Rights Watch has not been able to update its 2002 estimate that the Myanmar army employs 70,000 child soldiers. According to Human Rights Watch, the government claims it does not allow anyone to enlist and, therefore, there are no official statistics. Moreover, restrictions on the freedom of movement of UN and NGO staff, as well as other access and security concerns, severely limit the ability to monitor this issue in a manner that can lead to precise estimations of recruitment levels.⁵⁹

Curiously, even the ending of a conflict can make information gathering more difficult. In Nepal, after a peace agreement was signed in 2006 between the Maoist rebels and the government, attacks on education continued, particularly in the Terai region, but were harder to track because they were being carried out by smaller, less visible armed groups.

Prekshya Ojha, Director of the Documentation and Dissemination Department at INSEC, a human rights NGO in Nepal, says: “There are groups mobilizing there who say they are fighting for their rights - some are ethnic groups, some are armed groups. But some incidents may not be politically motivated, they may just be criminal activities. In these cases when people are abducted it is difficult to find out the reason why. They may just be armed groups asking for a ransom”.⁶⁰

A general difficulty in reporting some types of attacks is the lack of disaggregated data by profession or education-specific information. For instance, it is hard to find a breakdown of the number of education aid workers killed within the total of aid workers killed, the numbers of child soldiers recruited from schools, or the numbers of teachers or education staff killed in a bombing in front of a school. Similarly, the information may not exist to determine whether particular individuals are killed because they are teachers or students going to school, or for multiple other possible reasons. It raises questions about whether the categorization of the violation is defined by motive or effect. This study takes a rights-based approach: if the violent political or

59 Information supplied by Bede Sheppard, researcher, Human Rights Watch.

60 Prekshya Ojha, Director of Documentation and Dissemination Department, INSEC, interview with the author, August 13, 2009.

military act is intentional and disrupts education, to which every individual has a right, it is an attack on education, even if the motive cannot be clearly established.

Attempting sophisticated categorization of attacks can reveal more difficulties. For instance, trying to establish the extent to which girls' schools are being targeted compared with boys' schools in Afghanistan involves finding out if the reported girls' schools attacked really are girls' schools. In some cases, they may educate girls and boys in separate shifts or together, or they may have become boys' schools as girls have left. Similarly, some boys' schools that are attacked may turn out to have girl students in them, which may have prompted the attack.⁶¹

■ Challenges of data comparison

Accuracy of analysis is affected by different types of data being monitored by different agencies, which makes historical and international comparisons difficult. Governments often issue aggregate figures of the number of teachers killed or injured, but provide no breakdown of the types of attack they face or the gender of those attacked, which is important where, for instance, girls' schools are being singled out for attack, as in Pakistan. Some add the number of death threats. Others include kidnapping or rape as a threat rather than a type of attack.

Even within countries, organizations and ministries may provide different figures because they collect different sets of data or use different definitions and/or sources - or because they have different interests at heart.

In Colombia, for example, teachers' union FECODE, independent think-tank the National Trade Union School (ENS), the Observatory of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law of the Vice-Presidency, and the Ministry of Foreign Relations all give different figures for the number of deaths. The latter says three "teachers" have been killed in the first half of 2009; ENS says eight "education workers" have been killed, but it only monitors deaths of unionized workers. The teachers' union, FECODE, says nine teachers have been killed and the Observatory says ten teachers have been killed, including eight unionized and two non-unionized, which tallies with the ENS figure for deaths of unionized education workers.

In Iraq, Ministry of Education figures conflict with figures from the Ministry of Human Rights. In Afghanistan, CARE found that figures from the Ministry of Education

61 Zama Coursen-Neff, HRW, telephone interview with the author, August 31, 2009. Coursen-Neff is the author of HRW, *Lessons in Terror: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan*, HRW Reports 8, no. 6(C) (New York: HRW, 2006) and has made visits to Afghan schools.

and UNICEF do not always match.⁶² Both systems face the risk of double-counting episodes due to lack of exact data related to the names of schools and locations, or lack of information regarding the date of incidents, according to the study. There are clear examples of such double-counting in both databases. In addition, in some cases several incidents that happen on the same day are mistakenly considered as one attack.⁶³

Quite different models of collection exist, which affect the extent of coverage geographically and across time, as well as data accuracy.

Some organizations, such as Human Rights Watch, carry out one-off in-depth studies on particular conflicts at a particular time, which may include sections on attacks on education. It has published two reports focusing solely on education attacks (in Afghanistan and India). It has also published many reports with a sole or strong focus on recruitment of child soldiers and sexual violence, and has a strong track record on disseminating them effectively via the media.

Human Rights Watch reports are often based on field interviews with hundreds of officials and witnesses. For example, the 2008 report, *Dangerous Duty: Children and the Chhattisgarh Conflict*, is based on research in four districts in two states over four months. The NGO interviewed 235 people, including villagers, Salwa Judum (anti-Naxalite militia) camp residents, police, Special Police Officers and former child Naxalites in Chhattisgarh State, lawyers, journalists, and NGO representatives.

The largest published field study in the reporting period - apparently the only large-scale study dedicated solely to attacks on education - is the CARE study, conducted in Afghanistan, entitled *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan, Risks and Mitigatory Measures* (2009), which was commissioned by the World Bank and written by Marit Glad. Its preparation included a desk study of existing reports, literature and data, plus data collection in eight provinces. The data collection involved 1,037 individual and group interviews, including 559 focus group discussions with teachers, parents, students and *shura* (Councils of Elders) members.

More useful for year-by-year comparisons of data is the establishment of continuous monitoring systems within countries. In Colombia, the Observatory of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law collects information through a combination of daily monitoring of the main national newspapers and being given official information from governmental bodies including the police, the National Security Department, the Mine Action Program, trade unions and other civil society organizations, such as those representing indigenous and minority groups.

62 Glad, *Knowledge on Fire*, 12.

63 Ibid.

One of the organizations that has consistently provided detailed data on attacks on education is INSEC of Nepal, which has a national system for collecting information on human rights violations. INSEC has been working for the protection and promotion of human rights for nearly two decades and has been publishing a Nepal Human Rights Yearbook since 1992. But it only began monitoring attacks on schools, teachers and students in 2005, following the issuance of UN Security Council Resolution 1612 on children and armed conflict, which listed “attacks on schools and hospitals” as one of six grave violations against children and established a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism that initially covered seven conflicts, including the Maoist rebellion in Nepal.⁶⁴

INSEC has a representative in each of 75 districts nationwide. They work with partner organizations locally, such as women’s groups, police or village development committees, to gather and verify information. If an incident is serious they will visit the scene and interview victims or witnesses. For very grave incidents, a team from one of five regional offices or the central office might go with them and make the report public.⁶⁵ For reporting to be used as part of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict (MRM), district representatives always go to the location of incidents and interview victims, their families and witnesses.

The district representatives’ information is sent to one of five regional offices, where it is verified and cross-checked with other information. It is then passed on to a central office, where it is verified again and entered into a database. Analysis of the information is published in monthly and annual reports and is available on INSEC’s website.⁶⁶

The only international system for monitoring attacks on education is the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict established by Security Council Resolution 1612 and implemented by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The MRM demands the highest standards of verification, including interviews of victims and witnesses. But while it makes a vital contribution, its findings are limited to specific reporting periods of a number of months rather than being year round. In addition, its main focus so far has been on the recruitment of child soldiers and it is restricted to examining violations affecting children. It has also suffered from the same problems that can undermine any system of monitoring: that in some conflict situations, such as the war in Sri Lanka, high levels of insecurity have been a key factor in limiting the participation

64 The other countries covered in the piloting of the mechanism were Burundi, Côte D’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

65 Prekshya Ojha, telephone interview with the author, August 13, 2009.

66 INSEC website, www.inseconline.org.

of local or international NGOs in monitoring.⁶⁷ The MRM will be discussed in more depth in Section 9, Monitoring and Impunity.

■ Global collection

A principal challenge facing those who wish to advocate effectively against attacks on education is the collection and sharing of common types of data over comparable time periods across countries. One solution would be for concerned organizations to reach a consensus on which types of data to collect and disseminate, so as to enable both comparative and global analysis. Reaching such a consensus may not be easy, however, given the differing interests of the organizations involved.

More detailed research is required into the arrangements, extent and collection methods of different organizations, government ministries and the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict to see how collection of common types of data and information can be encouraged. Ideally, this information should include not just a dataset, for instance along the lines of this study's terms of reference (see Section 1), but also information on the impact on education, as set out in Section 7, and measures to provide protection and end impunity, as set out in Sections 8 and 9.

A second challenge is ensuring that the information gathered is disseminated widely via the UN system, NGOs and the media. An ambitious step would be to create an Observatory for the Protection of Education from Attack, backed by interested organizations, that would gather support, data and information from all bodies concerned and publish it in one place, providing international access to global reports, country reports and news feeds via a dedicated website.

67 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No Safety No Escape: Children and the Escalating Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka* (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2008), 42.

5. The nature of attacks

The following types of attack on education have occurred in different locations around the world over the past three years:

- Mass or multiple killings or injuries caused by explosions, rocket and mortar attacks, gunfire, or mass poisoning;
- Assassinations or attempted assassinations;
- Injury and beatings of targeted individuals;
- Abductions, kidnappings, forced disappearance, illegal imprisonment and torture;
- Indiscriminate, disproportionate violence and targeted violence against education protestors;
- Sexual violence by armed groups, soldiers or security forces against schoolchildren and teachers;
- Forced/unforced recruitment and use of children under 15 years old as soldiers or suicide bombers – including abduction and recruitment from or on the way to or from school, or recruitment that denies access to education;
- Destruction of education buildings, facilities (including transport), resources and learning materials by remotely detonated explosions, mortar and rocket fire, aerial bombing, burning, looting, and ransacking;

- Occupation and/or use of educational buildings or facilities by the military, security forces, armed police or armed groups;
- Verbal or written warnings to: stop teaching, close schools or other education institutions, not repair or re-open them, not attend school or college, not teach or research particular subjects or face violent retribution;
- Official published threats or orders by armed groups, the military or security forces to carry out any of the above attacks.

Tactics vary in different countries. Some armed groups, such as the Maoist rebels (Naxalites) in the north-eastern Indian states of Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Jharkhand, tend to blow up school buildings with dynamite and rarely target students or teachers. Others, such as the Islamic separatists in southern Thailand, typically firebomb schools but also assassinate individual teachers by shooting them, sometimes in front of their classes, and blow up police or army escorts protecting them on their way to or from school.

Related armed groups may use different tactics. The Taliban in Pakistan tend to concentrate on firebombing schools but have rarely killed students or teachers; whereas in Afghanistan, high numbers of teachers and students have been killed deliberately, and schools have been burned, bombed, shelled and subjected to rocket and mortar attacks.

The CARE study field assessment suggests that in Afghanistan the burning of schools has been the most frequent type of attack, followed by night letters, other warnings, explosions, armed attacks, killings, kidnappings and “terror”. One in five education personnel report having personally received threats.⁶⁸

Attacks on academics and trade unionists in countries such as Colombia, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq and Zimbabwe have involved death threats, abduction, forced disappearance, illegal arrests, beating, torture, assassination by bullets or car bombs, or some combination of these.

Suicide bombings have been directed at large groups of university students or school pupils in Iraq and Afghanistan but are rare elsewhere.

Some tactics are shared by state and rebel forces. There have been multiple reports of rebel groups arriving with trucks at schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to seize children for recruitment as child soldiers, while soldiers have seized children

68 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009).

on their way to school for the same purpose. In the same country, schools have been looted by police and ransacked by rebels, and neighbouring schools have been occupied by the national army and the rebel group CNDP.

In both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and more recently in Nepal, political movements linked to armed groups have tried to implement political programmes in schools that could be a prelude to indoctrination and recruitment of child combatants.

In Africa, in particular, the abduction and sexual abuse of schoolgirls and women teachers are reported to occur on the journey to or from school but research is needed into whether they also occur in raids on schools, particularly for child soldier recruitment. Child recruitment and sexual violence are often linked: in some cases, girls, and sometimes boys, are forced to become sex slaves for the armed groups who abduct them.

At the higher education level, sexual violence against detained students and academics of both sexes has been alleged in Iran.

Some countries experience a wide variety of attacks on education. For instance, in Colombia between 2007 and 2009, the Escuela Nacional Sindical figures for violations against education union members included 455 death threats, 245 forced displacements, 52 murders, five kidnappings, five arbitrary detentions, four attacks without causing injury, three forced disappearances (presumed dead), two illegal raids, and one case of torture.⁶⁹

Two disturbing new tactics are the apparently increasing number of direct attacks on schoolchildren, particularly in Afghanistan and Thailand, and the mass abduction and indoctrination of children in Pakistan to become suicide bombers.



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Hundreds of teacher trade union members are reported to have been assassinated in Colombia over the years by paramilitaries and the Colombian Army, including Alvaro Realpe, activist in the teachers trade union FECODE, German Delgado, activist in the university workers' trade union, Jesus Agreda, activist in the teachers' trade union FECODE and Leonel Goyeneche, regional leader of the teachers' trade union FECODE.

69 Figures from Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS). Figures supplied by the Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos (DDHH) y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (DIH), Vicepresidencia de la Republica de Colombia are higher, reporting 62 murders of teachers (unionized and non-unionized) in the same period.

In Afghanistan, schoolchildren have been sprayed with gunfire, attacked with acid or subjected to attempts at mass poisoning via the gassing of whole classes.

Suicide bombing was rare in Afghanistan until 2005, but has since proliferated there, as well as in Pakistan, according to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. The bombers used are increasingly children, some as young as 11 years old, recruited and indoctrinated from madrasas and seminaries and trained in Taliban camps in north-west Pakistan, according to officials in North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). They are then sold to other Taliban officials.⁷⁰

Other new reported threats that appear to have been on the rise over this period include the kidnapping of schoolchildren and teachers in Haiti and the Philippines, and gun battles between armed drug gangs and armed police occupying schools in Brazil's favelas.

School buildings have been shelled, bombed or burned by rebels in a number of countries but also by official armies in Georgia, during the Russian intervention in

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The headmaster of Shegaia boys' secondary school, located in the 'buffer zone' of Gaza, near the Israeli border, found all these weapons over the years. The school has been damaged four times since it was opened in 2004.

2008, and in the Gaza Strip during Israel's Operation Cast Lead in late 2008 and early 2009. School buildings have been occupied by rebel and government forces in Brazil, India, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At the higher education level, there is less emphasis on attacking buildings and more on the targeting of individuals. Among teacher trade unionists, the emphasis is almost exclusively on individuals.

The technology used for attack has changed little over the three years and ranges from the throwing of stones and lighting of fires to shelling and remotely detonating bombs. The two exceptions appear to be the use of poison gas, as mentioned earlier, and the use of mobile phone technology to remotely detonate bombs. The latter, for example, is used by separatists in Thailand to trigger roadside bombs against passing convoys carrying teachers to school. The availability of this technology may contribute to the increasing use of remotely detonated bombs against education targets in the Thai conflict, although earlier tactics of burning down schools or the shooting of individuals by pillion passenger assassins on motorbike have continued.

There also seems to have been a trend towards using car bombs in Thailand since 2008. Nails, metal rods, ball bearings and the links of motorbike chains have been packed with explosives in PVC tubes, metal boxes and gas tanks to maximize the number of wounds inflicted.

Some of the most brutal attacks have occurred in Thailand. On 20 February 2009, insurgents attacked soldiers returning from escorting teachers to a local school and beheaded two of them.⁷¹ One Buddhist teacher was shot in his parked car, then incinerated alive. Another was assassinated when four rebels dressed in school uniforms entered a classroom and shot him dead in front of pupils. In one incident in 2007, a man's severed head was mounted on the gate to a middle school, while the heads of two other victims were strewn on a bridge and a road nearby.⁷²

The most unusual reported threat - and a paradoxical one given the perpetrators' record on blowing up school buildings - is a diktat posted on walls by Maoist guerrillas in Bihar, India, in June 2009, warning that they would punish parents from marginalized communities if they did *not* send their children to school.⁷³

71 AFP, "Two Soldiers Beheaded in Thai South: Police," February 20, 2009.

72 AFP, "Teachers Targeted in Thailand's Deadly Insurgency," March 20, 2008.

73 Times of India, "Maoist Diktat in Bihar: Send Kids to School," June 11, 2009. In April, Maoists had blown up a school mainly used by tribal children, who are among the most marginalized.

6. Targets and motives

Developing a deeper understanding of the motives for attacks on different targets is vital to any attempt to prevent education being targeted in the future. In many conflict-affected countries, however, analysis is hampered by the lack of high-quality reporting or monitoring involving large numbers of face-to-face interviews. This is also a challenge in some countries not affected by open conflict, where attacks are perpetrated by or with the tacit approval of repressive regimes.

Despite the challenges of data collection and analysis, more detailed information about attackers and their motives has emerged in some of the worst-affected countries over the past few years. The types of attacker vary in different situations, and may include groups of armed civilians, civilians mobilized by armed groups, militants, armed groups, armed criminal gangs, state-backed paramilitaries, state armed forces, state police and/or state security forces.

An attempt to group attacks by motives on the basis of existing information may be helpful. Such motives tend to fall into the following categories:

- Attacks on schools or teachers as vehicles for imposing an alien culture, philosophy, religion or ethnic identity;
- Attacks on schools, teachers and students to prevent the education of girls;
- Attacks on schools, teachers, universities and academics to prevent all or specific forms of education;

- Attacks on examination halls and convoys carrying examination papers to disrupt the functioning of the education system;
- Attacks on schools and universities as symbols of government power opposed by rebels;
- Attacks on schools, universities, education offices, students, teachers, other staff and officials to undermine confidence in government control of an area;
- Attacks on schools, teachers and students in revenge for civilian killings;
- Abduction of children and some adults by rebel, armed or security forces for use as combatants, or to provide forced labour, sexual services and/or logistical support;
- Abduction for ransom;
- Sexual violence by armed groups, soldiers or security forces as a tactic of war or due to disrespect for gender rights;
- Attacks on students, teachers, teacher trade unionists and academics for involvement in trade union activity;
- Attacks on students and academics to silence political opposition or prevent the voicing of alternative views;
- Attacks on students and academics to silence human rights campaigns or human rights-related research;
- Attacks on academics for researching sensitive topics, such as the impact of war or the marginalization of a particular group;
- Occupation of schools for security operations against rebels and armed drug gangs and attacks on them by rebels for the same reason;
- Destruction of schools by invading forces as a tactic of defeating the enemy;
- Destruction of schools as revenge for, or a deterrent against, the launching of mortar, rocket or stoning attacks from inside the school or nearby.

Motives are highly contested in some countries. In Colombia, for instance, the Foreign Ministry, when asked to provide information about attacks on students, teachers and academics, implied that the perpetrators are mostly illegal armed groups. Clara Ines Vargas Silva, Director of Multilateral Political Affairs, said: "The rate of violence in large part are the result of the activities of illegal armed groups, financed by the

illicit drugs trade, extortion and kidnappings. Violence affects the whole population without discrimination, including unionized and non-unionized teachers".⁷⁴

However, two-thirds of teachers murdered are trade union members, according to National Police figures, and 60 per cent of murders of trade unionists globally occur in Colombia, suggesting that trade unionist activity may be a motive in their killings. To put education attacks in context, in the ten years to the end of 2008, 2,694 trade unionists were murdered in Colombia.⁷⁵

Although the perpetrators are unknown in 75 per cent of violations of the human rights of trade unionists in Colombia, they are known to be paramilitaries in 15 per cent of violations, state organizations in 6 per cent and guerrillas in 3 per cent, according to the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders.⁷⁶

According to Escuela Nacional Sindical (which tracks only the violations against unionized education workers), among murders of trade unionists, the perpetrator was unknown in 74 per cent of cases in 2006 and in 77 per cent of cases in 2007.

The percentage of education trade unionists killed by state organizations rose from 2.8 in 2006 to 12.8 in 2007, representing the majority of cases in which the perpetrator was identified. The percentage killed by paramilitaries fell from 12.5 per cent in 2006 to 5.1 per cent in 2007. In 2007, there were 11 acts of victimization of Colombian trade unionists by guerrilla groups; of these, five incidents involved threats and six were cases of forced displacement. The victims were education union members in the departments of Arauca, Narino, Atlantico, Huila and Caqueta; all but one of them were women.



Members of the university workers' trade union, SINTRAUNICOL, stage a protest in Bogotá, Colombia, in 2006, led by Jose Muñoz, national president of the union. SINTRAUNICOL has had several members murdered in recent years.

© Justice for Colombia/ Liam Craig-Best

74 Clara Inés Vargas Silva, Directora de Asuntos Políticos Multilaterales, Encargada de las Funciones del Despacho de la Viceministra de Asuntos Multilaterales, in communication with the author, August 9, 2009.

75 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2009* (FIDH, 2009).

76 Elver Herrera Arenas and Leydi Sanjuán, *Informe Sobre Las Violaciones A Los Derechos Humanos De Los y Las Sindicalistas Colombianos En El Año 2007* (Medellín: Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS), 2008).

From 2007 to 2009, in those cases where the perpetrator or organization responsible is known, 213 attacks are reported to be attributable to state organizations and 30 to guerrilla organizations (compared to 561 non-attributed attacks). Most of the attacks by state organizations fall into the category of death threats, for which the ratio of identifiable state organization threats to guerrilla threats was 24:5 in 2008, 101:10 in 2008 and 18:2 in 2009 as of the end of July.⁷⁷

ENS data suggests that unionized education workers are more likely to be issued with death threats if they are involved in union activities such as making public statements, campaigning or collective negotiations.⁷⁸ In other words, they are more likely to be targeted if they are active or play a leading role.

New research in this reporting period has deepened understanding of the motives behind attacks on schools, teachers and teacher escorts in southern Thailand as well.

Previously, Thai authorities suggested that the conflict in the south was the work of disparate separatists groups. But Thai police now say that the rebellion is led by a well-structured organization operating across four provinces: Songkhla, Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat. There is also growing acknowledgement that the causes are rooted in Thailand's assimilation policies.⁷⁹ Damrong Kraikruan, Chargé d'Affaires at the Thai Embassy in Washington DC, acknowledged that Muslims were seeking independence, inspired by ethnic pride and a history of oppression by the Thai government.⁸⁰

The conflict-affected area was once known for its Islamic teaching and attracted scholars from around the world.⁸¹ But Pattani was annexed by Siam in 1909 and successive governments sought to assimilate the population into the Thai Buddhist mainstream, particularly in the 1940s, with bans on Islamic schools and attire, and the outlawing of the Malay dialect, Muslim names and the teaching of local history.⁸² Local people were told to adopt Thai names and were prohibited from practising Islam. Islamic courts were abolished and Malay students were forced to pay their respects to images of Buddha placed in public schools.⁸³

Those who resisted were arrested, and some of them tortured. As political scientist Phaison Daoh writes: "This policy had a devastating effect on the relationship

77 Figures supplied by Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS).

78 Ibid.

79 Al Jazeera, "Thai Separatists to Continue to Fight," February 27, 2009.

80 Cassie Fleming, "Ethnic Violence Spreads in Thailand," *The Washington Times*, July 24, 2009.

81 Don Pathan, "Return Patani to Its Glorious Past," *The Nation*, June 30, 2009.

82 Martin Petty, "Q&A: What's Behind Thailand's Mysterious Insurgency?" *Reuters*, July 3, 2009.

83 Phaison Daoh, "Understanding, Not Troops, Needed in Southern Thailand," *Common Ground News Service*, March 17, 2009, <http://www.commongroundnews.org/article.php?id=25053&lan=en&sid=1&sp=0>.



Thai students stand in the doorway of a burned-out school in the southern border province of Yala. Since the resurgence violence in early 2004, hundreds of schools have been severely damaged or destroyed in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand.

between the Thai government and the people in the south”.⁸⁴ Such policies were later lifted, but the government has tended to concentrate on security operations rather than acknowledging the socio-cultural roots of the conflict. “Military operations therefore are always the backbone of government policies,” Daoh argues.⁸⁵

Schools are thus perceived with some historical justification as being a vehicle for suppressing both the local Islamic Malay identity and hopes of rekindling autonomy,⁸⁶ and have been on the frontline of attack since the first day of the five-year insurgency.

When the insurgency began on 4 January 2004, 50 armed men stormed the weapons depot of the Fourth Engineering Battalion in Narathiwat Province and simultaneously 20 schools and three police posts were burned down.⁸⁷ With the explosives and guns looted from the depot, the rebels began a series of shootings, bombings and arson attacks across the southern border provinces. By 27 January, nearly 700 schools out of 925 across the southern border provinces had to be shut down temporarily.⁸⁸

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

86 This impression was not alleviated when the Prime Minister introduced a lottery scheme to provide scholarships for pupils in the region, not realizing that lotteries are banned as a form of gambling in Islam.

87 Human Rights Watch (HRW), *“It Was Like Suddenly My Son No Longer Existed”: Enforced Disappearances in Thailand’s Southern Border Provinces*, HRW report 19, no. 5(C) (New York: HRW, 2007), 1.

88 HRW, *No One Is Safe: Insurgent Attacks on Civilians in Thailand’s Southern Border Provinces*, HRW report 19, 13 (C) (New York: HRW, 2007), 73.

Since then, the threat to schools has been made more explicit. According to Human Rights Watch, a leaflet found near a government school that had been burned down in May 2007 said:

Warning! To all Patani⁸⁹ Muslims

Now Patani Muslims are at war with the occupying forces of Siamese infidels. You must be aware that our attacks on the symbols of their occupying forces – such as burning of schools – are carried out to completely destroy the Siamese infidels’ rule. You are warned not to send your children to their schools. They will convert your children, and take away their awareness as Patani Muslims. You must send your children to *ponoh*⁹⁰. You are warned not to cooperate with and not to help – by providing money or labour – the occupying forces of Siamese infidels to rebuild their schools. Any assistant to the occupying forces of Siamese infidels is a sin, and will be severely punished.⁹¹

Some teachers are targeted in reprisals for alleged abuses by Thai armed forces or police, Human Rights Watch reports. An attack in which gunmen opened fire on and seriously injured four teachers driving home in a pick-up truck from Ben Luemu School in Yala’s Krong Penang District was preceded by warnings from militants that they would kill teachers in revenge for the murder of their leader Ustadz⁹² Hamayidin, whom they believed had been assassinated by soldiers. Villagers found leaflets near the intersection where the attack happened, which were written in Thai and said: “You killed our Ustadz, we kill your innocent teachers”.⁹³ Sometimes, teachers are held hostage as a means of pressing the Thai authorities to release arrested militants.

Mirroring the use of government schools to promote assimilation, the private Malay Muslim schools are alleged to have been turned into their own vehicle for recruiting child militants, with pupils being urged by teachers to defend their ethnic and religious identity.⁹⁴

There are an estimated 1,000 *pondok* (traditional madrasa) schools in the south, where 80 per cent of the population are Muslim and speak Malay, not Thai.

“Recruiters appeal to a sense of Malay nationalism and pride in the old Pattani sultanate,” says Rungrawee Chalermripinyorat, ICG’s Thailand analyst. “They tell

89 ‘Patani’ is the original Jawi spelling, used by Malays, of ‘Pattani’.

90 ‘Ponoh’ are Muslim schools.

91 This leaflet is held on file by Human Rights Watch and is reproduced in their report HRW, *No One is Safe*.

92 ‘Ustadz’ means Islamic teacher.

93 HRW, *No One is Safe*.

94 International Crisis Group (ICG), *Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand*, Asia Report no. 170 (June 22, 2009).

students in these schools that it is the duty of every Muslim to take back their land from the Buddhist infidels".⁹⁵

In 2009, the government estimated that 3,000 violent militants were terrorizing the 1.7 million people in the southern provinces.⁹⁶

Those under 18 are mostly given roles such as spying, arson and spray-painting "Free Patani" on roads.⁹⁷

At the same time, vigilante groups and rogue elements of the Thai security forces have been accused of targeting mosques and Muslim schools for revenge killings, which in turn may further fuel the cycle of violence and encourages enlistment of young Malays. The spike in attacks on schools in Thailand in June 2009 may have been triggered by the killing of 11 Muslims while they were praying in a mosque in Narathiwat on 9 June, suggesting the motive was revenge.

The gender motive in attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan is underlined by formal and written threats from the Taliban. When Fatema⁹⁸, a former director of education in a province with 480 schools in Afghanistan, attended the launch of *Education under Attack* in New York in November 2007, she brought with her a handful of written death threats received by herself and other officials, headteachers and teachers. One demanded: "Close schools for girls... it is the Islamic duty not to continue with those schools"; others were vaguer about the motive: "I have a request that you stop doing this work... If you continue I will kidnap you, take you in a car and kill you". This could have referred to the work of running girls' schools or any schools. Similarly,



© Save the Children/ Jean Chung

Rohela, 13, left, and her sister, Sokhaila, 14, study in their house in Shomali Plain, Afghanistan, in 2006. The sisters used to attend the Nahare Balla School, funded by Save the Children, but gave up last August due to strong opposition from their oldest brother. There is no female teacher in the school, and some girls like these sisters have left the school because of the lack of separate classes and of female teachers. The sisters study twice a day for an hour each in their house.

95 ICG, "Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand," media release, June 22, 2009.

96 Fleming, "Ethnic Violence Spreads in Thailand."

97 ICG, *Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand*.

98 Full name withheld for her protection.

one signed by the office of Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader, said: "If [sic] continue with schools you have not reason to complain for what happens to you".

But the reality shown by data is that while girls' education is disproportionately targeted, mixed and boys' education is also targeted, suggesting multiple motives for attacks. The CARE/World Bank study found 40 per cent of schools attacked in Afghanistan were girls' schools, 32 per cent were mixed schools and 28 per cent were boys' schools.⁹⁹ Responses in the study's field survey appeared to show that girls' schools were more likely to be attacked when the attackers were members of the armed opposition or internal community members, whereas criminal groups appear to attack boys' schools more frequently than those of girls. This may be because criminal groups do not discriminate between girls' and boys' schools and because there are more of the latter.¹⁰⁰ The study also found that the content of some night letters was directed at education itself or at schools as part of the government, for instance, mentioning that teachers should stop taking salaries paid by the government.¹⁰¹

In Swat District, of Pakistan, government figures show that 116 girls' schools were destroyed or damaged from 2007 to March 2009, but 56 boys' schools were also targeted.¹⁰²

	LRA initiated attacks	Attacks on LRA	LRA killed	LRA arrested	People killed by LRA	Abducted by LRA
JAN 09	26	14	51	74	62	6
FEB 09	24	4	6	19	53	36
MAR 09	33	5	10	1	62	501
APR 09	12	4	14	3	6	39
MAY 09	12	11	28	18	7	30

LRA-related attacks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Source: MONUC 2009.

The raiding of schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is heavily driven by the need to recruit personnel or provide shelter for troops, but the motives for other attacks on schools are disparate. According to MONUC, eight schools were attacked after December 2008 because of LRA leader Joseph Kony's order that his military abduct and integrate 1,000 new persons, aged 25 and below, to reinforce

99 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009), 33.

100 Ibid., 53.

101 Ibid., 36.

102 Figures supplied by Executive District Officer, Elementary and Secondary Education, Swat.

the guerrilla army's capacity. The table above shows the LRA-related attacks between January and May 2009 with a massive increase in abductions in May.¹⁰³

"When the armed groups attack the schools, the motive is normally recruitment," says Sayo Aoki, a former UNICEF education specialist in Goma. "Schools are targeted for forced recruitment because of the certainty of finding a large number of people in one location".¹⁰⁴

Attacks on schools and schoolchildren are not perceived as targeted attacks on education, but as part of widespread violence in the eastern part of the country.

In November and December 2008, CNDP rebels controlling Rutsuru forced the population to open schools that had been closed due to insecurity and parents' fears for their children's safety. Parents were worried that their children might be forcibly recruited at school or en route, or become separated in fleeing an attack. Displaced teachers were forced to return to the schools to teach in breach of the Geneva Convention.

"CNDP is known to be media savvy," says Aoki, "and it is understood that they aimed to transmit the image that everything was under control by showing the world's media the 'normal situation' symbolized by children in schools".¹⁰⁵

Israel has said its motive for bombing various educational institutions in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead was to eliminate threats of attack. It maintains its forces bombed the Islamic University of Gaza science laboratory on 29 December 2008 because it was being used as a "research and development centre for Hamas weapons", though no evidence was produced for the claim.¹⁰⁶

"The government buildings are a place where financial, logistical and human resources serve to support terror," Captain Benjamin Rutland, a spokesman for the Israeli military, told the *New York Times*. "Much of the [Hamas] government is involved in the active support and planning of terror".¹⁰⁷

In a public statement in October 2006, the Maoists in Chhattisgarh State, India, defended their destruction of schools with the following statement:

As for destroying schools used by the CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force, a state-controlled paramilitary police force] as their camps, neither the people nor our Party think it is wrong. The schools, once they are occupied by these

103 According to UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office- Goma.

104 Sayo Aoki, interview with the author, July 2009.

105 Ethan Bronner, "Is the Real Target Hamas Rule?" *New York Times*, January 3, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/04/world/middleeast/04assess.html?scp=3&sq=Gaza+university+&st=nyt>.

106 *The Economist*, "The Struggle for Gaza: Where Will It End?" January 8, 2009, 22-24.

107 Bronner, "Is the Real Target Hamas Rule?"

forces, are transformed into torture chambers and concentration camps and there is no hope that they will once again be used as schools in the near future.... Education of the *adivasis* [tribal communities] is not affected by destruction of school buildings used by the security forces but by the destruction of entire villages (up to 900 villages had been uprooted since June 2005) by the state police, paramilitary forces and Salwa Judum *goondas* [gangs] with active police support.¹⁰⁸

■ Motives for attacking higher education

The Scholar Rescue Fund's survey¹⁰⁹ of 847 applicants and 140 recipients of rescue grants for persecuted scholars has provided perhaps the first detailed global analysis of the motives behind attacks on higher education, although only drawing on information from applicants for its own funds. The study covers a range of threats – from harassment and dismissal to violent attacks, arbitrary arrest, torture and assassination.

It divides motives for persecuting academics into four groups. These are:

1. Political activities such as rejecting academic politicization, being involved with an opposition party, advocating political reform or the threat of attack by parties to conflict.
2. Studying or exposing crimes by government or other actors; engagement with foreign entities, for instance, via presenting papers abroad or that will be read abroad; and involvement in human rights activities inside or outside their country.
3. Religious or ethnic identity or gender, including being targeted for one's origins, or for research about minority groups or religion.

108 Ganapathi, "Maoist Reply to the Independent Citizen Initiative on Dantewada," October 10, 2006, <http://www.cgnet.in/N1/maoistreplytoici/view?searchterm=reply> (accessed February 20, 2008), para. 5, as reproduced in HRW, "*Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime*": Government, Vigilante, and Naxalite Abuses in India's Chhattisgarh State (New York: HRW, 2008).

109 Henry G. Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2009).

4. High visibility during times of conflict, for instance most published scholars were targeted in Iraq; or research related to culturally-sensitive issues such as HIV & AIDS.¹¹⁰

In relation to political activities, for instance, in Chad, government agents threw a grenade at a scholar who had researched and written about a past repressive regime, causing severe injuries. In Bangladesh, a senior law professor was assassinated for refusing to make political appointments as ordered by the prime minister's office.¹¹¹

In relation to exposing crime, attempts were made to assassinate an award-winning Colombian academic and journalist for articles linking members of the government and local militias with illicit drug traffickers.¹¹² In Turkey, the government imprisoned and brought 41 separate charges against an academic who investigated torture cases.¹¹³

In relation to engaging with the wider academic world, in Iran, a scholar with numerous human rights awards was imprisoned after returning from a conference in Berlin.¹¹⁴

Regarding the promotion of human rights, an academic was detained and threatened with violence in Zimbabwe for teaching courses on human rights in South Africa.¹¹⁵

In relation to sensitivity over issues concerning ethnicity, a scholar in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was held without trial for eight months and tortured for his research on ethnic conflict in the Katanga region.¹¹⁶ In Ethiopia, a scholar serving as president of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association was one of 123 members charged with treason and the intention to commit genocide, because they refused to divide the union along ethnic lines.¹¹⁷ A law scholar in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was repeatedly threatened and harassed by soldiers for continuing to carry out research showing that the Batwa, his own ethnic group, were being systematically persecuted by the government.¹¹⁸

Numerous Iraqi academics were murdered, it appears, because they were Shia or Sunni and their campuses were controlled by the opposing sect.¹¹⁹

110 Ibid., 40-45.

111 Ibid., 40.

112 Ibid., 35.

113 Ibid., 36.

114 Ibid., 36.

115 Ibid., 42.

116 Ibid., 36.

117 Ibid., 41; and Gomoraw Kassa, interview for Teachers' Television, *Persecuted Teachers* (February 2008), documentary video.

118 Jarecki and Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World*, 38.

119 Ibid., 43; and Brendan O'Malley, "Baghdad Battles for Better Education," *South China Morning Post*, January 17, 2009.

In relation to high visibility in times of conflict, in Spain, ETA separatists used a car bomb to try to assassinate an academic for urging the organization to pursue a political solution via non-violent means.¹²⁰ A Palestinian scholar who criticized the use of suicide bombers and the use of violence by Israeli and Palestinian forces was threatened with the destruction of his archive.¹²¹

Robert Quinn, founder and Executive Director of Scholars at Risk, another foundation which provides sanctuary to threatened academics, says many of the cases his organization deals with, particularly concerning human rights research, are straight power challenges. The researchers are simply doing appropriate work but it has consequences for the legitimacy of the power structure that is in place. There are other cases involving the search for deeper knowledge, and the implications of such knowledge for social, cultural and political frameworks.¹²² For example, after presenting papers on AIDS and human sexuality, a Moroccan professor of sociology repeatedly received death threats, made both by the government, which wanted to stifle the findings, and by religious conservatives, offended by the mere subject matter of the study.¹²³

The SRF study authors conclude that there is no single motivation for attacks on academics. Multiple factors are usually involved, but what the cases have in common is that the persecuted scholar's academic works are viewed by his or her government or by non-governmental actors as a threat. The position of academics and their work are seen as a source of power that provides them with prestige, international contacts and the ability to influence students. As Jarecki and Kaisth argue:

The oppressors – whoever they may be and whatever their reasons – want to interfere with the scholar's independence and to obtain his or her support for a specific viewpoint or, at the very least, to remain silent. The methods of oppression differ, but the goals are similar: to create an environment in which open scholarship or debate is not just discouraged but actively opposed, perhaps even in a way that threatens a scholar's job, freedom or life.

As has been true throughout history, from the Byzantine Empire through to the Nazi period and now to the persecution of academics in Iraq, silencing scholars is about gaining power and control, preventing unwanted opinions from being expressed, unwanted languages from being spoken, and an unwanted gender (women) or nationality from expressing their views.¹²⁴

120 Jarecki and Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World*, 41.

121 Ibid., 36.

122 Robert Quinn, telephone interview with the author, September 2009.

123 Jarecki and Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World*, 45.

124 Ibid., 45.

■ Motives for attacking aid workers

Some internationally reported cases of education aid workers being killed or kidnapped have highlighted a worrying increase in the targeting of aid workers in general, but disparate motives have been suggested.

One such incident was the death of Jacqueline Kirk, a prominent advocate for improving the quality of education in emergencies, and her colleagues Mohammad Aimal, Shirley Case and Nicole Dial while working for the International Rescue Committee in Afghanistan. They were ambushed by five gunmen in Logar Province. The Taliban described them as foreign spies and the two marked IRC vehicles they attacked as belonging to “foreign invader forces”.

According to the BBC, aid agencies are frequently targeted in Afghanistan, with convoys attacked and staff abducted or killed: 19 aid workers were killed in 2008 as of 13 August, more than in the whole of 2007. There were an estimated 84 attacks on aid agencies from 1 January to 13 August 2008.¹²⁵

Possible motives for Taliban attacks on education aid workers specifically may include ideological opposition to their work in supporting the education of girls or education in general. But they may also be carried out to punish those who “collaborate with the enemy” by delivering aid.

There is also a trend in both Afghanistan and Somalia for armed groups and criminals to collude to seize resources, remove a perceived threat to control over a local area or make a political show of strength.¹²⁶

Lawlessness and banditry may also be factors: in Sudan, they are thought to be the most common cause of attack. Kidnapping of aid workers increased by 350 per cent from 2006 to 2009.¹²⁷

Violent incidents against aid workers, including killing, kidnapping and armed attacks, have increased sharply since 2006, particularly for international NGO staff and UN local contractors, with 60 per cent of violent incidents occurring in Sudan (Darfur), Afghanistan and Somalia, according to the Aid Worker Security Database, created by the Center on International Cooperation in New York and the Overseas Development

125 BBC, “Aid Women Killed in Afghanistan,” August 13, 2008.

126 Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer, and Victoria DiDomenico, “Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update; Trends in Violence Against Aid Workers and the Operational Response,” *Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Policy Brief 34* (April 2009), 5.

127 *Ibid.*, 4.

Institute in London.¹²⁸ A total of 260 humanitarian aid workers were killed, kidnapped or seriously injured in violent attacks in 2008 and the relative number of attacks per number of aid workers increased by 61 per cent. The number of incidents rose from 63 in 2003 and 2004 to 75 in 2005, 106 in 2006, 119 in 2007 and 155 in 2008. In the past three years, there has been a sharp increase in the percentage of international staff killed, while the percentage of national staff killed has continued to increase.

Three out of four attacks occurred in just seven countries (Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Chad, Iraq and Pakistan). It is not known how many were attacks on education aid workers, although it is known that such attacks were not confined to these states. For instance, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2007, the convoy of an international NGO, AVSI, delivering educational materials was ambushed; in October 2008, the office of the IRC, an active education partner, was attacked; and in December 2008, an education aid worker in Rutsuru was shot dead.¹²⁹

Mario Novelli, Senior Lecturer in International Development Studies at the University of Amsterdam, suggests that the apparent increase in reported killings of education aid workers and aid workers in general should be viewed in the context of a trend in aid giving towards addressing the effects of conflict and the weaknesses of fragile states. He points to a sharp rise in the percentage of OECD/Development Assistance Committee aid going to conflict-affected or fragile states, from 9.3 per cent in 2000 to 38.4 per cent in 2007, and an increasing acceptance of the importance of education in conflict situations, partly fuelled by the worldwide drive to achieve Education for All.¹³⁰

Aid Worker Security Database figures suggest that, among the 45 per cent of incidents where the motive was known, the share of incidents known to have been politically motivated has risen from 29 per cent in 2003 to 39 per cent in 2008.

In Afghanistan in particular, there has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of attacks attributed to armed opposition groups, rising from 39 per cent in 2007 to 65 per cent in 2008.

Stoddard, Harmer and DiDomenico posit that "...aid organizations are being attacked not just because they are perceived to be cooperating with Western political actors, but because they are perceived as wholly a part of the Western agenda". They report that a few years ago, locals would have made distinctions between those agencies

128 Ibid., 11.

129 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office- Goma.

130 Mario Novelli, "Attacks on Humanitarian and Development Education Workers: A Preliminary Enquiry" (presentation, UNESCO international expert seminar *Protecting Education from Attack*, Paris, September 28, 2009).

which were and those agencies which were *not* working with the coalition force's Provincial Reconstruction Teams – which involved coalition military personnel and were used to build or repair schools among other activities. Now, all Western-based agencies are judged as partisan, except ICRC.¹³¹

By contrast, ICRC victim rates have declined over the past few years, at the same time as it has adapted its security strategy to include talking to potential sources of threat and emphasizing its independence and neutrality.¹³²

Novelli argues that both the politicization and militarization of development are behind the increase in attacks.¹³³ Six of the seven worst-affected states in 2006-2008 were predominantly Muslim countries and many of the aid organizations affected were Western-based, even if most of their aid workers are local nationals. Increasingly, the work of providing education is being reconceptualized as part of counter-insurgency strategies, and the blurring of lines between Western aid and military operations, as generals call for development investment to win over hearts and minds, has created new dangers for aid workers.

■ Case studies

Girls' schools blasted in Pakistan

The Taliban in Swat Valley, Pakistan, left no ambiguity about their intent to target girls' education. In a statement made in mosques and broadcast on illegal radio stations in late December 2008, they ordered the closure of all girls' schools and set a deadline of 15 January. With the order came a chilling warning: any schools which continued to provide classes for girls would be blown up, and any girls who ventured to lessons would be attacked.¹³⁴ They could expect the same fate as girls in Afghanistan who had acid thrown in their faces.¹³⁵

Maulana Fazlullah, the radical cleric who led the Taliban in Swat, frequently used his sermons to urge parents not to send their daughters to schools, which "inculcate western values" and lead girls down a wayward path.¹³⁶

131 Stoddard, Harmer, and DiDomenico, *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments*, 6.

132 Ibid.

133 Novelli, "Attacks on Humanitarian and Development Education Workers."

134 Zahid Hussain, "Islamic Militants Threaten to Blow Up Girls' Schools If They Refuse to Close," *The Times*, December 26, 2008.

135 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Militants Announce Ban on Girls' Education in Swat," January 1, 2009.

136 Hussain, "Islamic Militants Threaten to Blow Up Girls' Schools."

A spokesman for the Taliban, Muslim Khan, said no girls' schools would be allowed to open until the Army withdrew from the Swat Valley and Sharia Law was imposed. He told AP: "These schools are being run under a system introduced by the British and promote obscenity and vulgarity in society".¹³⁷

The seriousness of the warning was underlined by the fact that the Taliban had attacked around 125 schools in the previous year. Enrolment of girls had already fallen from 120,000 in 2007 to 50,000.¹³⁸

"It is feared that the extremists will carry out their threats," Ibrash Pasha, provincial coordinator of the Pakistan Coalition for Education, told IRIN. "Convincing parents to send their children, especially the girl child, to school was already an uphill task. Years of hard work put into mobilizing rural communities to educate their girls have come to nought".¹³⁹

In response to the order, education officials and school administrators announced that 900 schools – 500 public schools and 400 private schools, including 20 colleges – would close, affecting 125,000 students. Nevertheless, on the day after the deadline, a government girls' school was blown up in a suburb of Mingora, the valley's commercial capital.¹⁴⁰



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On 16 July 2009, a government high school was partly destroyed in Qambar Village in Swat Valley, in North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Pakistan. Ongoing insecurity remains a threat, including for humanitarian workers.

Swat, an idyllic mountainous valley once popular as a holiday destination, had begun to slip out of government control two years earlier. During the fighting since then – as a result of which 1,200 people died and 500,000 fled the area – the Taliban gradually gained control over the valley. As they did so, they entrenched their policy of banning girls from school by burning and bombing schools and spreading propaganda alleging that educating girls was anti-Islamic.

Every evening on the local radio, residents were told they were good Muslims if they stopped their daughters

137 The Independent, "Taliban Restrict Women's Education in Pakistan," January 18, 2009.

138 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Swat Militants Driving Girls Out of School," January 20, 2009.

139 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Militants Announce Ban on Girls' Education in Swat," January 1, 2009.

140 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Government Assurances of Swat Schools Fall on Deaf Ears," January 26, 2009.

going to school. The names of girls who had stopped going to school were broadcast, and listeners were told that girls who continued to attend classes would go to hell.

Ahmed Ali, 52, a father of three girls, told IRIN: “We can’t risk sending our daughters to school. The Taliban do what they say. I have seen dead bodies – beheaded bodies, I don’t want to be made an example of”.¹⁴¹

The ban on girls’ schools caused a public outcry. The managers of private schools appealed to the militants to reverse it in the interests of thousands of students and hundreds of female teachers, many of whom were the sole earners in their family.

In late January, the Taliban softened their official stance, allowing girls to go to school up to fourth grade but maintaining their threat beyond it.¹⁴²

“I am too terrified to even send my daughter to a private school,” Qudsia Bibi, a parent of a 15-year-old girl, from a village near Matta, Swat, told IRIN. “I will try and teach her at home”.¹⁴³

On 6 February 2009, Pakistan attempted to defuse the Swat conflict by conceding to the Taliban’s demand to implement Sharia Law in Malakand, the region that includes Swat Valley, in return for a ceasefire. Part of the agreement included the concession that schools would be allowed to re-open.¹⁴⁴

Swat soon resembled Afghanistan under Taliban rule before their defeat in 2001. In the towns, Talibs in black turbans and wielding sticks ensured Sharia Law was already being implemented. Black flags fluttered over buildings. Women were ordered to wear burkhas, forbidden from going to marketplaces or leaving the house unaccompanied by a man, and thrashed if inappropriately dressed; music was banned from shops; men faced reprisals if they let their wives go to work; and girls older than 13 were banned from going to school.¹⁴⁵

The most shocking case of Taliban justice was that of a teacher – a widow supporting three children – being labelled a prostitute and killed by militants for refusing to give

141 Ibid.

142 Delawar Jan, “400 Private Schools in Swat Shut Down Girls’ Classes,” *The News*, January 16, 2009; and Thaindian News, “Pakistan Posts Army at Swat Schools,” January 25, 2009, http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/pakistan-posts-army-at-swat-schools_100146974.html.

143 IRIN News, “Pakistan: Swat Militants Driving Girls Out of School.”

144 Saeed Shah, “Pakistan Imposes Islamic Law in Taliban Stronghold,” *The Guardian*, February 15, 2009; and Jason Burke, “Taliban Agrees ‘Permanent Ceasefire’ in War-torn Valley,” *The Observer*, February 22, 2009.

145 Stuart Ramsay, “Pakistani Region Where The Brutal Taleban Have Taken Control,” *The Times*, March 26, 2006.

up her job.¹⁴⁶ Her story was told to journalist Hamid Mir by a religious teacher who tried to help her. When neighbours in the village of Kuzah Bandai warned her that women were prohibited from leaving the home without good reason, she said she could not let her children starve and relocated to her sister's house in Mingora, where she continued working at a private school. When further complaints were made to her principal, she enlisted the help of a madrasa teacher who had taught members of the Taliban. He pleaded her case with the local commander, but was relieved from his post and banished from Swat for his efforts. The female teacher was then taken, forced to wear the ankle bells of a prostitute, and killed.¹⁴⁷

The plight of teachers and girl students was raised internationally by Koïchiro Matsuura, then Director-General of UNESCO. He expressed concern that attacks had been striking educational institutions, teaching staff and students for months. Girls' schools had been particularly targeted, and the Taliban and the Army had set up military posts in school buildings. Only an agreement upholding the government's commitment to Education for All, including facilitating girls' access to education, would reassure parents. "A strong signal must be sent, so that everyone can once more benefit from education, which is a determining factor for their future and the future of the country," he said.¹⁴⁸

By late April, the schools that had not been bombed had theoretically re-opened under the terms of the ceasefire agreement.¹⁴⁹ But many teachers had fled the region and parents remained afraid to send their daughters to school, for fear they might be attacked.

At this time, the Pakistani army, under pressure from the US and public opposition to its appeasement of the Taliban, and confronted by Taliban incursions in the districts neighbouring Swat, Dir and Buner, launched a full-scale offensive to drive Taliban insurgents out of Swat Valley.

The fighting displaced up to two million people, but by late May, as the Army encircled Taliban strongholds, Taliban fighters remained encamped in schools and offices in Mingora.¹⁵⁰

The Army eventually won the war. The immediate cost to education of the Taliban uprising and subsequent fighting was the destruction or damaging of 356 schools.

146 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Swat Militants Driving Girls Out of School."

147 Hamid Mir, "Swat – Valley of Horror and Terror," *The News*, January 13, 2009.

148 UNESCO, "Director-General Expresses Deep Concern About Girls' Education in Swat Valley: 'The Future of an Entire Country is Taken Hostage'," April 1, 2009.

149 Declan Walsh, "Taliban Reaches Beyond Swat Valley in Pakistan," *The Guardian*, April 25, 2009.

150 Declan Walsh, "Pakistani Army Claims Taliban's Elimination in Swat Valley Imminent," *The Guardian*, May 22, 2009.

The long-term cost of teachers and girls being driven away from classes has yet to be measured.¹⁵¹

Academic escapes death threats in Zimbabwe

For five years, Tompson Makahamadze kept his head down and moved jobs to keep out of trouble because as a teacher he did not want to expose himself to the pressures of Robert Mugabe's regime.

Makahamadze had joined the opposition Movement for Democratic Change in 1999 as a final-year student at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare. He saw it as a vibrant party, with many young people involved and one that respected the aspirations of academics and professionals.

"But, in Zimbabwe, aligning yourself with the opposition is as good as applying for a death sentence," he says.

He moved from his first job in a secondary school in Buhera District, Manyika Province, home of opposition leader Morgan Tsvangarai, after three of his colleagues were abducted. He left his second job, teaching sociology and divinity at a secondary school in Renco, a rural town in Masvingo Province, when youth militia began targeting young people from colleges and universities.

Then in 2005 he was offered a job at the Great Zimbabwe University (GZU), just outside Masvingo town, where the mantra is "You publish or you perish" and his life changed. He began writing about the problems affecting the people of the country and tried to look for solutions through his academic work.

At GZU, Makahamadze was teaching courses in New Testament studies and New Testament Greek and wrote about social and religious issues, including the impact of forced slum clearances on the Johane Morange Apostolic Church, Adventist Christian perceptions of the 2008 general election, the impact of HIV & AIDS on the Adventist Church, and the role of traditional leaders in fostering democracy and social justice.

Jointly with Takavafira Zhou, a GZU history lecturer (and President of the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe), he wrote a paper on the leadership of Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's president, who is also chancellor of GZU. The paper critically examined the views of supporters and opponents of Mugabe, and argued that his regime was tyrannical and oppressive and had undermined the spread of democracy in the world

151 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Schools in Swat Re-open," August 3, 2009.

by legitimizing brutality via the ballot box. It concluded that Mugabe was a liability. Makahamadze presented it at the university in November 2007.

“The constitution of Zimbabwe clearly states that Zimbabweans are free to express themselves and we believe that we should express ourselves as scholars,” he says.

But the title of the paper drew him to the attention of ZANU-PF officials, war veterans and Green Bombers (ZANU-PF youth militia) in Masvingo.

Academic freedom is limited in a country where universities are populated by large numbers of Green Bombers and infiltrated by government intelligence (CIO) officers who monitor dissent.

The two academics were reported to the vice chancellor, who summoned them separately to find out if a secret organization was behind their work. Makahamadze was warned to be careful or he would find himself in “Siberia”. He interpreted this to mean that he would disappear, never to be seen again, as had happened to a number of his friends.

In fact, Zhou, along with eight other PTUZ members, was later beaten and tortured in ZANU-PF offices in Harare in February 2008. In a chamber with bloodstained walls, they were beaten with wooden logs and iron bars by teams of men. Two of the victims, who were female, were sexually abused, with logs forced into their genital area.¹⁵²

When Mugabe campaigned openly in the March 2008 presidential election, Makahamadze thought he had nothing to fear, that Mugabe would be swept away in the democratic vote. But ZANU-PF withheld the results to force a run-off, amid widespread allegations of vote rigging, and the war veterans and the youth militia were ordered by the army to collect names of those who had openly opposed Mugabe.

In September 2008, Makahamadze learned from a reliable source that war veterans who had attended the presentation of his paper had put his name on a hit list of opponents to be eliminated. He was warned to save himself before it was too late.

“Those on the list were supposed to be killed,” he says. “They wanted to silence the opposition parties and wait for the next election”.

152 Anna Bruce-Lockhart, “Tortured by Mugabe’s Men,” *The Guardian Weekly*, June 24, 2008.

There was no time to tell his wife and young child what he was about to do. Makahamadze and seven others who feared for their lives, including four teachers, decided to flee to South Africa.

“I couldn’t believe that I was about to lose my life,” he says. “I thought of my family, my friends from school and all of my achievements. I’d lost hope. It felt like I was dead”.

Travelling at night under the cover of darkness, and hiding by day, they walked 200km before hitching a lift to the South African border.

Meanwhile, back home, the militia came looking for him, burned down his house, seized his wife and child and took them to a war veterans’ base. She was questioned about his whereabouts, but knew nothing.

The escapees found a hole in the electric fence dividing Zimbabwe and South Africa near Beitbridge border post and crossed the Limpopo River on foot by linking hands to avoid being swept away.

Makahamadze made his way to Port Elizabeth, where he worked in the orchards, until he heard about the Scholar Rescue Fund, run by the New York-based Institute of International Education, which provides grants for endangered scholars to relocate to institutions in safe countries.

He had to travel into Port Elizabeth to use the Internet but eventually IIE awarded him a fellowship and he joined Chatham University, Pittsburgh, in the United States, where he now teaches modules in international studies about African geopolitics, domestic violence and the relationship between culture and HIV/AIDS prevalence.

Makahamadze is in no doubt that this was an attack on education.

“I’m an academic and I know I was targeted specifically because of the kind of papers I was writing,” he says. “I wrote another one about the ruinous effects of Operation Muratsvimba – which targeted opposition members – on defenceless people, particularly Johane Marange Apostolic Church. And that’s education.

“In Zimbabwe, if you are in any education and you don’t dance to the tune of the ruling party, it means you are an enemy of the state and you can be abducted,” he says.¹⁵³

153 Tompson Makahamadze, interview with the author, November 2009.

Schools demolished to topple Gaza regime

On 29 December 2008, the third day of Israel's operation against Hamas, whose forces had been firing rockets into Israeli territory from Gaza, Brigadier General Dan Harel, the Israeli Deputy Chief of Staff, promised a new strategy: to destroy every building linked to Hamas' rule in Gaza until the Islamist movement was toppled from power.

"After this operation there will not be a single Hamas building left standing in Gaza," he said. "We are hitting not only terrorists and launchers, but also the whole Hamas Government and all its wings. We are hitting government buildings, production factories, security wings and more".¹⁵⁴

Among the targets were dozens of universities and schools, some of them sheltering IDPs.

It seemed as though the strategy was already being implemented. On 27 December 2008, eight UNRWA students were killed and 19 wounded while waiting for a UN bus after leaving the Gaza Training College, next door to UNRWA headquarters.¹⁵⁵ On 28 December 2008, an Israeli air strike destroyed the American International School in Gaza, killing the guard.¹⁵⁶

On the same day that Harel made his statement, the Islamic University in Gaza was bombed, destroying the science block, library and other buildings.¹⁵⁷ The Ministry of Education building was also reportedly hit twice.

On 5 January 2009, a co-educational UNRWA-operated school in Shati camp in Gaza was also hit, killing three people.¹⁵⁸ On 6 January, Israeli forces attacked three UNRWA-run schools in Gaza, killing more than 46 civilians.

In the worst incident, three Israeli tank artillery shells landed approximately ten yards from the UNRWA-operated al Fakhura School, a girls' preparatory school in the Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza, where 350 people had taken shelter.¹⁵⁹ Thirty people were killed and 55

154 The Times, "Israel Vows to Sweep Hamas from Power," December 30, 2008.

155 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Protection of Civilians Weekly Report – 291," December 24-31, 2008.

156 Ameera Ahmad and Ed Vulliamy, "In Gaza, the Schools Are Dying Too," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2009; and OCHA, "Gaza Humanitarian Situation Report," January 3, 2009.

157 James Hilder, "Hamas Braced as Israel Pledges an All-out War to Topple Regime," *The Times*, December 30, 2008.

158 BBC, "Strike at Gaza School 'Kills 40'," January 7, 2009; and United Nations (UN), "Statement by the Secretary-General on the Strike on United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) School in Gaza," January 6, 2009.

159 BBC, "Strike at Gaza School 'Kills 40'"; and National Public Radio (NPR), "UN Run School in Gaza Hit by Israeli Fire, 40 Dead," January 6, 2009, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=99038800&ps=rs>.

injured by shrapnel spraying both within and outside of the building.¹⁶⁰ They were among 15,000 people being sheltered in 23 schools run by UNRWA. The UN said it had given the Israeli authorities the exact coordinates of UNRWA facilities, precisely to avoid such slaughter.

Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General, said: "I am deeply dismayed that despite these repeated efforts, today's tragedies have ensued. These attacks by Israeli military forces which endanger UN facilities acting as places of refuge are totally unacceptable".¹⁶¹

At the time, Israeli authorities asserted that Hamas was using Gaza schools as sites for launching rocket attacks on Israeli towns, though UN investigators said they had found no evidence to support this claim.¹⁶² Israeli investigators concluded months later that in the al Fakhura incident Israeli troops had instead been attacking a Hamas mortar launching position 80 metres west of the school.¹⁶³

Hours before the al Fakhura attack, three young men, all cousins, died when Israeli forces bombed Asma Elementary School. Israeli investigators later alleged that a terrorist unit was present in the school, preparing to carry out military activities against IDF forces, and that the IDF had not been told that the school, previously closed for nine days, had been re-opened to shelter civilians.¹⁶⁴

However, the shellings were part of a pattern of attacks made on education buildings that destroyed or damaged 302 of them.

A reported 250 students and 15 teachers were killed and hundreds more were injured in military strikes. Some students were injured by shattered glass while taking examinations; others were killed while waiting for the bus home.



The American International School in the city of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, was completely destroyed during Operation Cast Lead. More than 170 schools in Gaza were damaged or destroyed during the hostilities.

160 BBC, "Strike at Gaza School 'Kills 40'"; and UN, "Statement by the Secretary-General on the Strike."

161 Michael Montas, "Highlights of the Noon Briefing- Gaza: Ban-Ki moon Appeals for Immediate Ceasefire After Strikes on UN Schools Sheltering Palestinians," January 6, 2009.

162 Tim McGirk, "UN: No Hamas Fighters in Bombed Gaza School," *Time*, January 7, 2009; BBC, "Strike at Gaza School 'Kills 40'"; and UN, "Statement by the Secretary-General on the Strike."

163 Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Operation in Gaza: Factual and Legal Aspects," July 29, 2009, http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Hamas+war+against+Israel/Operation_in_Gaza-Factual_and_Legal_Aspects.htm.

164 Ibid.

In one of the most dramatic pictures of the war, Mohammed Abed captured three men running for their lives from a UN school in Beit Lahia on 17 January as the burned embers from more than 15 shells, later confirmed as white phosphorous shells fired by Israeli forces, rained down on the three-storey building, leaving plumes of anti-tank smoke in their wake. Two children were killed and 14 people suffered severe burns as the falling phosphorous set the school alight in numerous places and parts of the roof fell in.

A report by Human Rights Watch alleged that the repeated use of air-burst white phosphorous artillery shells by the Israeli Defence Force in Operation Cast Lead, killing and maiming civilians, reflected a “pattern or policy of conduct”, was reckless in a densely populated urban area, and constituted a war crime.¹⁶⁵ The Israeli authorities claimed they were used legitimately in accordance with combat doctrine.

In defence of other attacks on schools, the Israeli forces published photographs marked with the location of alleged rocket launches from the vicinity of three school buildings, including two from inside a school compound and seven from an adjacent road or building.¹⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch also reported that Hamas fighters had fired rockets from bases close to civilian areas, a violation of international humanitarian law.

The long-term effect of the operation on Gaza’s education system was a costly degrading of infrastructure, a loss of teachers to death and injury, and a likely legacy of psychosocial distress or trauma among students and staff.¹⁶⁷

The report of the UN fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict, led by Justice Goldstone, found that both sides had committed serious war crimes which may amount to crimes against humanity; and that Israeli military planners deliberately followed a doctrine that involved the “application of disproportionate force and the causing of great damage and destruction to civilian property and infrastructure, and suffering to civilian populations”.¹⁶⁸

165 Rory McCarthy, “Israel Accused of Indiscriminate Phosphorous Use in Gaza,” *The Guardian*, March 25, 2009.

166 Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “The Operation in Gaza.”

167 Rory McCarthy, “Hamas Accused: Palestinian Groups Face War Crimes Claims,” *The Guardian*, March 24, 2009.

168 UN News Centre, “UN Mission Finds Evidence of War Crimes by Both Sides in Gaza Conflict,” September 15, 2009.

Rape as a tactic of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

"Wherever you are, whoever you are, they can rape you," says Honorata Kizende, 56, recalling the day they came for her.

"I worked for 25 years as a teacher. Most teachers do not get paid so I looked for other jobs. I used to sell food, sugar, for the mining on the weekends. On a Sunday night I was working at the mine and there was an attack.

"They took about ten women and walked us around the forest and turned us around and around. They wanted to make us think we were far away. They walked us for a long time. Until 1.00 a.m. We were hungry. They said they wanted to share dinner. I was dinner.

"Five men were kicking and raping me. They spread me and were raping me. They smashed my eyes and now I have trouble reading. They broke my teeth. They cut my wedding ring off. They said you are the wife of nobody now. You belong to all of us".

Honorata, a school director in North Kivu when she was captured, was kept as a sexual slave for the whole of 2002. Hers is a story of extraordinary brutality, but she is just one of tens of thousands of victims of sexual violence in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which include teachers and girls seized on their way to school.

"They took us from one forest to another. I couldn't stand it," Honorata said. "They called me the Queen, the one they publicly raped. They would put me on a cross, my head near the ground, and rape me one after the other".

Sexual violence is endemic in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where it has become a tactic of war. Experts are at a loss to explain why the problem is so widespread. But according to the UN, in 2006 there were 27,000 reported cases of sexual violence in South Kivu Province alone, despite the presence of 17,000 UN troops in the country.

Nobody knows how many of those violations are carried out against students or teachers.

Between 2007 and 2008, the UN recorded 5,517 cases of sexual violence against children in the conflict areas of Ituri and North and South Kivu, representing 31 per cent of sexual violence victims, according to Human Rights Watch.¹⁶⁹

“Most girls are targeted on their way to or from school, as well as at the market,” says Sayo Aoki, a former UNICEF education specialist in Goma.¹⁷⁰

The violation often leaves women homeless and destitute as hundreds of thousands of men, fearing the stigma of rape, turn their backs on their wives.

“This has to be one of the worst places in the world to be a woman,” Martin Hartberg, a protection adviser in Goma for Oxfam, told IRIN. “It is as if rape has become ingrained into the culture of these armed groups, and it is very difficult to turn that tide without overall security reform in this country”.

A 20-year minimum sentence for rape and sexual attacks was introduced in 2006, but there are few prosecutions.

Joseph Ciza, who helps to run the HEAL Africa hospital for victims of sexual violence in Goma, believes the solution lies in human rights education.

“Everyone must be taught that women have value and human rights,” he told IRIN. “If that happens, then militia commanders can teach it to their recruits, children will grow up knowing that rape is bad, things can change”.¹⁷¹

Honorata escaped from her captors by running away when they were distracted by fighting. She walked 300 kilometres to save herself. But when she got home her family disowned her.

“They said I was violated by Hutus. I had to leave. I found other women in the same situation. We lived together in a house. A few months later there was an attack of Tutsis. They came in our house. They all raped us again”. She wanted to kill herself then, and bled for two weeks. But she was helped by a nun and eventually joined a women’s advocacy organization, Women for Women. Today she is an international women’s rights programme trainer and travels around the country raising awareness of the problem.

169 HRW, “Taking the Next Step: Strengthening the Security Council’s Response to Sexual Violence and Attacks on Education in Armed Conflict,” April 20, 2009.

170 Sayo Aoki, interview with author, June 2009.

171 IRIN News, “DRC: Rape Crisis Set to Worsen Amid Kivu Chaos,” November 19, 2008.

“Many still think rape doesn’t exist,” she says. “I want to give a message to the authorities and internationals, that when you don’t break the silence you become an accomplice”.¹⁷²

Children abducted to fight with arrows and guns in India

Tarrem Kosa¹⁷³ was in class eight when the Naxalites (Maoists) came looking for recruits at his school in Chhattisgarh. They watched him playing sports, saw that he was fit and strong and decided to take him.

“I was studying in an ashram school (government-run residential school) when Naxalites came to my hostel,” he told Human Rights Watch. He was 13 or 14 at the time.

“They took four students from my school, but after 10-12 km the other three were sent away, and only I was kept”.¹⁷⁴

He pleaded with them to let him go back to school because he wanted to study. But for the next three years he was forced to remain a dalam (subgroup) member, taking part in several armed battles with government forces and depending on local villages and schools for food.

First he was trained to use bows and arrows, and then he was given a rifle and trained to plant bombs.

“I used to think of home a lot,” he told Human Rights Watch. “I worried I would never be able to contact my parents. Sometimes I would sit and cry”.¹⁷⁵

Eventually he deserted, but the Naxalites punished him by killing his two younger brothers, beating up his mother and setting fire to their home.

To protect himself, Tarrem surrendered to the auxiliary police. He was still under 18, but worked for them as an informer and joined search operations looking for Naxalites. It made him a wanted man.

172 Honarata’s testimony was supplied by UNICEF – Goma. It was collected during a campaign event in December 2008 for V-Day, the global movement to end violence against women and girls. Honorata is now an activist of V-Day’s Campaign, Stop Rape.

173 This is a pseudonym.

174 HRW, *Dangerous Duty: Children and the Chhattisgarh Conflict* (New York: HRW, 2008), 31-2.

175 Ibid.

Tarrem's story is just one of many child soldiers' experiences told in the Human Rights Watch Report, *Dangerous Duty: Children and the Chhattisgarh Conflict* (2008), which documents the recruitment and use of children by Naxalites, government security forces, including auxiliary police (SPOs), and the Salwa Judum (state militia).

All three are acting in breach of India's commitment to the terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which sets 18 as the minimum age for conscription, forced recruitment or direct participation in conflict. It also places obligations on non-state armed groups not to recruit or use children in hostilities.

In 2008, reports of under-18s being recruited to state anti-insurgency groups in Chhattisgarh were widespread, according to the *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*.

One report said estimates assume 80,000 children are participating directly or indirectly in the conflict, with allegedly 12,000 minors being used by the Salwa Judum and many of the 4,200 SPOs recruited by the Chhattisgarh government suspected to be under 18, according to the Forum for Fact-Finding Documentation and Advocacy.¹⁷⁶ Identifying their age is made difficult by lack of birth registration documents.

In 2006, Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) investigators interviewed nine minor girls in Bangapal relief camp, inside the premises of Bangapal Police Station, Chhattisgarh, who were recruited as SPOs. They told ACHR they were being given training in fighting tactics, including operation of guns and intelligence.¹⁷⁷

In the Naxalite conflict, many children are recruited by Maoists from school either under false pretences, without parental consent, or by force.

"Rebels are conducting a massive drive for child soldiers in their forested hideouts in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, which is close to Andhra Pradesh," said Inspector General Girdhari Nayak of Chhattisgarh's anti-Maoist police operation in May 2008.¹⁷⁸

"It's a forced recruitment. Rebels are carrying away children without their parents' consent and are training them to handle even sophisticated weapons and use them for attacks on civilians and police installations.

176 Ueli Zemp and Subash Mohapatra, "Child Soldiers in Chhattisgarh: Issues, Challenges and FFDA's Response," http://www.otherindia.org/dev/images/stories/feda_child.pdf.

177 ACHR, *The Adivasis of Chhattisgarh: Victims of the Naxalite Movement and Salwa Judum Campaign* (New Delhi: ACHR, 2006).

178 Zeenews.com, "Maoists Forcibly Recruiting Child Soldiers in Chhattisgarh," May 7, 2008.

“We have reports that insurgents have been forcibly taking away tribal (adivasi) boys and girls from schools in poverty-stricken hamlets of the Bastar region,” he added.

One male SPO, who was under age 18 at the time of a 2007 anti-Naxalite combing operation in Maraiguda, said he was ordered to open fire on a group of children wearing school uniforms.¹⁷⁹

Poosam Kanya, a former resident of Errabore camp, interviewed by Human Rights Watch in December 2007, said police asked him to become an SPO but he refused because he did not want to shoot and kill people. “They did not ask me how old I was when they asked me to become an SPO. They do not ask anyone how old they are. Even 14-year-olds can become SPOs if the police want them to. There are boys and girls who hold rifles and the rifles are bigger than them”.¹⁸⁰

According to Human Rights Watch, the auxiliary police have used children as guards, while Salwa Judum has reportedly used them in violent raids on local villages.

One journalist who visited the site of a Naxalite attack on a police outpost in Rani Bodli in March 2007, in which up to 55 police including 27 SPOs were killed, told Human Rights Watch he saw the bodies of many SPOs and estimated that around ten appeared to be under 18 years old.¹⁸¹

Nobody knows how many children are being used to gather intelligence, act as guards, make and plant landmines and explosives, and fight in the war between Maoist rebels and the security forces of Chhattisgarh State. But there is a strong case for better monitoring to gauge the scale of the problem.

179 HRW, *Dangerous Duty*, 43.

180 *Ibid.*, 4. Poosam Kanya is a pseudonym.

181 *Ibid.*, 42.

7. The impact on education provision, development and fragility

While the physical short-term consequences of attacks on education are obvious but rarely reported, the long-term psychological, financial, qualitative and ideological effects on the education system and the development of regions and countries are barely examined at all.

Attacks on schools, universities, students, teachers, academics and other education personnel are not just attacks on civilians and civilian buildings. They are an attack on the right to education, including the right to good quality education; an attack on academic freedom; an attack on stability; an attack on development; and an attack on democracy.

“These attacks have a terrible physical effect, because they destroy human lives, buildings and spaces for safe learning,” says Vernor Muñoz, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. “But they also have a symbolic effect that is devastating in itself, and which also exacerbates the physical effect.

“The symbolic effect is based on fear, on the subordination of some persons to others and the elimination of opportunities to live with dignity and freedom.



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On 15 January 2009, fire fighters work to control the fire at the burning UNRWA compound in Gaza City, Palestinian Autonomous Territories. The compound includes a main warehouse for food and fuel supplies, offices and a school. The school had been used as a shelter for the displaced during the current military incursion. Three people were wounded in the attack on the compound.

“There is also an ideological effect of the attacks against schools, in the removal of a basic human right. Therefore, attacks also deny the purposes of this specific human right of education, which has to do with the construction of learning that dignifies life. This goal is based on respect for human diversity. The attacks on educational institutions, students and teachers mean direct and brutal attacks on the human condition”.¹⁸²

The physical effects of the bombing, shelling and burning of school and university buildings are relatively easy to gauge and include: loss of life; injury; the loss of places in which to learn; and the loss of learning materials, equipment and school furniture, research materials, computers, data, management information systems, specialist laboratories, and transport vehicles.

The psychological effects of the murder, disappearance and torture of students, teachers and other staff are much harder to measure. They can include trauma, fear, insecurity, demotivation and despondency among students, parents, teachers, academics, support staff, aid workers, trade unionists and officials managing the system.

In all types of attack, the educational impact is likely to extend far beyond the number of individuals and communities directly threatened. Public knowledge of repeated attacks and threats of attack gleaned from word-of-mouth or the media can spread fear throughout schools and universities, which may in fact be the intention of the perpetrators.

“Attacks on education impede the right to education,” says Jan Eastman, Deputy Secretary General of Education International. “Education is an important right because it is about fulfilment as a citizen, as an individual, and attacks on education buildings and students and adults engaged in education impede that process. Children, particularly, don’t get that opportunity again”.¹⁸³

■ Long-term consequences for the quality of education

If schools in an area are repeatedly attacked, children most likely will be afraid to go to school, parents will be afraid to send them and teachers will be afraid to go to work.

182 Vernor Muñoz, interview with the author, August 27, 2009.

183 Jan Eastman, interview with the author, August 27, 2009.

Governments may also be reluctant to re-open schools or invest more resources in them until threats have passed.

Targeted assassinations, forced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and beatings, and threats of any of these, can have a stark impact on the ability and motivation of teachers, trade unionists, academics and officials to carry out their jobs, leading to a degrading of education quality in affected areas.

Governments may struggle to recruit teachers in areas where they are targeted for assassination, for example. If the problem continues over a number of years, this could have serious consequences for the quality and numbers of teachers recruited.

In higher education, attacks on academics who research or teach particular subjects – whether contested history, human rights or HIV & AIDS, for instance - will limit curricula, restrict new thinking and hinder development.

Attacks on aid workers can lead to their removal from a particular area or even the whole country, with the loss of the expertise and supplies that come with them. In Afghanistan in 2009, UNICEF's work as the lead agency supporting education was inhibited by the fact that UN staff were only authorized to work in half the country for security reasons, so work in other provinces had to be carried out by proxy through local NGOs.

“The impact of attacks is greater in developing countries, because they have fewer resources to counteract the attacks, or for recovery. There's less capacity,” says Eastman. “But if the attacks are repeated there is also the psychological effect of less impetus to do the repairs – some governments will feel they are hitting their heads against a brick wall – and a whole generation of children can lose the opportunity for education”.¹⁸⁴

■ Educational reverses fuel conflict

The loss of schooling can drive pupils down an alternative path. In some conflicts, out-of-school children are a target for recruitment for use in combat or forced labour by armed groups, security forces and criminal gangs.

It is commonly argued by proponents of providing education in emergencies that it is vital to establish schooling as quickly as possible for communities and individuals affected by conflict because it provides stability, an investment in the future and a

184 Ibid.

place where children will be cared for, freeing up parents to set about the task of reconstructing their communities and their livelihoods. But the reverse is also true: if schools are repeatedly attacked and it becomes too dangerous for teachers to turn up to teach or for parents to send students to them, a keystone of stability is removed from the community - increasing the likelihood of displacement and putting children at risk from other dangers. It is in the interests of all concerned with child protection to campaign for the protection of schools and other places of learning.

As Nicholas Burnett, then UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, told the UN General Assembly in March 2009: “Clearly, we will not reach the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals as long as children living in fragile and adverse circumstances are excluded from school or only have access to limited and low-quality learning opportunities. We will not reach these goals when students themselves, their teachers and other education personnel are victims of threats and attacks.

“But the issue goes well beyond numbers. It is about how the denial of education in fact perpetuates a cycle of violence and exclusion, how we deprive children, youth and adults of the knowledge, skills and values they need to build a better and more peaceful future”.¹⁸⁵

■ More monitoring and research needed

More research is needed on the long-term impact of attacks on students' education, teachers' ability to teach, and academics' ability to carry on researching, including the impact of being targets or witnesses of brutal attacks such as shootings, rape or torture.

Currently, most reporting on the impact of attacks on education is related purely to the numbers of schools closed, but little is said about the continuing effects on the quality of education or rates of enrolment and retention after they have re-opened. More of this kind of information would help build a wider case for the need to protect education systems and better orient responses to attacks.

185 Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO (panel address, UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or Natural Disasters, New York, March 18, 2009).

New information on the educational impact of attacks

Most information available on the impact of attacks comes from Afghanistan, Thailand and, more recently, Pakistan. But there is also useful information concerning Zimbabwe, Somalia, Nepal, Georgia and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories.

In Afghanistan, 670 schools remained closed in March 2009, according to UNICEF, denying education to 170,000 pupils in a country where half the school-age population was out of school. Girls' education was disproportionately targeted for attack, with the detrimental effect of undermining efforts to improve their already seriously disadvantaged position through school closures and reductions in student and staff attendance rates. The CARE research reported that three per cent of male teachers and seven per cent of female teachers were said by survey interviewees to have decreased their attendance after attacks.¹⁸⁶ Only 35 per cent of the 5.7 million pupils enrolled in schools in Afghanistan in 2008-2009 were girls. In July 2009 in Afghanistan, 400 schools remained closed, mainly in the south, due to insecurity, the Ministry of Education said. The improvement reflected the success of an attempt to negotiate the re-opening of closed schools (see Section 8: Protection and prevention measures).

Following a recorded 98 school incidents between 1 May and 24 June 2009 in Afghanistan, including direct attacks by small arms and rockets, the burning down of schools and death threats, Ann Veneman, head of UNICEF, said attacks on education "pull the country backwards and threaten the significant advances made in education and child health in recent years.

"Even where they do not suffer directly from the violence, when children are not allowed to feel safe at school or travelling to school, their education and their prospects suffer, and the futures of their families and their communities are undermined," she said.¹⁸⁷

In Thailand, 300 teachers requested relocation from one of the affected provinces in 2008. Press reports have indicated that hundreds of schools may close for days or weeks at a time following an attack on a school, teachers or soldiers guarding teachers

186 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009).

187 United Nations News, "Terrorism Kills More Afghan Civilians Than Any Military Action – UN Mission," July 13, 2009, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31446>.

in their area. On one occasion, all schools in the three southernmost provinces were closed.¹⁸⁸

In Pakistan's Swat District in NWFP, between January 2007 and March 2009, burnings, shellings, blasts and ransacking left 91 girls' schools and 17 boys' schools fully destroyed, and 25 girls' schools and 39 boys' schools partially damaged. The number of schools affected doubled during the Army's counter-offensive; when schools re-opened for the first time in three months, many classes had to be taken in tents, many roads to schools were destroyed or closed for security reasons, and many students could not return to classes or their parents were afraid to send them.¹⁸⁹

"My three children are keen to go back to school," Ameena Bibi in Mingora told IRIN in August 2009. "My two daughters have not been since December last year when the Taliban banned education for girls. But there is no transport here for them to use".¹⁹⁰

The Taliban ban on classes for girls forced the closure of 900 private and government schools.¹⁹¹ The placement of 300 newly qualified teachers was also postponed. The move threatened to do much more than reverse government efforts to tackle the extreme gender imbalance in Swat where only 28 per cent of women are literate compared to 67 per cent of men, and where only 19 per cent of females complete primary school compared to 58 per cent of males. Between 2002 and 2007, the number of girls in primary school had risen by 30,000 but the Taliban threat, if they had remained in power, would have stopped the education of 120,000 girls permanently.¹⁹²

Around 45,000 teachers left Zimbabwe between 2004 and 2008 to escape the economic crisis or political violence.¹⁹³ Many thousands more were reportedly afraid to leave their homes in 2008 due to the political violence, which halted education in most schools, particularly in the rural areas.¹⁹⁴ As a result, schools were empty and there were reports of their being used as bases for the Green Bombers and other state forces. The activities of all NGOs were also banned for a long period in 2008, with some staff members facing persecution.

A UNESCO education specialist in Harare warned: "The halt in the educational activities during the past years will have tremendous effects in the years to come,

188 AFP, "Thailand: Bomb Injures 14 in Thai Muslim South," June 18, 2007.

189 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Schools in Swat Re-Open," August 3, 2009.

190 Ibid.

191 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Swat Conflict Takes Toll on Girls' Education," June 16, 2009.

192 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Talibanisation Threatens Girls' Schooling in West," June 7, 2009.

193 IRIN News, "Zimbabwe: School's Really Out," October 20, 2008.

194 Information supplied by UNESCO Harare Cluster Office.

leaving students with knowledge gaps that will be harder to close as they move on".¹⁹⁵

A stark example of the impact of attacks on education aid workers occurred in Somalia, where as a result of the assassination of a second CARE employee on 21 June 2008, the American NGO suspended operations in the area, according to the US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Country Director David Gilmour said that CARE would be unable to provide emergency food assistance to more than 250,000 people in the region as a result. "Equally sad is that close to 400 primary school teachers and 5,000 schoolchildren, half of whom are girls, will not benefit from a recently commenced education programme in the same region," he said.¹⁹⁶

In Somalia in September 2008, Omar Role, a spokesman for Education Fraternity, a network of education NGOs in Mogadishu, said many schools in the city were totally destroyed and many students were no longer going to school. "We are losing a lot of children from classes because parents no longer feel their children will be safe," he added. At least 24 schools had been destroyed or closed due to attacks and insecurity – and attacks on schools were badly weakening the education sector, CRIN reported.¹⁹⁷

In Nepal, many children have mental disorders caused by the decade-long conflict between Maoist and Government forces, according to the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT), a local NGO that specializes in the psychosocial treatment of children affected by conflict.¹⁹⁸ Western Nepal was the worst affected by the conflict, with the highest rates of killing, forced disappearance, displacement and torture. Across the country, 22,000 students were reported abducted between 2002 and 2006; 1,264 received threats; 368 suffered beatings; 1,730 were arrested or tortured; and 126 disappeared.¹⁹⁹

"Thousands of children [in western Nepal] who witnessed and were victims of the violence, torture and killings are unable to overcome their worst experiences and need help," CVICT's psychosocial trainer, Tilak Manandhar, told IRIN in Bardiya District, in mid-western Nepal.²⁰⁰

195 UNESCO education specialist, email interview with the author, July 13, 2009.

196 IRIN News, "Somali: End Attacks Against Aid Workers, Agencies Urge," June 24, 2008.

197 Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), "Somalia: UN Condemns Attacks on Students, Teachers and Schools," September 12, 2008.

198 IRIN News, "Nepal: NGO Helps Children Traumatized by Conflict," December 20, 2007.

199 Figures provided by Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC).

200 IRIN News, "Nepal: NGO Helps Children Traumatized by Conflict."

The Maoist insurgency ended in November 2006, with the signing of a peace agreement, but child rights activists say the rehabilitation of children has been neglected by the government.

“There is a really crucial need to rehabilitate and heal the children, who continue to be haunted by their terrible ordeals,” psychosocial counsellor Sukmaya Sunwar told IRIN.²⁰¹

In some situations, it is hard to distinguish between the impact of specific attacks on education and collateral damage. The Ministry of Education and Science said the Russian military action in 2008 had serious consequences for Georgia’s education system. In the short-term, the start of the 2008-9 academic year had to be postponed in many areas. The widespread use of landmines and cluster bombs by the Russian army had made many buildings unsafe, requiring de-mining before they could be re-opened. In addition, many schools were seriously or lightly damaged by shelling, bombing, gunfire, being burnt down and looting, as well as by wear and tear from use as emergency accommodation for internally displaced people (IDPs). Many children were suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety crises and depression. More than 400 IDP children, accompanied by paediatric psychologists, were sent to Poland and the Ukraine for care. Another 100 were due to join them. In addition, psychological rehabilitation was being provided for 50 teenagers in special recreation camps in Tskneti.²⁰²

The cost of helping IDPs and restoring infrastructure led to a reported 20 per cent cut in the Ministry of Education and Science’s budget, forcing it to terminate or suspend programmes to support students living in conflict zones, preparatory classes for admissions examinations, grants covering tuition fees at universities, and up to 100 science programmes. The Ministry of Education said that if other programmes had to be suspended or terminated as well, the entire future of Georgia’s education reform programme would be at risk.²⁰³ Publishing of textbooks had come to a halt, as had the privatization of vocational education and training (VET). Training of principals and teachers had been interrupted. Up to 63 schools had to delay opening for some months, forcing 17,000 students to move to other schools.²⁰⁴ The future of key programmes supporting minority integration, inclusion, school partnerships, community mobilization, prisoner education, pre-school education, extracurricular activity and street children were at risk.

201 Ibid.

202 Ministry of Georgia, Russian Invasion of Georgia: Facts and Figures, September 25, 2008

203 Ibid.

204 Ibid.

On a positive note, the reduction of attacks on education in Iraq, combined with vastly improved general security, enabled elementary school enrolment to increase slightly from 4.15 million in 2006-2007 to 4.33 million in 2007-2008.²⁰⁵ On 1 September 2008, the Minister of Higher Education reported receiving 150 applications from academics wanting to return to the country.²⁰⁶

■ The impact on development and fragility

The impact of attacks in higher education is less concerned with the damage of buildings and more with the silencing of scholars and, by extension, the voices of intimidated colleagues and students in the wider academic community. Such attacks represent serious breaches of human rights and academic freedom – including “the right to contribute to social change through freely expressing their opinion on state policies and policies affecting higher education” as set out in the 1997 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Personnel – and pose a threat to economic, social and political development.

As Jarecki and Kaisth have argued:

“When a scholar is killed or silenced, a lifetime of teaching and learning that could provide thousands of hours of education for hundreds of students, with all the benefits that provides for the community at large, is lost. Other scholars silence themselves out of fear; students are reluctant to pursue their education, and the entire intellectual community upon which any country must base its growth and development suffers.

“The death, and even the silencing of a scholar, leads to the death of ideas – ideas that could have led to new cures for disease, economic growth in developing economies, improved methods of food production, or better protection of the most vulnerable sectors of society”.²⁰⁷

Their research for the Institute of International Education suggests it may be precisely those countries that most need such ideas as well as the energy and innovation generated by an open academic community in which academics are most likely to come under attack.

205 United States Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Iraq* (US Department of State, 2009).

206 Ibid.

207 Henry G. Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2009), 17.

By analysing the conditions in which academics are most likely to seek rescue from persecution via the Scholar Rescue Fund, Jarecki and Kaisth concluded that countries where the full range of attacks on academics are carried out, from harassment to violent attacks, torture and assassination, appear to have some or all of the following factors in common: low GDP; high level of conflict; small academic population; failed state status; low level of country freedom; and low level of press freedom.²⁰⁸

Jarecki and Kaisth warn that not too much should be read into their findings due to the limitations of the size and geographic reach of their database.²⁰⁹ But one interesting insight that merits further research is the suggestion of an increased likelihood of attacks on higher education in fragile states with low levels of democratic freedom. This throws more light on the shortcoming of the assumption by some that attacks on academics who are involved in politics, for instance by researching human rights, proposing alternative political strategies or advising or supporting alternative political movements, are really attacks on politics not education. The development of critical thinking and alternative academic research and opinions on political issues are education's vital contribution to political progress. And the places where that contribution is restricted by repression or attacks on academics tend to be states where political development is being stymied or sent into reverse.

We already know that there are strong correlations between fragility and low access and achievement in primary education: over half of primary-aged children not in school are found in conflict-affected countries, for instance,²¹⁰ and the World Bank has argued that provision of education, particularly for girls, is the single most effective intervention that countries can make to improve human development. The prevention of attacks on education and the strengthening of the right to education at all levels, therefore, can be viewed as important contributions to tackling conditions of fragility.

"Education has always been important in nation-building and teachers and academics have a responsibility, a duty, to be engaged in that. Attacks on education are an attack on the goal of educated citizenry," says Eastman. At the same time education, especially access to good quality education, is an important factor in promoting peace, stability and hope for better opportunities in the future in the form of development, all of which can help release states from conditions of fragility. Attacks on education, by contrast, undermine that hope of progress.²¹¹

208 *Ibid.*, 65.

209 *Ibid.*, 7.

210 Save the Children, "Children in Conflict-Affected Countries Short-Changed in Education Funding," June 3, 2008. Approximately 37 million of the 72 million children who do not go to primary school live in conflict-affected countries.

211 Jan Eastman, interview with the author, August 27, 2009.

Narrowing the vision for education

Robert Quinn of Scholars at Risk argues that the significance of attacks on education is the way they reveal a struggle about which vision of education should be followed. If attacks are content driven, limits will be placed on the knowledge that can be researched, taught or applied, for example in the political sphere.²¹²

This raises questions about the purpose of education. Illegitimate governments that only maintain their position through the exertion of power will frequently articulate that the purpose is to maintain the status quo, to have people develop the skills necessary to maintain the existing structure without threatening it.

“That ends up being a very narrow vision of what education is for, both for society and the individual,” Quinn says. “If you are of the mind that education is a process of personal fulfilment, extension and liberation, allowing the person to contribute to their full capacity in society, then you see that these restrictions have a much wider impact, that they are really a way to enforce an alternative world vision in which it is acceptable to structure things through brute force”.²¹³

Attacks at the higher education level can have serious long-term social, economic and political consequences for the countries where they are most severe, as well as for neighbouring countries because there is a loss of knowledge, a loss of opportunities for collaboration internally and internationally, and a degradation of respect for universities.

It is for this reason that the perceived dividing line between what is termed a political attack and what is an attack on higher education may be a false one, because it assumes that a university has no public role, no public voice, and that there are areas that should be off limits to educational research and its use. “The university does have a place and should be engaged in society, to justify society’s investment in it,” Quinn says. What is the point of academics researching politics, Quinn asks, if they cannot use that knowledge to develop politics?



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On the same night as the Naxalite attack on Belhara High School in India on 9 April 2009, red graffiti appeared on the walls of nearby buildings urging local residents to boycott the upcoming election. The graffiti here has been made illegible.

212 Robert Quinn, interview with the author, September 1, 2009.
213 Ibid.

Effects of attacks

Physical effects

- Loss of life, injury and permanent handicapping of pupils and staff
- Destruction of buildings, furniture, resources, facilities (including transport) and learning materials
- Destruction of approach roads preventing access

Psychosocial effects

- Psychosocial distress or trauma of students, staff and parents, among others
- Fear of going to work
- Fear of going to school
- Despondency/demotivation of students, teachers, academics, officials, trade unionists and aid workers

Financial effects

- Cost of rebuilding and/or resupply
- Cost of recruiting new teachers, officials and other personnel
- Cost of security measures
- Cost of psychosocial support
- Cost of lost contribution of education to economy

Educational effects

- Students' education ended or disrupted through withdrawal or flight by parents
- Student concentration/motivation to learn harmed
- Teaching capacity reduced and student-teacher ratio increased as teachers stop working, evacuate or relocate
- Quality of teaching undermined by demotivation/despondency/traumatization of teachers
- Academic freedom curbed, lowering quality and limiting capacity

- Research capacity diminished by fear of/disincentives for researching certain subjects or becoming an academic at all
- Teaching and research capacity reduced by flight of academics and teachers
- Education quality weakened by fear of participating in trade union work that would contribute to the defence or development of education
- Demotivation to serve in education administration
- Flight or reassignment of officials with loss of expertise
- Disruption/ending of NGO support, with loss of supplies and expertise

Effects on development/state-building/fragility

- Psychological and material gains for rebels weaken war effort
- Psychological gains for repressive regimes increase fragility
- Loss of confidence of community in rule of law/future undermines attempts to defeat rebels
- Restraint on academics' contribution to state-building/human rights development/democratic process
- Loss of ideas and contribution of knowledge to economic and social development
- Restraint on innovation
- Regression on Education for All, including access and educational achievement, with consequences for economy, health and social well-being
- Weakening of state management of education

8. Protection and prevention measures

There are many aspects of the protection and prevention of attacks on education on which expertise could be shared. They range from physical protection strategies, such as posting guards and providing armed escorts, to training soldiers in what they can or cannot do under international law or negotiating with armed groups to end attacks. An interesting theme that emerges in this report is the potential importance of community involvement in the running and defence of schools.

■ Armed protection

The use of dedicated armed protection has had mixed results against attacks on education. Measures that can be taken include: a general increase in force levels in the area, security patrols around schools, the posting of police or armed security guards at



In 2007, a group of youth workers were trained by Save the Children in child protection and children's rights in Cartagena, Colombia, to facilitate workshops aimed to help young people avoid recruitment into armed forces. Many young Colombians face forced recruitment by illegal armed groups.

schools, and provision of security escorts for teachers and students travelling to and from school.

Whether these are provided depends both on the availability of security manpower and whether security chiefs are persuaded of the importance of devoting resources to defending education targets. In some contexts, the task of persuasion may be harder because education is less valued, security budgets and manpower are stretched or because the ruling elite is less motivated to protect people from a particular region or social or ethnic group.

As the drive to achieve Education for All continues to reduce the number of children not in school worldwide, the proportion of those still going without education who live in countries affected by conflict is increasing. It is therefore precisely in the areas affected by insecurity and fragility that the job of mobilizing support for protection of schools is most needed if Education for All is to be achieved. Cooperation is needed between ministries of education and security-related ministries on this issue.

An example from Iraq shows the importance of raising the consciousness of protecting education beyond the boundaries of a particular ministry. In Iraq in 2007, school examinations for 150,000 secondary students were seriously disrupted by militants entering examination halls and killing teachers and students. MPs pressed for a different approach in 2008, for cooperation between the army, police, security and education ministries. And they ensured that the examinations were moved into university buildings where they could more easily be protected. According to Alaa Makki, President of Iraq's Parliamentary Education Committee, the key was a drive to "expand the importance of education in the minds of military officials and politicians".²¹⁴

The chaos caused by the attacks in 2007, combined with problems of corruption, resulted in an inflated 85 per cent pass rate, with 25,000 more students qualifying for university places than the available 85,000 places could accommodate. But neighbouring countries Syria and Jordan, which had taken many Iraqi students in the past, refused to recognize the examination results, so all of the successful students had to be squeezed into the existing system.

"We didn't want to leave students hanging around on the streets, where they can be absorbed by the militias, giving them money to buy arms and do bad things," says Makki. The universities, as a result, had to accommodate a temporary population bulge, which is now working its way through the system and putting a strain on resources.

214 Brendan O'Malley, "Baghdad Battles for Better Education," *South China Morning Post*, January 17, 2008.

Consequently, Makki, on behalf of the education committee, urged the Prime Minister and the ministers for education and higher education to prioritize protection of examination halls by the army and police in 2008.

Students were transferred from their schools to sit the examinations in the universities, because they had large halls that could accommodate thousands of students, and security forces were placed around the universities to guard them. "Previously they were held in different schools placed here and there, where we couldn't protect them," Makki said. It was the first time school examinations had been taken in university buildings and the pass rate fell to a manageable 50 per cent.

In southern Thailand, there has been a strong emphasis on increasing security force levels in the troubled southern provinces and providing armed escorts for teachers. Teachers have also received weapons training and training in how to negotiate with hostage takers, and have been given permission to carry guns.

Increased police patrols were placed around schools in the southernmost provinces from December 2006 onwards, and on 16 May 2007 more than 3,000 policemen were put on guard at about 1,000 government schools as the new school year began.²¹⁵ But this did not stop an upsurge of attacks on schools and teachers in 2007, with June becoming one of the worst months on record for such incidents.

The dramatic fall in the number of attacks on schools in 2008 coincided with a halving of violent incidents and casualties generally in the south, which has been attributed both to protection measures - for example, the Army had reportedly positioned armed soldiers and paramilitary units on school grounds²¹⁶ - and a weakening of the rebels' position in 2008.

However, it should be noted that although the number of schools burned down fell from 164 in 2007 to ten in 2008,²¹⁷ the number of students and education staff reported killed in southern Thailand (17) and the number of school guards/security escorts reported killed (11) remained the same in 2007 and 2008 and proportionately increased in the first half of 2009 (10 and 7 respectively).²¹⁸ This suggests that with schools better protected, insurgents concentrated more on attacking teachers individually or their security details. In January 2009, Sunai Pasuk of Human Rights Watch predicted that the trend of using car bombs to cause multiple casualties, which

215 AKI, "Thailand: 3,000 Police On Guard Against Jihad Attacks as Schools Reopen in the South," May 16, 2007.

216 The Nation, "PM Plays Down Safety Concerns Ahead of South Visit," January 17, 2009; and AFP, "Teachers Targeted in Thailand's Deadly Insurgency," March 20, 2008.

217 The figures here come from a search of media and human rights reports.

218 A problem with using figures for half the year is that they may be distorted by the inclusion of start of the school year in May, when the rate of attacks may be higher.

emerged in the last three months of 2008, would intensify. Such a trend could affect teachers in their security details, which tend to be blown up by roadside bombs or car bombs.²¹⁹

The measures for protecting schools always have to be looked at in the context of general security measures taken to tackle the wider conflict in which they occur. In 2007, the post-coup government in Thailand stepped up military spending and deployed more security forces in a tougher approach to the insurgency. This included the detention of hundreds of suspects for up to a month at a time, during which they were reportedly forced to go through “re-education” programmes.

But the International Crisis Group (ICG) warned that the government’s use of irregular forces such as paramilitary rangers and volunteer militias had weakened command-and-control mechanisms, reducing accountability. According to ICG, there was a need to professionalize the forces in the area. There was also a need to crack down on vigilante groups, which may have been behind the increasing number of reported murders of Malay Muslim teachers and other civilians in revenge attacks.

“Sub-contracting security to poorly trained paramilitaries and militias is no solution,” said ICG analyst Francesca Lawe-Davies. “They often fail to provide security, and their involvement in human rights abuses hands militants a propaganda victory”.²²⁰

The rangers should be given additional military and humanitarian law training and closer supervision to improve discipline and curb abuses; the village militias should be disarmed and disbanded; and controls on guns and gun licences should be tightened. Vigilante groups should not be allowed to operate, Lawe-Davies argued.²²¹

In March 2009, Thai premier Abhisit Vejjajiva ruled out granting political autonomy to the region and announced that an extra 4,000 security personnel would be deployed, adding to more than 60,000 forces already mobilized against the activities of an estimated 7,000 insurgents.²²² The troops would prevent local teenagers from joining the militant group by providing them with more opportunities for education, one report said.²²³

But attacks on teachers and teacher escorts appeared to be increasing in the first half of 2009. Pusak warned in January 2009 that there was no guarantee that such

219 Ron Corben, “Thailand’s Southern Insurgency Passes Five-Year Mark,” *Voice of America*, January 5, 2009.

220 International Crisis Group (ICG), *Southern Thailand: The Problem with Paramilitaries*, Asia Report no. 140 (October 23, 2007).

221 Ibid.

222 Grant Peck, “Thai Muslim Insurgents Draw Recruits from Schools,” *AP*, June 22, 2009.

223 Xinhua, “Security Force Attacked by Suspected Militant Bomb in S. Thailand,” March 12, 2009.

measures would make a long-term impact while the roots of the conflict, the sense of alienation among Malay Muslims, were not addressed.²²⁴ Compromises on the type of education offered, by contrast, could play an important part in doing so.

The question that needs to be researched in Thailand is whether or not providing soldiers as escorts, while well intentioned, simply offers a bigger target for the insurgents to aim at and encourages more attacks. In other conflicts, such as the Naxalite wars in India, schools have been relocated near or at police stations to provide extra protection, but this has made them vulnerable to attacks on the police stations.

■ Community defence

In many countries, particularly those with poor communications and thinly spread rural populations in challenging terrain, stationing troops or police at schools may not be a viable option due to the cost, manpower and logistical support required. Two initiatives in Afghanistan have shed new light on alternative ways to defend schools.

The first is the community defence initiative launched in June 2006, which involves mobilizing local communities to deter or resist attacks. School protection *shura* (councils) were established, where school management committees did not exist. They were to be supported by a national information gathering system to provide early warning of attacks. A team of 85 child protection officers were to monitor security data and work with local reconstruction teams to improve security. In addition, local people were encouraged to confront attackers, and in cases in at least eight provinces, they rushed out to defend schools.

The CARE study, *Knowledge on Fire*, revealed discrepancies in the perceived impact of this scheme. On the negative side, 87 per cent of respondents said that no attacks had been prevented in their community, while only four per cent cited cases of prevention. But in two provinces, Balkh and Khost, 12 per cent said there had been cases of prevention.²²⁵

In those two provinces, several respondents mentioned cases in which communities had negotiated with potential attackers or gained “permission” to continue teaching. In Herat in western Afghanistan, for instance, a police officer recounted how the police and community collaborated in the aftermath of an attack. The community

224 Corben, “Thailand’s Southern Insurgency Passes Five-Year Mark.”

225 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009), 49.

arranged to meet the alleged attackers, the Taliban, and negotiated a halt to attacks, allowing teachers and students to return to school. The police arranged transport to and from the meeting.²²⁶

Others measures employed in the two provinces included communities banning strangers from entering their village, hiring night guards or patrolling schools themselves, particularly after the receipt of night letters (threats). Even when they were not able to deter an attack, night guards were in some cases able to limit the damage by stopping schools or tented classrooms from burning down afterwards. In some cases, they or community members fought with attackers.²²⁷

A stronger message coming from the CARE research is that clear community involvement in the running of schools seems to be correlated with a reduced likelihood of attack and a greater chance of achieving negotiated prevention. Evidence supporting this includes the following:

- Sixty-five per cent of respondents from communities with a school that was not attacked said the community requested the building of the school, but only 56 per cent of respondents from villages where the school was attacked said the same; seven per cent of respondents from areas where a school was not attacked said the community did not request the school, while 17 per cent of respondents from areas where a school was attacked said the same.²²⁸
- Eighty-five per cent of respondents see protection as the responsibility of the community; 45 per cent say responsibility lies with the government and 32 per cent say responsibility lies with the police. The Afghan National Army and international military forces are seen as irrelevant to protection.²²⁹
- The hiring of guards for schools or other defence measures by the community send a message that the schools are “for the people and not for the government”, so should not be a targeted as a symbol of government.²³⁰
- The perception that the curriculum is anti-Islamic is a common reason for attack cited in the UNICEF incident database.²³¹
- A Ministry of Education field assessment in Logar indicated that schools funded by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (which include Afghan and

226 Ibid., 49.

227 Ibid., 49-50.

228 Ibid., 47.

229 Ibid., 43.

230 Ibid., 45.

231 Ibid., 7, 35-6.

international military personnel) and girls' schools are most vulnerable to attack.²³²

- Community-based schools, supported by NGOs, do receive threats, forcing suspension of operations, but very few physical attacks.²³³
- Thirty-one per cent of respondents said that some threats come from people they know in the community.²³⁴
- Ninety-six per cent of respondents whose schools had not been attacked said a Community Development Council had been established in their community, i.e. the community was organized and running its own affairs, compared with 60 per cent of respondents reporting attacks on schools.²³⁵
- When asked what could be done to prevent attacks from a choice of community-based and non-community-based measures, 72 per cent cited the establishment of security shuras in schools; and 56 per cent believed in general disarmament, 43 per cent in negotiation with the armed opposition and 36 per cent in increasing the police's involvement in protection of schools; only one per cent saw a role for international military forces.²³⁶



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A girl writes on the blackboard inside a mosque that serves as a community-based school in Kamar Kalagh, a village on the outskirts of Herat, Afghanistan. As there are no official schools nearby, some 460 girls and boys from nearby villages attend informal classes here, although attendance, particularly for girls, is irregular.

It is important to note, however, that the findings of the CARE study may be skewed by the fact that the survey was conducted only in those provinces that were safe for the research teams to visit, and where potentially sensitive topics might be discussed. The provinces most disrupted in the conflict, which the study says are the ones that suffer the greatest number of attacks on schools and school closures, were not covered in the survey.

232 Ibid., 35.

233 Ibid., 52.

234 Ibid., 18.

235 Ibid., 50.

236 Ibid., 50.

The conclusions the study draws are that community participation in the establishment and running of schools and in the defence of schools is regarded as an important factor in preventing some attacks in the provinces covered; that the dynamics of threats and attacks can only be understood on a local basis; and that taking a centralized approach to planning for the protection of schools could be ineffective or even detrimental.

The study argues: "Education stands the strongest chance of being optimally protected if the analysis, decision-making and implementation of power of school security is decentralized to the provincial, district, and community levels, with budgetary and technical support offered by the central government".²³⁷

This was largely the approach adopted by the Ministry of Education, which established School Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations and School Security Shuras to take charge at local level. The key is to ensure that local bodies are informed of all possible prevention and mitigation measures and of how to access support to implement those they deem appropriate for their situation, the study argues.

■ Negotiating the re-opening of schools

A dramatic breakthrough by the government reflects the findings that in Afghanistan, at least, attacks on education can be reduced if the community and even the Taliban are given more of a sense of ownership of education and their fears of external imposition of schools and/or alien values are addressed.

When Afghanistan's new Minister of Education, Farooq Wardak, was appointed in October 2008, he decided to address the opposition to government schools head on. For at least three years, the government had worked together with UNICEF and other agencies at local level to persuade local elders, particularly religious leaders, to drum up support for the education of girls and the establishment of community-based schools located inside people's homes with volunteer teachers. (There are now 8,000 such schools and with better systems of training and pay to professionalize the teacher workforce.)

Wardak borrowed from this idea of mobilizing local elders and religious leaders and invited tribal, religious and village leaders to generate support among local people for the re-opening of schools in areas where they had been kept closed after attacks. He

237 Ibid., 55.

then invited influential people from across the communities, including supporters of the opposition or anti-government elements such as the Taliban, for consultations to tease out why schools have remained closed and suggest compromises that would increase a sense of local ownership of schools and their curriculum. "They are inviting people regardless of their political beliefs, and people are coming to the meetings," says Fazlul Haque, UNICEF's Chief of Education in Kabul.²³⁸

Some objected to using the term "school", others feared the curriculum or regulations were anti-Islamic. In response, the government is allowing the word "school" in the school's name to be changed to "madrassa". It is also permitting communities to nominate a local trained teacher of their choice to join the school's staff and ensure that nothing anti-Islamic is taking place. Further, it is challenging people to root through the curriculum or textbooks, telling them that if they find anything anti-Islamic it will be changed. Schools have also been told to build prayer breaks into the timetable.

"It gives a sense that this is our school, the way we want it. The government is compromising and the communities are becoming motivated," says Haque. "They are taking care to ensure schools are opened and nobody is attacking them".

In March 2009, following this initiative, 161 schools re-opened compared to 35 in 2007-2008; and in the crucial first month of term, when schools are particularly vulnerable to attack, no violent incidents were reported.²³⁹

Recovery measures for schools

Apart from prevention, a second way to minimize the impact of attacks is to support rapid recovery. UNICEF has a longstanding policy of visiting schools within 72 hours of an attack and providing an emergency education package of tents for classrooms and boxes of teaching and learning materials within five days. In Afghanistan, that job is made harder by the fact that, for their own safety, UN staff are no longer allowed to travel in half the country, so local partners have to be used.

In some situations, a major obstacle is the continuing use of schools as either bases by security forces or shelters for IDPs. Negotiations may be required to return the buildings to their use as schools. In eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where occupation of schools by IDPs and by armed groups and the army has occurred,

238 Fazlul Haque, interview with the author, April 23, 2009.

239 Ibid.

UNICEF asks the education authorities and religious leaders to talk to people to see what can be done to get the schools cleared and re-opened.

UNICEF also coordinates with UNHCR to provide plastic sheeting for IDPs to use as shelters so that they can leave the school. "Very often in an emergency, schools act as welcome centres for IDPs. When they arrive they need shelters - that is why they occupy schools. But they are not staying because they want to stay in schools. They have no other choice," says Sayo Aoki, former UNICEF education specialist in Goma.²⁴⁰

UNICEF often speaks to schools and parent committees to negotiate local solutions, which can be successful, while sometimes OCHA acts as a mediator. In one case, a school occupied by rebels was evacuated after negotiations with OCHA. In another, a school occupied by the army was evacuated after negotiations led by a School Directors and Parents' Committee.²⁴¹

In Goma, UNICEF has been operating a pilot project since October 2007 to provide Mobile Teacher Support Teams, which help local schools integrate displaced children. The programme tries to raise the quality of learning by providing teacher training, increasing community participation and organizing catch-up classes for children who missed schooling through displacement or insecurity. So far, it has supported 85 host schools catering for 46,000 children, 36 per cent of them IDPs. Ninety per cent of children scored passing grades at the end of the school year, an important achievement given that 85 per cent of children who do not pass at the first attempt drop out of school.²⁴²

Internationally, recovery measures from attacks should improve with the increased weight being given to education in emergencies. According to Nicholas Burnett, formerly of UNESCO, this requires a strengthening of collaboration and capacity-building in the humanitarian response to crises, which tends to suffer from lack of coordination between the many actors. At the UN General Assembly debate on Education in Emergencies in March 2009, Burnett praised the acceptance of the application of the cluster process, through which agencies coordinate their response to humanitarian situations, to education in 2006. But he warned that a "major shortcoming" remained in the limited role often given to national partners in the reconstruction process.²⁴³

240 Sayo Aoki, interview with the author, June 2009.

241 Ibid.; and information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office – Goma.

242 Ibid.

243 Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO (panel address, UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or Natural Disasters, New York, March 18, 2009).

“Capacity development is not an add-on but must be an integral part of both our crisis prevention efforts and of our response to a crisis,” he said. “Many countries experience chronic and intermittent conflict. Capacity-building improves the skills and confidence of education ministries to act in these situations and to better mitigate their effects”.²⁴⁴

■ Recovery measures for child soldiers

There is now a well-established procedure, developed by the UN, of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) for child soldiers, which aid agencies support. The first stage is often to collect small arms and light and heavy weapons in the conflict zone, which involves assembling combatants and managing the storage or destruction of arms. Demobilization involves the formal and controlled discharge of soldiers from the army or armed group. The process should include establishing the child’s participation in the conflict, collecting information to establish the child’s identity and trace his or her family, and assessing the needs of the child. Reintegration is a long-term process that aims to provide children with a viable alternative to life in the armed group and re-establish them in the community. It may include reuniting them with their family or finding alternative care if that is not possible. It also means providing education and training, offering them help in planning how to make a livelihood and giving psychosocial support, where needed.²⁴⁵ International progress on disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating child soldiers has been achieved with the support of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict’s work, agreed by the UN Security Council, in the listing and monitoring of offending countries and the issuing of time-bound action plans.

■ Recovery measures for victims of sexual violence

Psychological trauma; tissue tears in the vagina, bladder and rectum; uterine prolapse; infertility; and sexually transmitted infections including HIV & AIDS are among the painful effects suffered by women and children raped in war, according to research by

244 Ibid.

245 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, www.child-soldiers.org.

Jeanne Ward and Mendy Marsh for the United Nations Population Fund.²⁴⁶ A study of raped widows of genocide victims in Rwanda found 67 per cent of survivors were HIV-positive. Attempts to meet the medical and psychological needs of survivors of war rapes are hampered by lack of facilities or specialist knowledge. Interviews with women IDPs in Kosovo, East Timor and Colombia revealed that state-run facilities were difficult to access. In most conflict situations, humanitarian organizations are struggling to make the most basic of services accessible.

■ Recovery measures for academics

In higher education, several of the international networks that advocate on behalf of threatened scholars also help relocate them to the sanctuary of safe institutions in other countries.

Robert Quinn of Scholars at Risk says: “Our primary work is essentially the worst case scenario, which is when there are no means to protect somebody in their country, and we are losing their mind, their voice, their contribution, so we try to organize emergency relocation to a sanctuary, a university elsewhere”.

Scholars at Risk, based in New York, and the Scholar Rescue Fund, based in the Institute of International Education, also in New York, work together and separately to help endangered academics find sanctuary. Between them, they identify academics in need of rescue and provide, find or fund temporary academic positions in the US, Canada, Europe and more recently in Jordan and the Middle East. CARA, the UK-based Council for Assisting of Refugee Academics, has tended to make grants available to academics who have come to the UK and made a claim for refugee status. The grants enable them to register for PhDs and MScs. Hardship grants are also provided for academics struggling to support their families, having lost their means of income.

In addition, CARA is piloting continuing professional development programmes for Iraqi academics in exile and a research fellowship programme to support innovative international research projects involving Iraqi academics.

Quinn accepts that there is a need for earlier intervention, before the point at which academics are under such pressure from death threats or experience of arrest or torture that they have to leave a country. “We are trying to identify intervention points

246 Jeanne Ward and Mendy Marsh, *Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in War and its Aftermath: Realities, Responses, and Required Resources* (United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA), 2006).

before people have to leave. And we have a few theories about how it can be done,” he says. “But it will involve mobilizing human rights structures, intergovernmental structures to at least make attacks more visible. We also need to raise the political and social cost of attacks in the hope of mitigating them. And the long-term aim is to build a democratic base of support for the university space, a vision of education that will allow people to contribute to their full capacity in society without restriction”.²⁴⁷

■ Negotiating safe sanctuaries

The right to education in safety was enshrined in the expanded commentary of the Dakar Framework for Action resulting from the World Education Forum. Paragraph 58 declares that: “Schools should be respected and protected as sanctuaries and zones of peace”.

Education under Attack (2007) reported the suggestion from Save the Children that an international symbol be commissioned to denote that schools are safe sanctuaries and must not be attacked, although some experts argue that having too many such symbols devalues them and others cite important ethical and security concerns about singling out categories of civilians (see Section 9 Monitoring and impunity).

Since then, in 2008, the Indian National Commission for Protection of Children's Rights (NCPCR) has recommended to all parties in the Naxalite conflict that schools should be identified and recognized as “zones of peace”. This would include non-use of schools for anything other than educational purposes, separation of schools from the Salwa Judum, police or Naxalite camps, and introduction of programmes addressing the psychosocial needs of the children in schools via appropriately trained teachers.²⁴⁸

The extensive list of attacks in breach of this ideal (see Annex I: Country reports) might seem to offer little hope of either the Dakar commitment or painted symbols having any effect. But experience in Afghanistan of the negotiated re-opening of schools is not the only example of armed groups being persuaded to leave the violence of the conflict outside the school gates.

247 Robert Quinn, interview with the author, September 1, 2009.

248 National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), *Visit to Dantewada (Chhattisgarh) and Khammam (Andhra Pradesh) to Investigate Status of Health and Education of Children Affected by Civil Unrest, 17th to 19th December 2007* (NCPCR, 2008), 4, as cited in Human Rights Watch (HRW), “*Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime*”: *Government, Vigilante, and Naxalite Abuses in India's Chhattisgarh State* (New York: HRW, 2008).

In Central African Republic in June 2008, agreement was reached with rebels - who had a history of kidnapping parents and teachers - to create neutral areas where children from bush schools, set up by displaced communities, could take examinations.²⁴⁹

During the conflict between Maoist and government forces in Nepal (1996-2006), there was widespread disruption of schooling. The forced closure of schools for strikes imposed by the Maoists had prevented pupils from taking their examinations. Schools were being taken over as military bases. Thousands of students and teachers were being captured for indoctrination programmes, and children were being recruited as child soldiers. Maoists were extorting up to 15 per cent of teachers' pay and forcing the use of curricula that conflicted with those of the state.²⁵⁰

On the other hand, schools were seen as tools for stabilizing the Royalist regime, for instance because pictures of the Royal family were placed on the wall or in text books.²⁵¹

In 2004, UNICEF and partner organizations were urged by stakeholders to mount a Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) initiative. UNICEF supported World Education and other partners to:

- Create a module for negotiating and developing school codes of conduct to safeguard them as zones of peace, in which local community facilitators convened negotiations with Maoists, army, civil society and other stakeholder groups to cease targeting schools;
- Mobilize civil society to keep the conflict out of schools using local media, which monitored threats to schools through the educational journalists' association;
- Provide psychosocial and other support for students affected by conflict;
- Provide support and coping skills to teachers; and
- Teach landmine awareness and protection.²⁵²

249 Nathalie Fiona Hamoudi, "Bush Schools in Central African Republic" (presentation, UNESCO international expert seminar *Protecting Education from Attack*, Paris, September 30, 2009).

250 Melinda Smith, "Nepal Case Study: Schools as Zones of Peace" (presentation, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Global Consultation 2009, Istanbul, April 1, 2009).

251 Melinda Smith and Raj Kumar Dhungana, "Schools as Zones of Peace, Nepal" (presentation, UNESCO international expert seminar *Protecting Education From Attack*, Paris, September 30, 2009).

252 Melinda Smith, "Schools as Zones of Peace: Nepal Case Study in Access to Education During Armed Conflict and Civil Unrest," in *Protecting Education from Attack: A State-of-the-Art Review* (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), 261-278.

Signs were painted on roofs of schools to prevent the government from bombing them, and hoarding messages were designed to ensure public awareness of the initiative.

The programme was piloted in two of the worst affected districts. The most difficult part was developing ways of negotiating the codes of conduct, according to Melinda Smith, former education cluster lead in UNICEF's Nepal office.

At first, World Education tried to use government officials as negotiators but quickly realized this could endanger students and staff. Instead, they trained trusted local community members, mostly women, to serve as facilitators. "The facilitators played the central role in engaging both the government and the Maoists by putting social pressure on each to take part, playing on their desire to be seen in a positive light in both communities," notes Smith. "Since the Maoists had brothers, nephews and nieces attending the local schools they were persuaded to support codes of conduct not only to help their relatives, but to be consistent with the Maoists' message of universal free public education".²⁵³

Contact was established with the Maoists via human rights activists who had helped protect Maoist lives. It was too dangerous for the facilitators to meet with the Maoists directly so negotiations involved a backdoor shuttle process enabling facilitators to operate without fear of retribution. A key factor was mobilizing local journalists to act as monitors of any agreed code, which was posted at the front of schools, Smith argues.

As the conflict escalated, participants agreed that there was a need to create district-wide codes of conduct to underpin the school-based codes. They also noted the need to develop peace education/conflict resolution modules for the community and schools. The codes included clauses such as "No arrest or abduction of any individual within the premises"; "No use of school to camp, never consider school premises as possible target, no use of school as armed base, no use of school uniforms for camouflaging purposes".²⁵⁴

Negotiations in two districts proved successful, with 39 schools in six targeted villages declaring themselves "Zones of Peace". A district



© UNICEF Nepal/CWIN/2008

253 Ibid., 266.

254 Smith, "Nepal Case Study: Schools as Zones of Peace," sample code of conduct.

code of conduct was also negotiated. Local monitoring teams reported that all political activities in schools had ceased as a result of the code.²⁵⁵

In another SZOP initiative by Save the Children US, interviews in four districts showed parents and students felt there was enhanced safety and security at school and violence had ceased.²⁵⁶

The success of the SZOP initiatives during the conflict led to a government SZOP campaign after the conflict and in response to emerging unrest in the Terai region.

Conducted using national advocacy, public hearings and local negotiations, this achieved the agreement of codes of conduct in nine districts and 403 schools. The results were fewer school days lost to closure during strikes, armed groups stayed out of schools, school governance improved and the misuse of schools for political activities was reduced.²⁵⁷ Since then, efforts have been made to develop a national framework for Schools as Zones of Peace.²⁵⁸

The lessons bear some similarities to the lessons of the negotiations in Afghanistan: conditions for success seemed to include ownership of the process by the community, buy-in from the armed opposition and local leadership/sense of ownership of schools. The additional advantage in Nepal was the Maoists' public commitment to universal education.

The CARE study in Afghanistan recommends that where potential attackers are known, community leaders might consider engaging in preventative negotiations with them to try to reach agreement on continuing education locally. But it warned that this option must not be taken lightly and only local leaders would know if it was appropriate, might achieve the opposite effect or would be beyond their reach.²⁵⁹

At an international expert seminar, "Protecting Education from Attack", hosted by UNESCO in Paris in September 2009, it was argued that the efficacy of attempting to challenge armed groups to end attacks on education and comply with international humanitarian law would depend on the motives and structure of such groups. If they are seeking international recognition as a potential government in waiting, they might be more cooperative; but many parties to conflict are made up of semi-autonomous factions with different levels of discipline and different levels of will to comply. Where the objective is to terrorize the civilians or drive an ethnic group out of a region, the task will be considerably more difficult.

255 Smith, "Schools as Zones of Peace: Nepal Case Study", 268-269.

256 Ibid., 269.

257 Ibid., 276-277.

258 Smith and Dhungana, "Schools as Zones of Peace."

259 Glad, *Knowledge on Fire*, 57.

■ Inclusion in peace agreements

Another place to address attacks on education, the motives for them and their impact on the right to education might be in the content of peace agreements.

Of 37 publicly available peace agreements signed between 1989 and 2005, 26 (70 per cent) mention education; and of 66 publicly available partial peace agreements signed in the same period, 31 (47 per cent) mention education.²⁶⁰ According to Kendra Dupuy, these agreements stipulate four types of activity: respecting and implementing the right to education, resuming education services, responding to conflict-created issues within the education sector, and reforming the education system to address issues at the heart of the conflict.²⁶¹

Several peace agreements formally recognize the strong connection between education and the root causes of some conflict, including distribution of resources, access to political power, recognition of identity and cultural development, and poverty.²⁶² "Peace agreements are political solutions to armed conflict, and education is fundamentally a political matter because education is a central component of the production and reproduction of power structures in society," Dupuy argues.²⁶³

The 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi states that one of the causes of violence and insecurity in the country was "a discriminatory system which did not offer equal educational access to all Burundian youths from all ethnic groups". The agreement tried to rectify this by calling for equitable distribution of buildings, equipment and textbooks.²⁶⁴

Similarly the Guatemalan and Chiapas agreements of the mid-1990s state that indigenous teachers should be trained and employed to carry out bilingual and multicultural education to improve social equality and inclusion, thereby addressing grievances around which groups of people in these countries mobilized. The 1996 Guatemalan Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples calls on the government to involve community representatives in the management of education

260 Kendra E. Dupuy, "Education in Peace Agreements, 1989-2005," *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (February 2009), 153.

261 *Ibid.*, 155.

262 Wondem Asres Degu, "Reforming Education," in *Postconflict Development: Meeting New Challenges*, ed. Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren (Boudler: Lynne Rienner, 2004) and Scott Gates, "Empirically Assessing the Causes of War" (paper, 43rd Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, New Orleans, March 24-27, 2002), as cited in Dupuy, "Education in Peace Agreements", 158.

263 Dupuy, "Education in Peace Agreements", 158.

264 *Ibid.*, 159.

at the local level, and the 1996 Philippines Agreement calls for autonomous regional governance of education.

Some agreements address curriculum content, encouraging the teaching of values such as tolerance, forgiveness, cooperation, solidarity, respect and diversity; and some specify the use of the local language as the language of instruction.

Dupuy argues that education has an important place in peace agreements because they can determine the priorities for the post-conflict period, they signal a state's commitment to caring for its entire population, and, most importantly, because education has a vital role to play in building peace.

However, possible reasons for not including education in peace agreements are the dangers involved in trying to negotiate with armed groups and the question of whether agreements affecting the long-term future of education are best addressed by combatants on the field of battle, with little time for or possibility of drawing on education expertise.

Jonathan Somer, a legal adviser with Geneva Call, an NGO which negotiates with non-state actors in conflicts to reach agreement on non-use of landmines and is looking into developing a way to reach agreements on child protection, warns that armed groups may not be willing to cooperate with state authorities in some situations precisely because of tension over education. He cites the example of the PKK in Kurdish areas of Turkey, who used to see schools as legitimate targets because they believed the Turkish authorities, who banned the use of the Kurdish language in schools, were using them for assimilation purposes as part of a campaign to annihilate Kurdish culture.²⁶⁵

The question remains whether peace agreements have been successfully implemented in countries where education has been a target of attack, and what, if any, effect they have had in improving prevention of and protection from attacks, in mitigating the educational impact of attacks in the long-term and in removing education as source of tension. Further research is needed in this area before any conclusions can be drawn.

265 Jonathan Somer, interview with the author, October 9, 2009.

■ Controlling the behaviour of Armed Forces

Deterring members of state armed forces from carrying out attacks may require a tightening up of guidelines on the implementation of international humanitarian and human rights law in relation to attacks on civilian objects and civilians. The 2009 UNESCO expert seminar in Paris was told by legal experts with experience of advising combat commanders that the key to preventing violations is good discipline; effective training of troops; and an effective system of listening to complaints, reporting all suspected violations and investigating and prosecuting where there is a case to answer. Under the Geneva Convention, soldiers must be trained in the implementation of international law not just when they are recruited but annually, before deployment, and in the theatre of war. They must be informed, for instance, that collateral damage cannot be excessive in relation to the military advantage to be gained and that their decisions will be judged on the expected impact on civilians. They must carry with them cards which effectively communicate the rules of engagement. At the same time, the advice on operational law given to commanders on the battlefield is critical. Military legal experts argue that there is a need to better stigmatize the use of schools for military purposes if attacks by national and international armed forces are to be reduced.

■ Making education work for peace

One way to reduce the risk of schools becoming targets in the first place is to ensure that education plays its part in building peace, before, during or after conflict. As mentioned in *Education under Attack* (2007), a blueprint for this exists already in the form of the 1966 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers, which in paragraph 3 states:

Education from the earliest school years should be directed to the all-round development of the human personality and to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic progress of the community, as well as to the inculcation of deep respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; within the framework of these values the utmost importance should be attached to the contribution to be made by education to peace and to understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and among racial or religious groups.

Education may be intrinsically political in the way it shapes power structures in society, but if it is fair and genuinely inclusive, run in a transparent way, and sensitive to local cultural identity, language, religion, history and values, it can contribute to a reduction in the very tension that in some cases causes schools or universities to be attacked. Giving parents and students a say in the running of schools is one way to ensure that these sensitivities are addressed.

Curriculum content that can also make a positive contribution includes the use of inquiry-based history teaching methods and curricula to tackle controversial local history; the teaching of education for mutual understanding, common and diverse cultural heritage, and conflict resolution; and the promotion of curriculum or research collaboration between students and staff from both sides in divided communities. It also includes creating an ethos of tolerance, fairness and understanding.

All of these have been tried for many years in Northern Ireland, for instance, where Catholic teachers were issued with a blanket death threat by an armed group in 2002 – although experts are divided on their impact, given that children from both sides still largely attend separate school, and education is competing with the influence of sectarianism in children’s families and communities.²⁶⁶

Similarly, in higher education, tackling the restriction or distortion of content, limitations on academic freedom and bias in the way staff are hired may contribute to ending conflict and building peace and stability. Hester Luna Paanakker’s explorative study on attacks on higher education in Iraq, based on researching the views of academics who fled the country after the American invasion, found that the way higher education was being run was perceived as fostering an environment in which the large-scale and specific targeting of academics for political reasons took place. This politicization took the form of favouritism, selectivity, repressiveness and corruption on sectarian lines. More research is needed into the place of academic freedom in the relationship between conflict, political violence and higher education.²⁶⁷

266 Brendan O’Malley, *Peace Makers* (Teachers TV, 2008), documentary, www.teachers.tv.
267 Hester Luna Paanakker, “Higher Education in Iraq under Attack: An Explorative Study on the Political Violence Against Academics and the Higher Education System in the Conflict in Iraq” (master’s thesis, University of Amsterdam, September 2009), 108.

9. Monitoring and impunity

■ Strengths and weaknesses in UN monitoring of attacks on education

At the UN General Assembly debate on Education in Emergencies on 18 March 2009, Nicholas Burnett of UNESCO made a powerful case for the link between monitoring and reporting and ending impunity. “Regular monitoring is crucial because silence legitimates an unacceptable situation,” he said. “In some cases, monitoring can act as a deterrent; in others it can be a tool for negotiation and mediation. Every single attack needs to be documented, investigated and brought to international attention. Without monitoring, we cannot denounce, and without denunciation, we cannot act to protect education and to end impunity”.²⁶⁸ Such documentation is also vital for improving rapid response, recovery measures and efforts to prevent future attacks.

Currently, no global monitoring system exists for the full range of attacks on education. There is, however, a growing international monitoring and reporting mechanism stemming from international action on children and armed conflict, which covers attacks on schools. While not a comprehensive solution to the challenge of

268 Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO (panel address, UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or Natural Disasters, New York, March 18, 2009), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001812/181220e.pdf>.

monitoring and reporting attacks on education, this mechanism is an important one among several avenues for improving the coverage of such attacks. The key questions are how can it be strengthened to enable better data collection and use, and how can it be complemented to ensure that the full range of attacks is consistently monitored and that the data contribute towards efforts to enhance protection, risk avoidance and recovery.

Origins of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict

The UN Security Council first called for an annual listing of parties who use children in armed conflict in 2001 (Resolution 1379). Time-bound action plans for halting recruitment and releasing child soldiers were introduced by Security Council Resolution 1539 in 2004. State and non-state actors had to agree to such plans with UN Country Teams²⁶⁹ or face the possibility of sanctions.

Subsequently, an international Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) was established by SC Resolution 1612 (2005), to provide “timely, accurate, reliable and objective” information to the Security Council on six grave violations against children in armed conflict, including “attacks on schools and hospitals”. For the first time, there was an attempt to put in place a system of monitoring and reporting, with UN Country Teams establishing MRM Task Forces in each listed state and feeding incidence data to the Security Council.

However, the only countries monitored by the MRM are those that are officially listed in the annexes of the reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict. Until now, countries have been listed only for recruitment and use of child soldiers, although once listed the other five grave violations can also be monitored. Even then, not all countries where significant levels of recruitment or use of child soldiers are reported have been listed: India is a prime example.

As a result, the imperative to monitor attacks on education via the MRM currently exists only in 14 countries, compared with 31 countries listed in this study as having experienced attacks on education between January 2007 and July 2009.

In March 2009, the annexes to the Secretary-General's 8th Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict listed parties to conflict from the following countries:

269 United Nations Country Teams are composed of the representatives of the UN operational agencies on the ground in a country. In complex emergencies or disasters, the UN Resident Coordinator plays the leading role in coordinating the programmes and actions of all countries with a UN presence.

Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda.²⁷⁰ Of the other countries with the most serious incidence of attacks on education during its reporting period (September 2007 to December 2008), developments in Georgia, Iraq, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Thailand were also reported; but there was no mention of India, Iran, Pakistan or Zimbabwe.

Under SC Resolution 1612, a Working Group of the Security Council was set up,



The UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict convenes at UN Headquarters in New York to discuss violations against children during armed conflict.

of which a subgroup meets every two months to consider reports²⁷¹ provided by the MRM country-level Task Forces, usually focusing on two conflict situations at a time. The reports are approximately 18 pages long and chronicle all violations reported by the MRM Task Force in the relevant country, identify action taken and make recommendations. The subgroup debates them and makes recommendations on them to the Secretary-General concerning what time-bound action he should instruct the parties to conflict to take.²⁷²

The MRM Task Force in each country is a coalition of willing partners, which reports to the UN Country Team. The Country Team is chaired by a representative of the Secretary-General or the Resident Coordinator, with a vice-chair usually from UNICEF, or otherwise from OHCHR, UNHCR, DPKO or ILO. The Task Force members are UN agencies, NGOs and other civil society bodies, usually organizations which are heavily

270 United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, A/68/785-S/2009/158 (March 26, 2009), annexes.

271 These reports include global horizontal notes and country-specific reports. The horizontal notes, which are not made public, provide information or updates on the situations of concern. The country-specific reports are later made public and feed into the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict.

272 For more details on how the MRM works, see Watchlist on Children in Armed Conflict, *Getting it Done and Doing it Right: A Global Study on the United Nations-led Monitoring & Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict* (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, January 2008); and Katy Barnett and Anna Jefferys, *Full of Promise: How the UN's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism Can Better Protect Children*, HPN Paper #62 (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

involved in child protection or human rights monitoring. The proportion of non-UN agencies involved varies between different countries.

The Task Forces are supported by the work of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC), which helps Country Teams design and implement action plans.²⁷³

They collect and verify information on incidents related to the six grave violations against children:

- Killing or maiming of children;
- Recruitment or use of children as soldiers;
- Attacks against schools or hospitals;
- Denial of humanitarian access to children;
- Abduction of children;
- Rape and other grave sexual abuses of children.

To date, action plans have remained limited to addressing the recruitment and use of children as soldiers (although this will broaden to include sexual violence and killing and maiming, following SC Resolution 1882, which was adopted on 4 August 2009).

As monitoring has both improved and increased for child soldier recruitment, so, too, has expertise in the design and implementation of action plans. According to Alec Wargo, Programme Officer of the OSRSG-CAAC, a crucial lesson learned is that the Security Council Working Group is better equipped to make concrete recommendations when more in-depth analysis of the violations committed is available. "The monitoring and reporting of child soldiers has steadily improved since 2005," says Wargo. "Also we have a lot more mainstreaming with child protection advisers on peace-keeping missions and other operations".²⁷⁴

Progress on child soldiers

The proof of progress on child soldier use and recruitment lies in the rate of de-listing from the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report. Countries are de-listed

273 Alec Wargo, interview with the author, October 8, 2009.
274 Ibid.

when the time-bound action plan has been fulfilled; in other words, when there is prevention of recruitment, accountability for those who recruit in violation of both local and international law, and access for the UN to verify what is being done. It usually takes about a year to 18 months and can only happen if there is no new widespread recruiting; if there is commensurate punishment for those who do recruit; and if there are no longer children associated with the armed force in the field or in camps.

These efforts have yielded some significant successes with regard to the use of child soldiers, according to Human Rights Watch²⁷⁵:

- Five parties to the armed conflict in Côte d'Ivoire ended their use of child soldiers after agreeing to action plans to end the practice;
- The government of Uganda has been “de-listed” from the Secretary-General's list of violators after removing children from the Uganda People's Defence Forces and local defence units associated with the government;
- Several non-state armed groups in Myanmar have signed voluntary “deeds of commitment” committing to end their use of child soldiers and submit to independent verification;
- As follow-up to the Security Council Working Group conclusions, the SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict has secured commitments from parties to armed conflict in the Philippines, Nepal, Chad, Central African Republic and elsewhere to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers and/or to release children from their forces;
- Some actors have agreed to action plans to demobilize child soldiers, although they have yet to be implemented fully.

Neglect of sexual violence and attacks on schools

By contrast, the coverage of sexual violence and attacks on education in the Secretary-General's reports has been minimal, suggesting not enough weight is being given to gathering information on these topics. Greater salience has been given to sexual violence this year, however, with the passing of SC Resolution 1882, which opens the way to listing countries for this violation.

275 Human Rights Watch (HRW), “Taking the Next Step: Strengthening the Security Council's Response to Sexual Violence and Attacks on Education in Armed Conflict,” April 20, 2009.

Until August 2009, the recruitment of child soldiers was the only trigger for countries being listed and in practice became the main focus of the MRM. Now, two more violations will trigger listing - sexual violence and killing and maiming - which will also result in mandatory action plans to tackle these violations. This should increase attention to sexual violence and killing and injuring of students at or on the way to or from school, but not necessarily attacks on school buildings and the killing of school teachers and other education personnel.

Given that all six violations are to be monitored wherever listing is triggered, this expansion of criteria for listing may benefit the monitoring and reporting of attacks on schools because it may widen the number of countries being observed.

However, the reality is that the non-trigger violations, in general, and attacks on schools, in particular, seem to get far less attention and few recommendations have been made on how to improve protection of students and schools. A Human Rights Watch analysis of the Security Council's response to two violations, sexual violence and attacks on education, found that although the monitoring and reporting mechanism documents all six grave violations, in practice violations other than the recruitment and use of child soldiers have received only superficial attention.

According to the analysis, the Secretary-General has issued nine country reports on children and armed conflict since the beginning of 2008 and the Security Council Working Group has issued ten separate sets of conclusions on individual situations. These 19 documents included a total of 141 separate recommendations related to the recruitment and use of child soldiers, but only 18 recommendations on sexual violence and only six related to attacks on education. Seven of the 19 documents include no recommendations on either sexual violence or attacks on education, even in situations where the Secretary-General has described rates of sexual violence as "alarming" and where attacks on schools have also been cited.²⁷⁶

Similarly, a 2008 Humanitarian Practice Network study, supported by Save the Children, concluded that monitoring and reporting and responses to grave violations other than recruitment were "limited and patchy", and that the situation would not change as long as child recruitment remained the only criterion for inclusion in the annexes. It noted that Security Council members had expressed concern that in situations where schools are subject to attacks their situation would "not be afforded any thorough scrutiny" unless specific instances of recruitment are found.²⁷⁷ If this pattern is repeated with the two new trigger violations, it is unlikely that attacks on schools will be monitored adequately by the MRM.

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Ibid.

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Barnett and Jefferys, *Full of Promise*, 16.

Human Rights Watch recommended that the UN Security Council should mandate UN Country Teams to expand the dialogue with parties to armed conflict to achieve action plans that address all violations against children including sexual violence and attacks on schools; and that the Security Council should incrementally extend the “triggers” for monitoring and reporting of violations against children and armed conflict, starting by including the violations of sexual violence and attacks on schools as triggers.²⁷⁸

Nicholas Burnett, for UNESCO, said the Security Council must be encouraged to give equal weight to all categories of grave violations and to refer certain targeted attacks to the International Criminal Court for investigation and prosecution. “In short we need to ensure that a systematic, reliable global monitoring system is in place to document violent attacks on education,” he said.²⁷⁹

Broadening the definition of attacks on schools

A second issue that has been raised internationally is whether the monitoring and reporting covers a wide enough definition of attacks on schools. The question may stem from the lack of prosecutions of, or reports on, attacks on schools in the Secretary-General’s reports on children and armed conflict (although coverage has increased in the most recent report).

How close does “attacks on schools” come to the definition used in this study? For instance, does it include students, teachers, school support staff, education officials, education trade unionists and education aid workers?

The minimum data set that the OSRSG-CAAC seeks from MRM Task Forces asks for nine categories of information in relation to attacks on schools and hospitals, including answers to the following question: “Consequences of attack? (Number of children killed/injured; period of time that the school was closed/affected; number of teachers killed/injured or other staff)”.²⁸⁰

In her 2009 Annual Report to the UN Human Rights Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, makes the following recommendation regarding attacks on schools, using a wide definition (with author’s emphasis):

278 Ibid.

279 Burnett, (panel address).

280 Minimum dataset supplied by Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Parties in situations of armed conflict are urged to adhere to international law protecting the right to education in situations of concern. *This includes protecting educational institutions and the process of education, including students, teachers, academics and other education personnel.* Special attention should be paid to the protection of girls, given the increased targeting of girls' education in some countries.²⁸¹

In line with this, the instructions sent by the Security Council Steering Committee to the Nepal MRM Task Force define attacks on schools as “physical attacks against the buildings hosting a school including occupation, shelling, targeting for propaganda, forced closures, forced use of schools by armed groups/forces, *physical assaults against school personnel*, looting and robbery of school equipments and supplies, restrictions of access”.²⁸²

Forced use of schools here refers to “military intervention disturbing regular learning activities: use/exploitation of the places for any purpose (station, bunker, night halt, using water taps/playground; lecture/talk programme/learning programme by armed groups; entering school premises with arms; firing at school premises, exchange of fire through school premises; presence in proximity with the building)”.

Task Force member organizations are also instructed to count the number of teachers/staff killed and injured, the number of children/students killed and injured, and the combined number of threats to teachers/students.

This dispels any notion that the MRM system is not intended to collect information on a wide definition of attacks on schools that includes students, teachers and education personnel as well as buildings. So why is it not happening in practice?

Why education attacks are poorly reported

Currently, the MRM Task Forces appear to be seriously underreporting the extent of attacks on education in many situations where parties are already listed for recruitment or use of child soldiers. There is little information on Thailand, for instance, minimal data from Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and very little information on Somalia and Sudan.

281 United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*, Radhika Coomaraswamy, A/HRC/12/49 (July 30, 2009), para. 62.

282 Taken from a copy of the instructions provided by Informal Service Sector Centre (INSEC).

There has been a failure to encourage the involvement of key education sector actors (both UN and civil society) and get them to address and highlight issues relating to attacks on education. It would appear that education organizations have yet to become closely and/or consistently involved with the monitoring and reporting mechanism and in some cases, may not even be aware of its existence. As yet, no community of practice on reporting on these violations has emerged. As a result of their absence or lack of engagement, education-oriented organizations are not feeding information into the Country Teams for the Secretary-General's reports or proposing actions they would like the Security Council to take to protect children and education.

Where MRM reporting on education attacks does occur, it is limited to an exclusive emphasis on physical attacks while other threats and the impact on children and education systems are conspicuously lacking in such reporting.

It should be noted that two general factors affect any attempt to bring education organizations on board. One is lack of staff and funding. Most Task Force members have added MRM activities to their workload with little or no expansion of capacity. Even UNICEF has received very little funding for implementing the MRM. As Barnett and Jefferys argue, there is a need to ensure that Task Forces routinely receive resources both to facilitate capacity-building for their members in monitoring and reporting and to ensure that monitoring and reporting are undertaken to a sufficient scale and quality.²⁸³

Another factor is the reluctance to cooperate in collecting information about human rights violations due to fear of threats or retributive attacks by armed forces and armed groups. NGOs may also have concerns about risking principles of partiality and neutrality, as Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict has reported, because the information collected is used to trigger political action by the Security Council.²⁸⁴ Many NGOs are concerned about the possibility that information gathered by MRM Task Forces might be shared with the International Criminal Court, particularly in countries where the ICC has issued indictments for war crimes, due to fears that commanders and others facing potential indictment will carry out punitive attacks.²⁸⁵

Greater involvement of education-oriented UN agencies and NGOs is needed to put attacks on education on the agenda of country-level MRM Task Forces. But these organizations are caught in a quandary: if they could become more active in monitoring and reporting education attacks, they could lobby effectively for more financial support for preventive recovery programmes, but without extra funds and training they may not have the capacity to monitor such attacks. There is a case,

283 Barnett and Jefferys, *Full of Promise*, 15, 20.

284 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Getting it Done and Doing it Right*, 11.

285 *Ibid.*, 17.

therefore, for donor governments concerned about the effects of attacks on education upon the quest to achieve Education for All to consider providing targeted funding for such capacity-building among education-oriented UN agencies and NGOs.

Targets missed by the MRM

There are some significant differences between the remit of the OSRSG-CAAC on attacks on schools and the wider definition of attacks on education used in this study, which concern the definition of education personnel other than teachers and the limitation to the K-12 education sector. Bridging this information gap is a challenge that most likely will have to be filled outside the apparatus of the MRM.

One type of target that is only partially covered by the MRM is security guards/escorts:

Security guards/escorts

The OSRSG-CAAC interpretation is that security escorts for teachers can be included if there is a clear pattern of attacking convoys of teachers. It is more problematic if the teachers are escorted by soldiers rather than the police, which is a civilian force. This fits with the Geneva Convention distinction between civilians and military personnel but perhaps not with the real motives for attacks, since rebels tend to see soldiers and police alike as symbols of the state they are opposing. This study includes soldiers guarding teachers because attacking them represents an attempt to prevent the protection of teachers, and is therefore an attack on the right to education in safety.

Three significant types of target not covered at all by the MRM are attacks on teacher trade unionists, higher education personnel and education officials:

Teacher/education trade unionists

Under the MRM, if a teacher is attacked while carrying out a political or trade union activity as opposed to actually teaching, the attack is not counted as an attack on schools.

“If they are attacked in a school with students then it is very clear that they are being attacked as part of the whole education infrastructure. If they are outside of their community, and they are engaged in political activity, they may be teachers but they are teachers second, they are political activists first,” Wargo says. “We’d always have to ask the crucial questions: Why were they attacked? What are the events

surrounding the attack? Is it just after a meeting of trade union officials or is it in the school?"²⁸⁶

The case needs to be made for the inclusion of teacher trade unionists because they are often an important part of ensuring the provision of good-quality education both at primary level in line with the Education for All goals and at all other levels of education.

Jan Eastman, of Education International, says the first point to make is that teacher trade unionists are both teachers and trade unionists, so their deaths still mean the loss of a teacher. Teachers are the most important and expensive resource in the education process. Schools can exist without buildings - 60 per cent of schools in Afghanistan do not have permanent buildings and operate in the open air or tents²⁸⁷ - but they cannot function without teachers. If teachers stop going to work due to death, injury or fear, children will not be taught.²⁸⁸

Her second point is that teachers have a vital contribution to make through their trade unions in taking part in national dialogues shaping the education system, its curriculum, standards and values. Attacks on teacher trade unionists while carrying out that activity are an attack on the education system. Even debate about teachers' pay is important, since the level set will affect recruitment and consequently the quality of staff. Giving teachers a voice through union membership and activities is an important part of developing a high-quality education system; attacking teacher trade unionists therefore potentially threatens the quality of education provided.

Academics and higher education personnel

Tertiary education is not covered by the OSRSG-CAAC because the remit of the MRM concerns children under 18. Although it is possible to argue that universities are fundamental to the training and qualification of future schoolteachers in both their subject and in pedagogy, the protection of academics is not on the Security Council's agenda – perhaps because there is little awareness of the extent of the problem or its significance. There is the additional concern of the political sensitivity of the subject, given that most attacks on higher education appear to be carried out by forces of the state. Detailed studies reporting incidents, who is responsible, and why would be required to demonstrate that academics are a vulnerable population.

286 Alec Wargo, interview with the author, October 8, 2009.

287 Maysam Najafizada, "Afghanistan: Education in a War Zone," *Transitions Online* with support from the Education Support Program, Open Society Institute, February 13, 2009.

288 Jan Eastman, interview with the author, August 27, 2009.

Education officials

It hardly needs saying that attacks on education officials are an attack on the education system. Without them, budgets will not be set, supplies will not arrive, teachers will not be paid, national standards will not be devised and enforced, curricula will not be developed, teachers will not be trained, and the education process will grind to a halt. Attacks on individual officials or administrative buildings are an attack on the capacity of the education system to function. Therefore, it is important that attacks on officials are also monitored.

Towards global monitoring of attacks on education

There are two ways to increase reporting of attacks on education. One is to intensify and broaden the scope of reporting by the MRM to include non-physical attacks and, particularly, the impact of attacks on education on the school system. Zama Coursen-Neff of Human Rights Watch has suggested that country-level education clusters could play a positive role in helping to put education-oriented information systems in place and in developing methods of collecting standardized information.²⁸⁹

The other way is to encourage the development of a truly systematic global monitoring system on this issue, to which the MRM could contribute relevant data, but which would cover all sectors of education and feed into an annual report similar to *Education under Attack 2010*. It would mean building a coalition of international, regional and national partners, across all education sub-sectors, willing to seek and provide data year after year so that trends and impact could be tracked both globally and within particular contexts.

For their part, the networks devoted to assisting endangered scholars and education trade unionists could contribute to monitoring and reporting by investing in analysis of the considerable number of reports of incidents reaching them concerning academics and education trade unionists and by publishing the information.

Perhaps education organizations that are encouraged to participate in the MRM could additionally be persuaded to extend their reporting to cover the full range of attacks - where they have the means to do so - for use by a global monitoring system.

289 Zama Coursen-Neff, "Monitoring Attacks on Education" (presentation, UNESCO International Expert Seminar *Protecting Education from Attack*, Paris, September 28, 2009).

■ Ensuring perpetrators are punished

The cases for and against changing international law

The problem of lack of prosecution of those responsible for attacks on education has vexed the international community and has gained increased attention since the publication of *Education under Attack* (2007). At a conference on Iraqi education, hosted by UNESCO in Paris in November 2008, there were widespread calls for investigations of those responsible for killing hundreds of university professors and intellectuals.²⁹⁰ At the UN General Assembly debate on Education in Emergencies in March 2009, there was an impassioned plea by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, of Qatar, to ensure that the perpetrators of attacks on education are punished.

Her Highness, who is UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, said: "Upholding the right to education requires protecting educational institutions and all their staff from attacks during times of conflicts. This protection can only be ensured through the presence of two essential elements: sanctions and punishment.

"To that end, existing international conventions must be activated and their content enhanced to establish, through profound and serious reflection, an international mechanism, practical and operational, to prohibit attacks on the right to education, punishing the perpetrators and obliging them to offer an appropriate compensation for any human or material damage resulting from their actions".²⁹¹

Key questions raised in and as a result of the ensuing debate included: What more needs to be done to ensure that perpetrators are actually investigated, tried and punished? Was the apparent widespread lack of progress on this issue due to gaps in the coverage of attacks on education by international law or the monitoring processes that can inform investigators? Should there be a campaign for a UN resolution?

290 UNESCO, International Conference on the Right to Education in Conflict-Affected Countries *Stop Jeopardizing the Future of Iraq*, Paris, October 30 - November 1, 2008, focused on access to education, protection of Iraqi intellectuals, and educational issues facing Iraqi universities, IDPs and refugees. It was attended by Iraqi ministers, officials and academic leaders and supported by the Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned.

291 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "Speech by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar: Opening Session of the Thematic and Interactive Debate on Education in Emergencies," March 18, 2009.

What could be done to ensure that laws that do apply are used to investigate such attacks?

There are differing opinions on whether attacks on education are adequately covered in international law, which here refers to international human rights law (IHRL); international humanitarian law (IHL), including customary international law;²⁹² and international criminal law (ICL).

Research conducted on behalf of the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar into the coverage of such attacks in the principal relevant treaties in IHRL, IHL, ICL and customary law suggests such attacks are already covered, even though the protection of education buildings is not expressly mentioned in them as thoroughly as, for example, the protection of hospitals.²⁹³

Under IHRL, which concerns the duty of states to protect rights, states do have a duty to protect enjoyment of the right to education or education systems from attack in times of armed conflict or insecurity even by private actors. In practice, it means states must take “reasonable” steps to protect students from attacks by paramilitaries, criminal gangs or non-state organized armed groups (NSOAG) at or on their way to or from school, where the attacks create a barrier to attending school.²⁹⁴ It also means they have a duty to take steps to overcome other obstacles to education, which could arguably include the need to repair schools after attack.²⁹⁵

292 The concept behind customary international law is that a state is bound by a norm of conduct even when it has not given its sovereign consent through ratification of a treaty, and even though it strongly disagrees that the alleged norm is customary law. That norm of conduct is established simply by general practice or the words and behaviour of states. Although there can be disputes over whether a particular standard of conduct has become a binding rule of law through custom, the two basic rules applying to the protection of education systems - no targeting of civilians or civilian objects and no excessive collateral damage - are among the most firmly established customary norms in IHL. See The Office of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems,” in *Protecting Education from Attack: A State-of-the-Art Review* (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), 147-178.

293 The IHRL treaties referred to here are the UNGA, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*, 999 UNTS 171 (December 16, 1966), the UNGA, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*, 993 UNTS 3 (December 16, 1966), and the UNGA, *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, 1577 UNTS 3, A/44/49 (November 20, 1989); the IHL treaties are the four International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Geneva Conventions (GC)* (August 12, 1949), and the two Additional Protocols: ICRC, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)*, 1125 UNTS 3 (June 8, 1977) and *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)*, 1125 UNTS 609 (June 8, 1977); and the ICL treaty is the UNGA, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, A/CONF.183/9 (July 17, 1998). See The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems.”

294 The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems.”

295 Ibid.

Human rights treaties are created under the authority of the United Nations General Assembly. Compliance is monitored by the treaty bodies, which report to the General Assembly, and the Human Rights Council with its Special Rapporteurs, including the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, and the Universal Periodic Review, which reviews progress of every state in realizing human rights. Other accountability mechanisms include the UN Security Council; the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict; the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; and the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. Security Council mechanisms include recommendations and resolutions, which may establish systems of reporting and time-bound action plans, as with SC Resolution 1612.²⁹⁶

Under IHL (also known as the laws of war), which covers both international and non-international armed conflict,²⁹⁷ civilians (including students, teachers, academics and other education personnel) and civilian objects (including school buildings and transport) must never be targeted for attack; an attack must not cause “excessive” or disproportionate incidental loss (collateral damage) to civilians in relation to the direct military advantage anticipated; and the weapons or methods must not cause an unreasonable (disproportionate) amount of suffering to human beings. Violations of any of these rules fall into the most serious category of war crime.²⁹⁸

These rules apply to political leaders of states and commanders of state forces who make decisions about the conduct of warfare, but also to the political leaders and commanders of NSOAGs. In addition, individual soldiers of both state forces and NSOAGs are obligated to comply with them and their commanders can be held criminally responsible for violations committed by others.²⁹⁹

The most significant obligation to armed groups is contained in Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions 1949, which applies to “each Party to the conflict”. The article specifies that certain acts directed towards those who are not taking part in hostilities (such as teachers and students) are prohibited. These include murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, torture, taking hostages and outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.³⁰⁰

296 Ibid.

297 Non-international armed conflict means fighting between a state and a non-state organized armed group.

298 The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems.”

299 Ibid.

300 Peter Rowe, “The Application of International Humanitarian Law to Attacks on Education in Armed Conflict,” in *Protecting Education from Attack: A State-of-the-Art Review* (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), 179-194.

Gaps in the ratification of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Convention, on non-international armed conflict, are covered by customary law; as are gaps in the laws of distinction in the same protocol, which refers only to targeted civilians, not civilian objects, and does not outlaw disproportionate collateral damage to civilians and civilian objects.

The challenges in seeking prosecutions under IHL include the requirement to prove that civilians or civilian objects were targeted, that disproportionate force was used or that the suffering was disproportionate. Subjective judgments made about what constitutes a disproportionate impact of an attack on education, when commanders are deciding whether it is legitimate to mount an attack, may be affected by the degree to which they see, feel or understand the impact on civilians and education. Would a judge determine the legitimacy of an attack that collaterally damages a school by how many walls were immediately destroyed, by how many children were traumatized for lengthy periods, or by the possible long-term effect on children's education of teachers consequently refusing to work in the area? Education specialists and international organizations have a role to play in informing these decisions.

There are also problems in determining whether the level of violence constitutes an armed conflict, whether combatants fit the definition of an organized armed group and whether such groups have sufficient degree of control over the territory in which the violations took place.

One significant issue in IHL affecting attacks on education, however, is the exception that if civilians take part in hostilities or civilian buildings are used for military purpose - for example, as a base for soldiers or command post for military operations - they lose protected status.

There are safeguards against this exception being falsely used to justify attacks:

- Those planning or authorizing an attack must do everything feasible to establish whether the targets are civilians or civilian objects.
- Legal advisers must be available to advise commanders on the lawfulness of the attack when it is being planned or authorized.
- Those who carry out the operation must stop the attack if it becomes apparent that the targets are civilians or civilian objects.³⁰¹

301 The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Planning and Programming Directorate, "International Law and the Protection of Education Systems."

However, critics believe that, during the heat of battle, confusion over the evidence of whether a building is being used for military purpose can too easily be used to justify attack. Since the ascribed motive for a high number of attacks on schools in certain conflicts is their use by the military, security forces or armed opposition groups, this may be an important point to address in law.

Gregory Bart, Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, of the US Navy, who is serving as Chief, Operational Law and Policy, for Special Operations Command, argues that there is a strong case for proposing a change to international law to increase the protection of school buildings in line with the level of protection afforded to religious buildings and hospitals, by banning their use for military purposes altogether.³⁰²

Currently, schools are no more protected than a cinema or a hotel. Yet while school protection has not been improved in law since 1907, protection of churches and hospitals in law has improved significantly to the point that their military use is banned.

Bart makes the argument that conversion to military use of one school on the battlefield leads to a higher probability that commanders will think that if one building has been converted, others must have been too, which immediately puts more schools at risk of being targeted.³⁰³

He therefore argues for an outright ban on military use and for the use of a recognizable symbol in order to make compliance easier. The ban would also require continuous vetting of the purposes of course curricula and research programmes that occur within an individual school building – thus potentially also prohibiting the use of schools for political programmes designed to recruit child soldiers, or for the use of university laboratories to develop weapons of war.³⁰⁴

Broadly, apart from the lack of a ban on military use of education buildings, the problem of widespread impunity for perpetrators of attacks on education seems to result not from deficiencies in the written law but from a failure to implement such law. Human rights experts advise that international humanitarian and human right law are complete enough to empower investigation of states on almost every problem cited in *Education under Attack*. Education buildings and students, teachers and education personnel are covered as civilians by the Geneva Conventions to which every state is a party.³⁰⁵

302 For the arguments in detail, see Gregory Bart, "The Ambiguous Protection of Schools under the Law of War: Time for Parity with Hospitals and Religious Buildings," *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 40, no. 2 (2009). His argument is a personal view and not necessarily the view of the United States government.

303 *Ibid.*, 441.

304 *Ibid.*, 438.

305 Advice of Bruce Abramson, human rights lawyer, provided at a legal seminar on increasing the protection of education systems during war and insecurity, London, June 26, 2009.

By contrast, experts advise that the risk involved in drawing up new legal rules via a new treaty specifically on attacks on education is that the process of negotiating such a treaty would give states the opportunity to unpick some of the safeguards that already exist for students, staff and education buildings as civilians and civilian objects. In other words, there is a danger that the quest to improve protection for education targets could actually leave them with less protection in law.

A dissenting view on this point, offered by Saad Jabbar, is that the passing of Security Council Resolution 1738 (2006), which protects journalists, demonstrates that it is not necessarily impractical to push for a resolution for a specific group such as academics. Such a resolution would complement the existing protection of children and schools and staff who work in them by SC Resolution 1612.³⁰⁶ On the other hand, there are also concerns that any measure that privileges protection of one group of people, or one set of buildings over another, risks legitimating attacks on other targets that are not afforded special protection.

One significant gap in IHL, particularly from the perspective of attacks on higher education or education trade unionists in non-conflict situations, is coverage below the threshold of what constitutes an armed conflict. Such violations are normally regulated by national criminal law. However, systematic attacks in peacetime are covered by Article 7 of the Rome Statute, as will be discussed later, although this would not apply to one-off attacks. This study shares the conclusion that “while action should be taken to correct any weak places in the law, most of the work to strengthen protection will have to go to solving other dimensions of the problem”.³⁰⁷

A range of aspects need tackling in order to realize the potential of international law and national laws to help deter attacks. These include:

- Referring more cases concerning perpetrators and commanders (who knew or ought to have known a war crime was taking place or failed to stop it taking place) to national prosecutors and, where appropriate, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court;
- Researching and monitoring the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms in reducing impunity for education attacks;

306 Saad Jabbar, Deputy Director of the Centre for North African Studies, Cambridge University, raised this point in an interview with the author, March 18, 2009.

307 The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems.”

- Training troops, officers and military lawyers in the laws of war and the conduct of troops in relation to protecting education from attack and protecting the right to education;
- Monitoring the compliance of officers and troops with national and international law in relation to protecting education from attack and protecting the right to education;
- Monitoring the disruption of the provision of education and fulfilment of the right to education by attacks on education, including the impact on the education system; and making the international community, military lawyers and parties to conflict more aware of the impact on victims, education systems, development and fragility;
- Entering into special agreements between parties to conflict not to attack education students, staff, personnel, buildings or their vicinity, educational processes such as examinations, or other aspects of provision;
- Improving recognition of the value of education and the importance of protecting it, via advocacy, the possible development of an internationally recognizable symbol denoting safe sanctuary status, public education on the right to education and the laws of war, and better monitoring and reporting of attacks (as above);
- Improving victim assistance and repair and recovery of buildings and facilities in line with the duty to protect the right to education.

The importance of national investigations

One problem for attacks on education is that only in a few cases, such as the incident involving acid attacks on girls in Afghanistan, does news coverage reach sufficient scale to sway world opinion and trigger international investigations. Arguably more plausible, given the extensive coverage within some countries, such as Thailand, is the likelihood of encouraging national investigations where appropriate laws exist.

In her July 2009 report to the Human Rights Council, Radhika Coomaraswamy said that action at the international level must be underpinned by a commitment to address impunity at the national level. This includes undertaking appropriate reforms of national legislation for the protection of children in order to bring laws into line with international obligations, as well as addressing prevailing cultures of impunity for grave violations against children through “rigorous investigation and prosecution

of those responsible". She advocated strengthening child protection capacity and improving training for military, police, law enforcement and judiciary officials.³⁰⁸ She said national legislation relating to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes should ensure that these crimes are punishable under national law and have the same scope as the definition contained in the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The role of the International Criminal Court

The ICC is an important vehicle for encouraging prosecutions against perpetrators of attacks on education for several reasons.

First, because the Rome Statute classifies as war crimes the conscription, enlistment or use in hostilities of children under 15; grave acts of sexual violence; and attacks on hospitals and schools, and the ICC is already carrying out investigations into crimes concerning attacks on education as defined by this study in six out of the eight cases it has taken up.

Second, although the OSRSG-CAAC does not formally forward evidence to the ICC, it does have a very close relationship with that body and makes the court aware of cases. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was due to give evidence in the Hague, based on her *amicus curiae*³⁰⁹ submission, in January 2010. The courts use OSRSG-CAAC reports to see what they might investigate and go back to partners on the ground, for instance in the MRM Task Forces, to share information. Therefore, if reporting of attacks on education by the MRM on Children and Armed Conflict can be improved, there will be an improved supply of information to encourage ICC investigations.

Further, although under the principle of complementarity the ICC tries cases only when states are unwilling or unable to do so, in line with their responsibility to prevent and punish atrocities, the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) takes a pro-active stance against impunity. It uses its influence within national and international networks to encourage and provide support for genuine national proceedings where possible.

According to the Office of the Prosecutor³¹⁰ of the ICC, the Rome Statute does not specifically define "attacks on schools", but several of the acts prohibited by the Rome

308 UNGA, *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*.

309 This is a legal term for organizations that are called upon to expound the law where a case has broader implications beyond the effects on the parties to the case.

310 Statements supplied to author by the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC), August 2009.

Statute might, under certain circumstances, cover attacks on education as defined by *Education under Attack 2010*:

Article 8 of the Rome Statute dealing with war crimes prohibits the intentional direction of attacks against the civilian population (Art. 8(2)(b)(i) & Art. 8(2)(e)(i)) and against civilian objects (Art. 8(2)(b)(ii)) in times of international and non-international armed conflict. There is also a specific reference to the prohibition of intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to education (Art. 8(2)(b)(ix) & Art. 8(2)(e)(iv)). An attack intentionally directed at a school as well as the civilians inside it would be prohibited both in terms of the general prohibition against attacking civilians and civilian objects as well as the specific prohibition against attacking educational buildings. The only caveat is that the building must not be being used for a military purpose or serve a military objective and the civilians must not be directly taking part in hostilities.

Article 7, which concerns crimes against humanity, and applies in situations of both peacetime and armed conflict, protects civilians against such acts as murder, imprisonment, torture, rape, enforced disappearance, or other inhumane acts causing great suffering or serious injury to the body or mental or physical health. For any of these acts to qualify as a crime against humanity, however, they have to be committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

According to the Rome Statute, there are three ways that a case may be brought before the ICC:

- A State Party can refer a situation to the Prosecutor;
- The Prosecutor may initiate investigations on the basis of information received from reliable sources. In this case, the Prosecutor must seek prior authorization from a Pre-Trial Chamber composed of three independent judges; or
- The United Nations Security Council can refer a situation to the Prosecutor acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Although any crime falling within the jurisdiction of the ICC is a serious matter by definition, the Rome Statute requires the OTP to determine that a case is of sufficient gravity to justify further action by the Court. Factors considered include the scale, nature, manner of commission and impact of the crimes.

Current ICC investigations of attacks on schools

Currently, the OTP is conducting investigations and prosecutions in eight cases, in four conflicts (the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC], Uganda, Sudan and the Central African Republic [CAR]), involving 14 individuals.

Six of those cases contain references to crimes that might be described as attacks on education as defined in *Education under Attack 2010*:

- The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo (Situation in the DRC)
- The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui (Situation in the DRC)
- The Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda (Situation in the DRC)
- The Prosecutor v. Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti and Okot Odhiambo (Situation in Uganda)
- The Prosecutor v. Omar Hassan Al Bashir (Situation in Darfur)
- The Prosecutor v. Jean Pierre Bemba (Situation in the Central African Republic)

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, the respective defendants/suspects are charged, among other things, with the war crime of using children under the age of 15 to participate actively in hostilities punishable under article 8(2)(b) (xxvi) and/or article 8(2)(e)(vii) of the Rome Statute in the Democratic Republic of the Congo between July 2002 and the end of 2003 and in Uganda during 2003 and 2004. It should be noted that children have also been among the victims of other offences, such as murder and acts of sexual violence.

Similarly, the situations in Darfur, Sudan, and the Central African Republic are marked by the commission of mass-scale crimes such as killings, rapes and pillaging against the civilian population, including children. In many of these instances, community leaders such as teachers were targeted. In Darfur, the relevant timeframe runs from March 2003 to July 2008; in the Central African Republic from October 2002 to March 2003.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

In September 2003, the Prosecutor informed the States Parties that he was ready to request authorization to use his own powers to start an investigation into war crimes committed in the Ituri region, but that a referral and active support from relevant States would assist his work. In March 2004, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo referred the situation in its territory to the Court, and on 23 June 2004, the Prosecutor announced his decision to open the first investigation of the ICC.

On 26 January 2009, following an earlier confirmation hearing before the Pre-Trial Chamber, the *Lubanga* trial commenced. The Office completed the presentation of its case on 14 July 2009 and the defence was scheduled to begin in October 2009. The trial of *Katanga and Ngudjolo Chui* was scheduled to commence in September 2009. The arrest warrant for Ntaganda was issued on 22 August 2006, but he remains at large in the DRC.

Uganda

In December 2003, the Office received a referral from the Government of Uganda concerning the crimes allegedly committed by the Lord's Resistance Army. The Office subsequently notified Uganda that it would interpret the referral as concerning all crimes under the Statute committed in Northern Uganda and that its investigation would be conducted in an impartial manner. Following the Ugandan government's acceptance of this interpretation, on 28 July 2004 the Office decided to open an investigation.

Five arrest warrants were issued in July 2005. However, on 11 July 2007 proceedings against Laska Lukwiya were terminated due to his confirmed death. The Office also has submitted information to Chamber on the reported death of Vincent Otti. The surviving persons remain at large and LRA abductions of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and the Central African Republic, some of them from schools, have not ceased during this period, which also saw an attack by the LRA on a teacher training institute in Sudan.

Sudan: Darfur

On 31 March 2005, the United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, adopted Resolution 1593 referring the situation in Darfur, Sudan, since 1 July 2002, to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with article 13(b) of the Rome Statute.

The investigation into the Darfur situation was opened on 6 June 2005. Since then, three cases have been brought before the Court:

- The Prosecutor v. Ahmad Muhammad Harun and Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (Ali Kushayb);
- The Prosecutor v. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir; and
- The Prosecutor v. Bahr Idriss Abu Garda.

The suspects from the first two cases remain at large, while the suspect in the third case has appeared before the Court.

With respect to “attacks on education”, Bashir has been charged with multiple attacks that took place from March 2003 to 14 July 2008 as part of the counter-insurgency campaign. These were attacks on the civilian population of Darfur, belonging largely to the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa groups, and attacks included the bombing of schools, where children made up a large proportion of victims.

The Central African Republic

The situation in the Central African Republic was referred to the ICC by the country's authorities in December 2004. The investigations opened in May 2007. An arrest warrant was issued against Jean-Pierre Bemba, who was arrested on 24 May 2008 in Brussels, Belgium. On 15 June 2009, Pre-Trial Chamber II partially confirmed the charges: Bemba is accused of rape and killing as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and pillaging as a war crime. His trial was due to start in late 2009. Massive sexual violence is a distinctive feature of this case, including against children: many have been raped, even gang raped, often in public and/or in the presence of relatives.

Additionally, the OTP continues to closely monitor allegations of crimes committed in the Central African Republic since the end of 2005 and whether any national investigation and prosecution has been, or is being, conducted with respect to crimes potentially falling under the Court's jurisdiction.

Children have been identified as primary victims of the conflict that erupted in the Central African Republic toward the end of 2005, and are estimated to account for half of the internally displaced population.

Reports indicate that various armed groups operating in the Central African Republic continue to recruit and use children. There have also been reports of other grave violations against children, including killing, maiming, and attacks on schools.

Specifically, there have been reports of schools being targeted by *Zaraguinas*, or armed bandits, for the purpose of abducting children for ransom. This has resulted in parents refusing to send their children to school.³¹¹

The deterrent effect of ICC activity

Since 22 June 2009, the OTP has been working in close cooperation with a Special Adviser on Crime Prevention, Juan E. Méndez, to research how the impact of the Office's work can be maximized and how it contributes to the prevention of massive atrocities.

“Our mission is to end impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole – war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide – and to contribute to the prevention of such crimes in the future, which might include ‘attacks on education’,” an OTP spokesman said.

The impact of each of its activities has to be maximized, from the analysis of information to the beginning of the investigation to the trial. The aim is for each investigation and prosecution to reverberate not just locally but in all States Parties.

“When massive crimes are planned, the announcement of an analysis or investigation can have a preventative impact. Even the mere monitoring of a situation by the Office – which is different from a formal investigation – can deter crimes from being committed,” the OTP said.

“This effect is not limited to situations under investigation but extends to different countries around the world, by emphasizing such aspects as the absence of immunity for serious crimes or by showing that activities previously considered ‘normal’ - for example, the recruitment of child soldiers, including so-called ‘voluntary recruitment’ - are serious crimes that will be prosecuted”.

The assertion that involvement of the ICC in cases influences states and non-state actors appears to be backed up by the research of Barnett and Jefferys, who found that the indictment of Lubanga and the two others in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on charges of recruitment of children had caught the attention of the world's press far more than any of the measures and actions associated with SC Resolution 1612. They quote a UK government source who claimed parties to conflict “are much more frightened of the ICC than they are of sanctions”.³¹²

311 Information supplied by the OTP of the International Criminal Court.

312 Barnett and Jefferys, *Full of Promise*, 9.

Currently, the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor is conducting detailed analysis of the situations in Afghanistan, Colombia, Kenya, Georgia, Côte d'Ivoire and Palestine.

Making an example of education attackers

There is general recognition that for protection of education in law to have an impact, more must be done to ensure that the perpetrators of violations are seen to pay for their crimes. At the UNGA debate in March 2009, Lothar Krappman, a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, said: "This vast demolition of education facilities is not only a side effect of blind military action. Let me ask whether attacks on schools, teachers and children really get the attention these crimes deserve? I would like to urge all those involved, including UN bodies and agencies as well as civil society organizations, to consider issuing a clear statement, which calls upon state parties to protect schools and to make them a secure place. States should criminalize attacks on schools as war crimes in accordance with article 8(2)(b)(ix) of the Rome Statute of the ICC and prosecute offenders accordingly".

A useful objective for those concerned with attacks on education might be to encourage national or international investigations in the most high-profile situations where attacks on schools and teachers are well publicized and the perpetrators have made their intention to attack schools public in published threats or orders. Examples include the targeting of schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan by the Taliban, and in India by the Communist Party of India-Maoist.

In Afghanistan, there are numerous cases of written threats, some of them in the name of Taliban leader Mullah Omar and many in the name of the Taliban. In Pakistan, the threat to girls' schools to either close down or face the consequences was made very publicly on behalf of local Taliban leader Maulana Fazlullah and was later reviewed and modified at a meeting chaired by him to apply to schools teaching girls above grade 4.³¹³

In India, the Naxalites have made public statements, particularly in Chhattisgarh State, indicating that they have blown up school buildings in retaliation for security forces previously using them as camps. In many cases, they have blown up schools long after they were no longer being used as camps.

The scale of attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the deterrent message it would send because those conflicts - and attacks on education in those conflicts - are more

313 Delawar Jan, "400 Private Schools in Swat Shut Down Girls' Classes," *The News*, January 16, 2009.

widely reported, would be a good place to start, though the alleged perpetrators would have to be caught before they could be tried, of course.

Duty to protect from attacks

A second avenue to pursue is the argument that international law can be used not just to punish perpetrators of attacks but also to put pressure on states to take protection measures against them. As mentioned earlier, while international humanitarian and criminal law outlaws the targeting of education systems, international human rights law, concerning the right to life and the right to education, contains a “duty to protect” the public from attacks by private actors, even in times of armed conflict or insecurity.

The effectiveness of these laws should not be judged merely by the number of prosecutions brought for failing to comply with them, but also by the extent to which positive measures are taken to uphold the rights they are designed to protect.

There is an important job to be done in offering states assistance to enforce these laws in the name of enhancing human rights. A dynamic and constructive way of doing this would be to encourage collaboration on the development of internationally endorsed guidelines for protecting education systems during war and insecurity.³¹⁴

Such a process would be inclusive, involving states, military officials, security and legal experts, humanitarian bodies, education organizations and others. The aim would be to provide a comprehensive list of concrete actions that could be taken to improve protection, such as enacting legislation to make the relevant human rights violations a crime under national law, and providing training for military lawyers, officers and troops specifically to understand how to avoid an attack on education. The guidelines would underpin advocacy for particular prevention measures to be taken. Significantly, they would also provide judges with guidance that would help them determine their decisions, for instance on whether reasonable steps were taken to establish if a building was a protected school building before it was attacked, or whether reasonable action was taken to prevent a school being attacked by private actors.

The ultimate aim should be to seek the adoption of such guidelines by the UN General Assembly as a clear statement of what states individually and collectively agree they should undertake.

314 The Office of HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Planning and Programming Directorate, “International Law and the Protection of Education Systems.”

The development of guidelines should be complemented by a concerted attempt internationally to raise awareness of how international law covers attacks on education by providing guidance on protection and risk avoidance measures; encouraging better monitoring and reporting of attacks; further researching their impact, the motives behind them and the effectiveness of protection measures; and increasing public education on the right to education, which is already used by advocates of Education for All. Research could usefully include deeper investigation of some of the more difficult issues informing commanders' decisions to carry out military operations, such as what constitutes excessive collateral damage to schools; or government decisions about police and security operations against suspected subversion by students, academics and trade unionists, such as whether the action impinges unreasonably on human rights, academic freedom and the right to education.

Engagement with media outlets, editors and journalists is required to promote understanding of the issues and coverage of violations. The aim should be to generate a groundswell of informed international opinion to ensure that political, military and judicial decision-makers are required to be conscious of the need to protect education from attack and give more weight to that consideration in the decisions they take.

10. A foothold on the international agenda

Education under Attack (2007) was the first global study on violent political and military attacks against education staff, students, teachers, academics, union and government officials, and institutions. As such, it broke new ground in putting this issue on the international agenda.

The study was presented at a side meeting of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in Geneva and to a briefing of experts at UN headquarters, New York, as well as to UNESCO delegates in Paris, to the Executive Board of Education International in Brussels, and to meetings of education and aid experts in the UK and the Netherlands.

The launch in New York on 8 November 2007 gained worldwide media attention, adding to coverage of the subject in reports on particular conflicts and advocacy by human rights, aid and trade union organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Save the Children, UNICEF and Education International. The latter has since issued an international declaration demanding that schools be treated as safe sanctuaries.³¹⁵

There is now extensive media coverage of attacks on education in the national press in many of the countries where they take place, and in the international press where attacks take place in conflicts involving international forces or interests, such

315 Education International, *Schools Shall Be Safe Sanctuaries: A Declaration by Education International* (Education International, September 2009).

as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Iran. Coverage of such attacks in Africa is considerably more limited.

The issue has increased in prominence on the agenda of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and has been championed internationally by the Director-General of UNESCO and by Her Highness Sheikhha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar, UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education.

A conference on the plight of education in Iraq, hosted by UNESCO and funded by the Sheikhha, took place in Paris in October 2008; this conference, in which attacks on education were a principal focus, was attended by Iraqi government ministers, MPs and prominent academics and education experts.³¹⁶

A measure of the salience of the topic in the international system is its increasing coverage in the Annual Reports of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict and the reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the extensive coverage in the UN General Assembly debate on Education in Emergencies in New York on 18 March 2009, and the Security Council's recognition of its importance in a statement issued in April 2009.

The debate was addressed by the President of the General Assembly, HE Miguel d'Escoto-Brockmann; the UN Secretary-General; the President of Burundi, HE Excellency Mr Pierre Nkurunziza; HH Sheikhha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned; Radhika Coomaraswamy, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; Vernor Muñoz, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education; and Nicholas Burnett, then Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO, among others.



On 18 March 2009, the UN General Assembly held a thematic debate on Education in Emergencies. UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Hilde F. Johnson (centre) moderates a panel on making education a priority in emergency and post-emergency situations. At left is former UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Nicholas Burnett.

316 UNESCO, International Conference on the Right to Education in Conflict-Affected Countries *Stop Jeopardizing the Future of Iraq*, Paris, October 30 - November 1, 2008.

The President of the General Assembly concluded: “We must urge all those involved, including UN bodies and agencies as well as civil society organizations to develop clear policies that call on State Parties to protect schools and make them safe havens, especially in the most difficult situations. I support the call that States should criminalize attacks on schools as war crimes in accordance with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and prosecute offenders accordingly. This must be done as a matter of course, routinely and systematically”.

On 20 April 2009, the issue was formally raised by the UN Security Council when the President of the Council, in a statement concerning the 8th Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, urged all parties to conflict to “refrain from actions that impede children’s access to education, in particular attacks or threats of attack on school children or teachers, the use of schools for military operations, and attacks on schools that are prohibited by applicable international law”.³¹⁷ He also specifically instructed all parties listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General’s report (S/2009/158) that had not already done so to prepare and implement without delay concrete time-bound action plans to halt recruitment and use of children in combat operations “and to address all other violations and abuses committed against children and undertake specific commitments and measures in this regard”.

■ The context in which education attacks are addressed

Concern about attacks on education has been addressed in a number of development and human rights agendas, but the full range of attacks has not been entirely addressed in any single one of them. Attacks on education are a threat to the achievement of all six Education for All (EFA) goals and should be a key concern of those working to achieve Education for All. Many of them occur in areas where the goals of universal primary education, gender equality and the provision of good quality education are hardest to achieve. But early childhood education facilities (EFA Goal 1) and vocational schools (EFA Goal 3) have also been targeted. And the targeting of higher education has a knock-on effect on other goals where it impinges on the education or training of future teachers.

317 United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Statement by the President of the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict*, S/PRST/2009/9 (April 29, 2009).

The lack of attention to attacks on higher education generally, except in Iraq, may partly be a product of the political drive to focus on primary education, to the neglect of higher levels of education, which are also vital to development.

Attacks on education are an important issue for the Education in Emergencies sector, which deals with the protection of the right to education, in the sense of continuing to provide education, in conflict, post-conflict and disaster-affected situations. However, attacks on education also occur in pre-conflict situations, particularly in higher education, and Education in Emergencies programmes may not necessarily address the long-term impact of the degradation of the education system or the long-term compromises needed to make education inclusive and a factor in building peace. While an undeniably important step forward, any attempt to push for an action plan, resolution or declaration on Education in Emergencies is likely to be supported most by countries concerned with the proliferation of natural disasters, which may leave little room for addressing attacks on education adequately.

Attacks on education clearly overlap with child protection concerns, particularly in armed conflict, including all six grave violations against children. But this focus may not extend to teachers and other education personnel and does not extend to higher education.

UNESCO, charged with coordinating the worldwide drive for Education for All, and with a special responsibility for holistic support to education systems, is one UN body uniquely positioned to address the issue in all sub-sectors. It has played a key role in putting the issue on the international agenda by commissioning the *Education under Attack* studies, and hosting the Iraq education conference and a seminar of experts, 'Protecting Education from Attack'. Yet the subject was not on the formal agenda of its World Conference on Higher Education Conference in July 2009.

UNICEF, with its key role in aiding recovery of education, supporting long-term development of education and coordinating monitoring of attacks in the country Task Forces for children and armed conflict, offers a voice based on practical field experience and detailed knowledge of events on the ground. But its remit remains principally focused on early childhood and basic education in line with its mandate for children.

The common interest binding all of these sectors and organizations is that attacks on education are an attack on the right to education as recognized by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Geneva Conventions, the 1966 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers and the 1997 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Personnel.

The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Vernor Muñoz, says he should work with governments and civil society to address these problems. “The moral authority of the Special Rapporteur can be very helpful to make visible cases of impunity. The information gathered in the reports is highly valued for accountability purposes”. However, his is a voluntary position and he is given scant resources. “The major assistance that governments and NGOs can provide UN special procedures is facilitating their work: support investigations, enable them to make country visits and establish processes to monitor progress on the recommendations made in their reports,” he says.³¹⁸

The first steps towards building a potential movement or coalition on this issue have been made, particularly via the expert seminar ‘Protecting Education from Attack’ in September 2009, which was attended by 70 or so representatives from interested organizations.

The challenge ahead is to harness the strengths of all those organizations with an interest in this issue to build on the progress being made on Children and Armed Conflict issues and on the momentum regarding Education in Emergencies in order to achieve protection against attacks for all involved in education, and to ensure that no sector is left behind in this regard. If Education for All is to be achieved, such concerted action is imperative.

318 Vernor Muñoz, email interview with the author, August 2009.

11. Conclusions and recommendations

Graça Machel, in her groundbreaking 1996 report to the UN Secretary-General on the situation of children in armed conflict, argued that the destruction of educational infrastructure represents one of the greatest development setbacks for countries affected by conflict. “Years of lost schooling and vocational skills will take equivalent years to replace and their absence imposes a greater vulnerability on the ability of societies to recover after war,” she said.³¹⁹

Education under Attack (2007) examined the targeting of education for attack in the ten years following her report and found that there had been a dramatic increase in the number of recorded incidents from 2004 onwards. This study, *Education under Attack 2010*, has found reported evidence that the systematic targeting of students, teachers, academics, education staff and institutions has continued in a greater number of countries during the period from January 2007 to July 2009.

The dramatic intensification of attacks reported in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Thailand and the sudden explosion of attacks during military operations in Georgia and Gaza have been the most worrying new trends. Failure to eradicate the problem in Colombia, Nepal and Iraq and the scale of ongoing attacks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Zimbabwe are matters of grave concern. An often overlooked but significant worry is the number of countries where universities and their students and academics have been targeted, such as Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Iran and Zimbabwe.

319 Graça Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* (United Nations, 1996), 44.

There have been some promising improvements in media coverage and the number of outlets covering attacks on education.

The number of incidents monitored by MRM country-level Task Forces has increased, which represents an important advance. Given the specific focus of the MRM on children in armed conflict under specific circumstances, however, this system is inadequate to provide global monitoring at all levels of an education system and of all categories targeted in each of the countries where attacks are occurring. At present, efforts still fall short of providing a comprehensive, global monitoring system.

An examination of the motives of attackers reveals many different underlying causes, but some recurring risk factors that should be explored further and addressed include:

- The misuse of schools to impose alien values;
- The failure to create a sense of community ownership of schools and the education process;
- The blurring of the distinction between military operations and aid operations; and
- The belief held by many repressive regimes that it is acceptable to assert their power by limiting the scope of education, particularly higher education, through brute force.

The apparent deterrent effect of giving communities a say in the running of schools and the defence of their schools deserves deeper consideration.

Attacks on schools, universities, students, teachers, academics and all other education personnel are not just an attack on civilians and civilian buildings. They are an attack on the right to education, development and democracy.

A possible correlation between attacks on higher education and fragility has been articulated. More research is needed to establish this link and to see if it also holds for attacks on schools. A glance at the roll call of states suffering the highest number of attacks suggests this is likely to be the case.

Protecting education is an important part of creating stability and the reverse seems also to be true. The vast demolition of schools seen in certain conflict situations can be a contributing factor in a downward spiral of violence and increased displacement of populations.

The elimination of intellectuals and the severe restriction or death of academic freedom that goes with it can have a seriously detrimental impact on development, with knock-on effects on neighbouring countries and the global cultivation of knowledge.

It is time for governments to take due account of the role that attacking education plays in creating instability and reversing economic and social progress when they are weighing up the cost of providing protection and tackling impunity. But it is also true that government policies on education in some situations are fuelling conflict and are at least part of the reason why schools are attacked.

By contrast, the values of inclusive, transparent, culturally-sensitive education that promotes tolerance and understanding, as espoused in the 1966 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers, remain crucial to education's contribution to building peace.

Progress on tackling the recruitment and use of child soldiers is welcomed, but there is a long way to go before an adequate international monitoring system is established for attacks on education or until a sufficient number of cases are tried to provide an adequate deterrent.

The MRM on Children and Armed Conflict already allows monitoring not just of attacks on school buildings but of the killing of students, teachers and other education staff. It is a question of galvanizing education-oriented organizations to become monitoring partners, help gather that information, and use it not only to strengthen accountability but also to improve prevention and response.

Attacks on education must be included as a trigger for listing by the Security Council with the added requirement of producing time-bound action plans.

Beyond, but including, the contribution of the MRM, a truly global system of monitoring attacks on the full range of education targets as defined in this study must be developed.

Evidence from research suggests that hard security measures alone may not deter attacks. Much greater effort needs to be put into researching why perpetrators carry out attacks on education and what scope there is for negotiating to protect schools and universities as safe sanctuaries.

More research is also needed on the progress of countries in criminalizing attacks and investigating and prosecuting perpetrators. The fact that many countries have not done so to date may be due largely to lack of awareness either of attacks or of the significance of their impact on education.

The importance of education needs to be raised in the minds of military generals, leaders of non-state armed groups and politicians. At the same time, members of armed forces and non-state actors should be provided with training and follow-up to embed knowledge of the provisions of humanitarian law regarding attacks on education.

There is a case for exploring the merits of changing international law to ban the conversion of schools and other education buildings to military use. But for most attacks on education, the human rights and humanitarian instruments already exist to deal with the problem; it is rather a question of gathering the evidence and putting pressure on international and national courts to investigate more cases.

At the same time, states and parties to conflict should be encouraged to take positive steps to uphold the right to education and the right to enjoy education in safety as implied by international law. To this end, the collaborative development of internationally endorsed guidelines for protecting education systems during war and insecurity would be a positive step forward.

A change of mindset is needed to ensure that political, military and judicial decision-makers are required to be conscious of the need to protect education from attack, and to give weight to that consideration in the decisions they take regarding military and security operations.

The starting point should be a sustained international campaign of awareness-raising and advocacy to ensure that education attacks, including attacks on higher education, are effectively monitored, investigated and addressed through the courts; and that

adequate protection and recovery measures are put in place.



In a rural community in Afghanistan, these children were able to attend a school after the Taliban left. The school was built inside the home of the man in the top right corner of the image.

■ Recommendations

General principle

The international community should promote respect for schools and other education institutions as sanctuaries and zones of peace in order to protect the right to education.

On improving protection in law

- The UN should encourage international courts such as the ICC to provide an adequate deterrent to attacks on schools and education institutions, students, teachers, academics and other education staff, including education officials, trade unionists and aid workers, by actively pursuing high-profile cases relating to attacks on education.
- The Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict should help deter attacks on schools and violations against children by requesting that the Secretary-General include in his reports the names of individual commanders who have been implicated through credible evidence in attacks on education for possible referral to relevant sanctions committees or for investigation by the International Criminal Court. This requires investigations not only of individual cases but also of patterns within a particular chain of command that can establish accountability for such violations among senior commanders or officials.
- Action at the international level must be underpinned by action at national level. Governments should criminalize attacks on education in law.
- The international community should support the use of national, regional and international courts to bring perpetrators of attacks on education to account (for example via advocacy, sponsorship of legal scholarship on relevant subjects, and monitoring trials).
- Governments and the international community should consider ways to strengthen the protection of higher education in international humanitarian and human rights law.

- Governments and the international community should consider the merits of proposing an outright ban in international humanitarian law on the conversion of schools to military use and the creation of an internationally recognized symbol to denote that schools and education facilities should be respected as safe sanctuaries.
- International support should be given to produce comprehensive guidelines on the application of humanitarian law to the protection of education buildings, students and personnel; and on the measures that states must take to protect education systems. Endorsement should be sought for such guidelines from the highest possible authority, preferably the United Nations General Assembly.
- Measures should be taken to encourage better training for military lawyers, commanders and soldiers on the application of humanitarian and human rights law to the protection of education buildings, students and personnel and inclusion of the issue in military manuals.
- The ICRC and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) should encourage the inclusion of learning about the right to education and other rights affected by attacks on education within school curricula, with a view to fostering the notion of schools as zones of peace and helping students to protect themselves, for example from voluntary recruitment by armed groups.
- Governments should use every opportunity to set conditions of adherence to human rights norms, with particular reference to the rights of children, the right to education, the right to academic freedom and protection of both educational institutions and the process of education when entering trade or aid agreements with parties to a conflict.

On monitoring and reporting

- Recognizing the limited attention paid to attacks on schools by the current MRM on Children and Armed Conflict, the Security Council should demonstrate its commitment to the right to education by establishing attacks on schools as a trigger violation for UN Security Council listing of parties committing violations against children in armed conflict, requiring monitoring and reporting and time-bound action plans.
- Agencies and NGOs strongly engaged in education provision should, where possible, join MRM country-level Task Forces or support their activities in

order to help improve and broaden monitoring of attacks on education and to advocate with the Security Council and within other international fora for action plans to stop such attacks.

- Donor governments should provide targeted funding to improve the capacity of education-oriented UN agencies and NGOs to support the MRM.
- The international community should support the establishment of a global system of monitoring attacks on the full range of education targets (including students from early childhood to higher education, teachers, academics, other education staff, education trade unionists, education aid workers and education facilities), comprising:
 - Annual global reporting on this problem using common data sets to enable analysis across countries and over time;
 - A publicly accessible global database; and
 - The establishment of an observatory or clearing house where data, research and reports on attacks on education can be gathered and made public.
- MRM country Task Forces, education ministries, human rights NGOs, trade union organizations and education organizations should improve their data and information collection on attacks on education to include information about the impact on education provision and quality, such as the closure of schools, enrolment, attendance and retention rates, and recruitment rates of teachers and other education personnel; the psychosocial impact on victims and affected communities; and the rate of investigations and prosecutions for attack in order to determine progress on ending impunity.

On protection measures

- The international community, UN agencies and NGOs should work with governments of conflict-affected states and governments assisting in preventing or limiting conflict to develop:
 - Mechanisms to protect threatened students, teachers, academics, education support staff, education trade unionists, education officials and education aid workers and to assist them in relocating internally or externally where appropriate;

- Ways to rapidly reconstruct, repair and resupply attacked educational institutions in order to guarantee a zero tolerance policy towards violations of the right to education;
 - Ways to support the continuation of education in alternative places or via alternative methods and media in areas under attack;
 - Ways to support the continuation of the work of academics in exile for the education system under attack.
- The international community should consider providing funding to help capacity-building for local protection of education.
 - UN Country Teams, peacekeepers and governments, where the security situation and safety concerns allow, should encourage negotiations among education and community stakeholders and parties to armed conflict to reach agreement on respect for schools as safe sanctuaries and the re-opening of closed schools.
 - In situations where there is a pattern of attacks on or abduction of schoolboys or schoolgirls on the way to or from school for recruitment as child soldiers/ forced labourers or for rape, governments should find ways to provide safe transport of students to and from school.

On reducing the risk of attack

- The UN Security Council should recognize the relationship of education to the peace and security agenda, i.e. the role that education can play in both contributing to tension and in promoting peace, and should offer support for strategies to ensure education is not a contributing factor to conflict.
- Governments and parties to conflict should work to ensure education is perceived as neutral by making certain that schools, colleges and universities are transparently run in an inclusive, non-sectarian, non-discriminatory way, and that curricula are non-propagandist and are sensitive to local linguistic, cultural and religious specificities.
- The international community, UN agencies and NGOs should devise strategies and campaigns to promote and fund inclusive, good-quality, learner-centred education in conflict-affected countries and establish respect for schools as sanctuaries or zones of peace.

- Governments should consider the merits of involving communities in the running of schools and the defence of schools as a means of reducing risk of attack.
- Governments and the international community should take into account the potential increased risk of schools and aid workers becoming targets of attack when considering whether to provide military support for education aid and reconstruction in emergencies and in post-conflict situations.

On research

- Deeper research is needed into:
 - The extent and impact of attacks on education, particularly the medium- and long-term impact on education systems, but also the impact on development, conflict and fragility;
 - The extent of forced and voluntary recruitment of children by armed forces, armed groups and security forces from, or en route to or from, school or in ways that deprive children of their right to education, as well as possible protection measures;
 - The extent of sexual violence against students, teachers and education personnel at or en route to or from schools and other education institutions and its impact on fulfilment of children's right to education, as well as possible protection measures;
 - The extent of attacks on education aid workers, the motives for them and possible protection measures;
 - Motives for attack of each type of target and the effectiveness of response strategies that address them, including the effectiveness of increasing communities' sense of ownership of both the education process and defence of education targets;
 - The conditions in which negotiations to respect schools as safe sanctuaries can take place during conflicts;
 - The advantages and disadvantages of including education and the protection of education in peace agreements;

- The levels of awareness, among political leaders, military commanders, military legal advisers and soldiers, of the application of international law to the protection of education;
- The level of response to attacks on education effected by accounting mechanisms such as the MRM on Children and Armed Conflict, the Human Rights Council and Special Rapporteurs.

On advocacy

- Further advocacy work is required to increase awareness of how attacks on education:
 - Violate existing human rights instruments;
 - Harm education systems and attempts to achieve Education for All; and
 - Undermine development, and contribute to fragility and conflict.
- UN agencies, NGOs and teacher unions should campaign for international solidarity with targeted groups and institutions and press for human rights instruments to be invoked to punish the perpetrators of attacks on education.

On media coverage

- Education organizations should engage with the media to encourage coverage of attacks and their impact in order to improve accountability and response to attacks. This should include coverage of the long-term impact of attacks on education, education systems and efforts to achieve Education for All.
- The international and national media should recognize their critical role in bringing such attacks to global attention and commit to reporting on them.
- Training and guidance should be provided to the media on how attacks on education violate human rights instruments.

Annex I: Country reports

■ Afghanistan

A CARE report on Afghanistan for the World Bank warns of an “alarming” trend.³²⁰ Between January 2006 and December 2008, 1,153 attacks on education targets were reported, including the damaging or destruction of schools by arson, grenades, mines and rockets; threats to teachers and officials delivered by “night letters” or verbally; the killing of students, teachers and other education staff; and looting. The number of incidents stayed stable at 241 and 242 respectively in 2006 and 2007, but then almost tripled to 670 in 2008.

In 2006 and 2007, 230 people died from attacks on schools, students and education personnel, according to Ministry of Education (MoE) figures. In one incident, dozens of schoolchildren and five teachers were killed when they lined up to meet an MP in Baghlan Province in November 2007.³²¹

From 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2009, 123 schools were targeted by insurgents and 51 received threats, according to the Afghan Rights Monitor, citing figures from UNICEF. At least 60 students and teachers were killed and 204 wounded in security incidents in the same period (and since then, on 9 July 2009, 13 primary pupils were killed

320 Marit Glad, *Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan; Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation* (CARE/World Bank/Afghan Ministry of Education, 2009), 21. A margin of error must be accepted as a result of a switch of database between that of UNICEF for 2006-7 and that of the Ministry of Education for 2008.

321 Fisnik Abrashi, “59 Schoolchildren Died in Afghan Blast,” *AP*, November 9, 2007.

when Taliban forces detonated a bomb between two schools in Logar Province).³²² In July 2009, more than 400 schools, mostly in the volatile south, remained closed due to insecurity, the MoE said. UNICEF recorded 98 school incidents in the period from 1 May through 24 June 2009.³²³ At least 26 schools were attacked and partially damaged by the Taliban on election day, 20 August 2009, because they were being used as polling stations, according to the MoE. The schools were hit with rockets, missiles and improvised explosives.³²⁴

In June 2009, six incidents of explosives being found near or in schools and other locations occupied by children were reported. On 21 June 2009, an explosive was placed in a classroom and detonated on the second floor of Do Abe School building, Kahmard District, Bamyan Province. The explosion destroyed part of the second floor and damaged the structure.³²⁵

In April 2009, two schools in Nader Shah Kowt District, Khost Province, were attacked. A portion of one of the school's front walls was damaged.³²⁶

In March 2009, a school in Nader Shah Kowt District, Khost Province was attacked, causing major damage to the building.³²⁷

The MoE reported that terrorist and insurgent attacks killed 149 teachers, other school employees and students during 2008.³²⁸

By September 2008, 600 schools were reported closed, 80 per cent of them in the southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul and Uruzgan.³²⁹

On 14 September 2008, the Taliban reportedly cut off the ears of one teacher in Zabul Province.³³⁰

322 Rahim Faiez, "Massive Bomb Blast in Central Afghanistan Kills 25," *The Guardian*, July 9, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/8599557>; and Mohammad Obaid, "Blast Outside School in Afghanistan Kills 25," *Reuters*, July 9, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=110&Itemid=100106.

323 United Nations News, "Terrorism Kills More Afghan Civilians Than Any Military Action – UN Mission," July 13, 2009, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31446>.

324 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Over 20 Schools Attacked on Election Day," August 24, 2009.

325 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "Insurgent Attacks Hinder Educational Progress in Afghanistan," July 9, 2009, <http://ocha-gwapps1.unog.ch/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/JBRN-7TSGAC?OpenDocument&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635N96>.

326 Ibid.

327 Ibid.

328 United States Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Afghanistan* (US Department of State, 2009).

329 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Attacks Deprive 300,000 Students of Education," September 22, 2008, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80506>.

330 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Ten Schools Torched in Past Three Weeks," April 10, 2008, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=77695>.

On 13 August 2008, three humanitarian workers employed by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), who worked specifically on education programming, and one of their drivers were ambushed and killed by the Taliban in the Logar Province of Afghanistan. The second driver was seriously wounded.³³¹

On 9 June 2008, gunmen killed a teacher and his daughter in Nangahar Province.³³²

On 14 May 2008, gunmen killed a teacher in Kunduz Province who had publicly criticized suicide bombing.³³³

On 7 May 2008, The Times reported that 36 attacks on schools and teachers had taken place since the start of the new term on 23 March. School buildings had been set on fire or attacked with grenades; teachers were kidnapped; and, in one case, a caretaker had had his ear and nose cut off as punishment for “co-operating with the Government”.³³⁴ In another incident, on 4 April 2008, armed men set fire to the Ortblaq School in northern Kunduz Province and cut off the ears of the night watchman.³³⁵

In some schools, night letters ordering teachers to leave, signed on behalf of the Taliban leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar, were left pinned to the door. In Miyan Abdul Hakim School, Kandahar city, attackers terrorized the caretaker, gathered together desks, floor mats and any textbooks or exercise books they could find, and set fire to them.³³⁶

In Zabul, where the local community had reached an agreement with the Taliban to leave schools alone, Taliban commanders allowed teaching but destroyed religious studies books that promoted reconciliation between Sunni and Shia.³³⁷

By January 2008, attacks on schools and insecurity were preventing 300,000 children from attending school in the south, where 400 schools were closed.³³⁸

331 The International Rescue Committee, “IRC Mourns Four Beloved Colleagues,” August 14, 2008, <http://www.theirc.org/news/irc-mourns-four-beloved-colleagues>.

332 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Afghanistan*.

333 Ibid.

334 Nick Meo, “Taliban Return to Attacking Girls’ Schools in Afghanistan,” *The Times*, May 7, 2008.

335 United Kingdom Border Agency, *Country of Origin Information (COI) Report: Afghanistan* (London: UK Border Agency, 2008), 160; and IRIN News, “Afghanistan: Ten Schools Torched.”

336 Meo, “Taliban Return to Attacking Girls’ Schools.”

337 Meo, “Taliban Return to Attacking Girls’ Schools; IRIN News, “Afghanistan: Ten Schools Torched”; and UK Border Agency, *COI Report: Afghanistan*, 160.

338 Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), “Afghanistan: Some Schools More Vulnerable to Attacks Than Others?” January 2, 2008; and Rahim Faiez, “Afghanistan: Violence Forces Afghan Kids from School,” *AP*, January 21, 2008, <http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=16212>.

In 2007, there were 228 school attacks, resulting in 75 deaths and 111 injuries, according to UNICEF.³³⁹

On 25 October 2007, grenades were thrown into Naswan High School, Shindand District, Herat Province, damaging several classrooms. It was the fourth school to be attacked in the same district in 17 days. Two of them were girls' schools. The area was a hotspot of Taliban insurgency.³⁴⁰

In October 2007, police arrested a student, Sayed Perwiz Kambakhsh, at Balkh University for downloading and distributing information about the role of women in Islamic societies. He was sentenced to death for "insolence to the Holy Prophet" but his sentence was later commuted to 20 years on appeal.³⁴¹

On 17 June 2007, seven children died when US air planes bombed an Islamic studies school in Zarghun Shah District of Paktika Province in the southeast.³⁴²

Fourteen schools were torched by insurgents in several provinces between April and May 2007, according to the MoE. This was followed by a lull in attacks in June and July, which may have been the result of a "school protection" campaign, encouraging communities to declare publicly their support for education.³⁴³

In February 2007, the headteacher of a girls' high school in Lashkargarh repeatedly received warnings by phone and night letter ordering her to leave her post.³⁴⁴

There was a significant increase in suicide attacks in 2006 and 2007. According to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), some of the bombers appeared to be children drawn heavily from madrasas in Pakistan.³⁴⁵

A reported 120 schools were torched and ten teachers killed in 2006, and 273 schools were set on fire in 2005.³⁴⁶

Schoolchildren have increasingly been targeted on their way to or from or at school. In February 2007, a 13-year-old student was reportedly shot dead on his way to

339 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Conflict Threatens Access to Children by Humanitarian Organizations in Afghanistan," July 8, 2008.

340 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Attacks Threaten Girls' Schooling in Shindand," October 25, 2007.

341 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Afghanistan*.

342 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Seventeen Killed in Suicide Blast in Uruzgan Province," July 10, 2007.

343 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Hundreds of Schools Remain Closed in the South," September 6, 2007.

344 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Boys' Education Slides in Helmand," October 8, 2007.

345 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan (2001–2007)* (UNAMA, September 2007), as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008* (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008), 42.

346 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Record Numbers Enrol in New School Year," March 21, 2007.

Zokur High School in Lashkargarh. Four days later, gunmen fired indiscriminately outside Karte Laghan School, killing a student and a caretaker.³⁴⁷

On 12 June 2007, ten girls were allowed to go home early from the Qalai Sayedan School in Logar Province, Afghanistan. But two men on a motorbike, armed with a machine gun, were waiting for them as they made their way past the school gates and down the dirt road. A burst of automatic fire hit Shukria, 13, in the back and arm. As she fell, her sister Zarmina, 12, ran to her and the gunmen rode close and opened fire again, killing Shukria and one other, and wounding four other girls.³⁴⁸

On 15 June 2007, a suicide bomber blew himself up in front of students leaving a school in Tarinkot, Uruzgan Province, killing 11 of them and wounding several others.³⁴⁹

On 12 November 2008, high school girls in Kandahar were attacked with battery acid (see Introduction, p. 1).³⁵⁰

On 28 December 2008, a group of primary school children were walking along a road on their way home from school, close to a checkpoint in Khost Province. They were unaware of a 4X4 vehicle slowly zigzagging its way through the barriers approaching the checkpoint they were passing. As the vehicle drew level with them it exploded. Fourteen pupils were killed. They were all aged 8 to 10.³⁵¹

On 12 May 2009, 98 students and six teachers were admitted to hospital after a mass poisoning at Qazaaq School, north of Kabul.³⁵² Five victims slipped into a coma but were revived. It was the third poison gas attack on schools in the area: scores of pupils were taken ill in separate attacks on schools in Charikar, Kapisa Province, north-east of Kabul. The attack came a day after 61 schoolgirls and one teacher from a school in neighbouring Parwar Province were admitted to hospital with a sudden illness with headaches, vomiting and shivering.³⁵³ The third school was attacked on 26 April 2009, when five teachers and 40 pupils collapsed, overcome by fumes, after a bottle was reportedly thrown into the playground during a ceremony at Sadiqi Padshah School,

347 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Boys' Education Slides."

348 Barry Bearak, "As War Enters Classrooms, Fear Grips Afghans," *New York Times*, July 10, 2007.

349 IRIN News, "Afghanistan: Teenager Hanged by Taliban in Latest Child Killing," October 2, 2007.

350 Clancy Chassay, "Acid Attacks and Rape: Growing Threat to Women Who Oppose Traditional Order," *The Guardian*, November 22, 2008; and United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, A/63/785-S/2009/158* (March 26, 2009).

351 Saeed Shah, "Suicide Car Bomb Kills 14 Afghan Primary School Children," *The Guardian*, December 28, 2008.

352 Welt Online English News, "Third Afghan Girls' School Targeted by Poison Attack," May 12, 2009, <http://www.welt.de/english-news/article3725247/Third-Afghan-girls-school-targeted-by-poison-attack.html>.

353 The Telegraph, "More Than 80 Girls Hospitalised by 'Poison Gas Attack'," May 12, 2009.

Charikar.³⁵⁴ After the attacks, many girls expressed fears of going to school in an area where girls' education had been strongly endorsed by local communities and which had never been under firm Taliban control.³⁵⁵

In the cities, where schools are better protected, the targeting of schoolchildren by suicide bombers and abduction for ransom by criminal groups on the journey to or from school were also reported to be significant problems in 2008.³⁵⁶

In May 2009, six girls' schools in Chahar Darreh District, in the northern province of Kunduz, were closed following receipt of letters threatening acid and gas attacks. As a result, teachers and pupils stayed at home and eventually the authorities closed the schools. The district was largely under Taliban control.³⁵⁷

■ Argentina

In 2008, students and teachers from the Don Orione de Wilde School and activists from the People's Children organization were reportedly subjected to threats, acts of intimidation, attacks and kidnappings for taking part in a "Hunger is Crime" campaign against malnutrition among children in Argentina. On 24 July 2008, Gerli, a boy from the Don Orione charity's John XXIII orphanage, was kidnapped, taken into a car and threatened by a group of heavily armed masked men. On the night of 26 September 2008, a teacher from the same orphanage was kidnapped and heavily beaten by a group of hooded assailants who demanded he end his involvement in the campaign. On 3 October 2008, another teacher from the same orphanage was threatened in the same way.³⁵⁸

On 4 April 2007, police officers killed Carlos Fuentealba, a member of the Neuquén Association of Teachers, during a hunger strike for better wages. He was hit on the back of the head by a tear gas canister fired from two metres away by a member

354 Ben Farmer, "Girls Collapse After Suspected Poison Attack on Afghan School," *The Telegraph*, April 27, 2009.

355 Giselle Chang, "Afghan Children Heading to School Despite Attacks," *United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) World Bulletin*, June 24, 2009, <http://www.unausa.org/Page.aspx?pid=1323>; and Hamid Shalizi, "Scores of Afghan Girls Ill in Third School Poisoning," *Reuters*, May 12, 2009.

356 Meo, "Taleban Return to Attacking Girls' Schools."

357 BBC Monitoring Service, "Daily Says German Forces Unable to Prevent Closure of Afghan Girls' Schools," May 18, 2009.

358 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2009* (FIDH, 2009), 153.

of the Zapala Police's special forces. The officer was later charged with voluntary manslaughter.³⁵⁹

■ Brazil

From May to July 2007, eight municipal schools and day-care centres in and near the Complexo do Alemão, Rio de Janeiro, were occupied unannounced by armed police, it was reported. These facilities were used as a base for a military-style assault on armed drug gangs, making them a target for attack while students were still attending classes. The operation involved 1,300 military and civilian police officers, plus soldiers from the National Force. The school buildings suffered extensive damage from intense exchanges of gunfire, leaving children screaming with fear; in one case, grenades exploded on the school patio.³⁶⁰

Armed drug gangs also used schools for shelter. In October 2007, the National Rapporteur on the Right to Education on a visit to CIEP Theophilo de Souza Pinto, a school with 1,058 students, encountered adolescents with machine guns sitting on the school's pavement and by the gate. The roof was shot through with bullet holes from recent fighting between criminal gangs.³⁶¹

In June 2008, schools set up in Rio Grande do Sul State by the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST), which campaigns for land rights in Amazonia, were closed down by force by the police. On 16 June 2008, one school was destroyed after the Public Ministry lodged a complaint on 11 March 2008 against eight suspected members of MST for "constituting a group aiming at changing the rule of law and the established order in Brazil, and which committed crimes of political non-conformity".³⁶²

■ Burundi

Surges in child soldier recruitment in 2006 in June and July and after the September ceasefire were reported by the UN. There were also anecdotal reports of recruitment

359 International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), *2008 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights* (ITUC, 2008).

360 Denise Sarreira and Suelaine Carneiro, *Violation to the Education Rights of the Community in the Complexo do Alemão, Rio de Janeiro* (Sao Paolo: Office of the National Rapporteur on the Human Right to Education, 2008).

361 Ibid.

362 FIDH, *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2009 – Brazil* (FIDH, 2009), <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a5f301317.html>.

through raids on schools by National Liberation Forces (FNL) members. In April and May 2007, more than 28 schoolchildren were recruited in the provinces of Bururi and Ngozi.³⁶³

■ Chad

Thousands of children remain in the ranks or are associated with armed groups from rebel factions, including the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group, the Toroboros, the Convention révolutionnaire démocratique du Tchad (CFDT), Concorde nationale tchadienne (CNT), Front uni pour le changement (FUC) and Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (UFDD). More than a quarter of FUC combatants were children, many under the age of 15, it was estimated. It recruited children as young as 12 years of age on a large scale before its integration into the Armée Nationale Tchadienne (ANT) in late 2006. There were confirmed reports that between January 2006 and May 2007 the FUC abducted children in the Guéréda area on their way to school or the market to strengthen their forces. Other children were forcibly recruited from refugee camps.³⁶⁴ In November 2008, Human Rights Watch cited the case of a 15-year-old boy apparently abducted from a school in Djabal refugee camp, in Silva, eastern Chad, by the Sudanese rebel group, JEM, which is backed by the Chadian government, during an attack on a Khartoum suburb.³⁶⁵

■ Colombia

According to Rafael Cuello Ramirez, first vice president of the teachers' union, FECODE, 360 teachers have been murdered, 342 threatened, 50 exiled and 25 "disappeared" (which means abducted without trace, presumed killed) over the past decade. In 2009, as of June, nine teachers had been murdered, and two had survived assassination attempts.³⁶⁶ The number of violations in the teaching sector rose from

363 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 78; and UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Burundi, S/2007/686* (November 28, 2007).

364 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Chad, S/2007/400* (July 3, 2007), as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 93.

365 Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Briefing to the UN Security Council on the Situation in Chad and the Central African Republic," December 4, 2008.

366 La Federación Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE), "La Violación de Derechos Humanos No Ha Disminuido Con la Política de Seguridad Democrática," June 27, 2009.

193 in 2006 to 260 in 2007.³⁶⁷ These included assassinations, kidnappings, forced disappearance, illegal detention, torture and threats. National Police figures indicate 90 teachers were assassinated from 2006 to 2008,³⁶⁸ compared with 310 killed during the period from 2000 to 2006.³⁶⁹ This represents a decrease in the average number of teachers assassinated per year from 44 to 30. Figures from the Observatorio del Programa de DDHH y DIH, Vicepresidencia de la República, show the number of teachers murdered fell from 55 in 2006 to 23 in 2007 and rose to 29 in 2008, with ten killed in the first half of 2009. However, according to the National Trade Union School (Escuela Nacional Sindical), the number of death threats against education workers rose from 146 in 2007 to 269 in 2008, with 40 registered in 2009 by the end of July. The number of education workers forced to move for their own safety rose from 93 in 2007 to 149 in 2008 and fell to just three in the first half of 2009. In addition, from 2007 to 2009, five education workers were harassed to end their activities, five were arbitrarily detained, four were attacked without injury, three were forcibly disappeared, two were illegally raided and one was tortured, according to ENS.³⁷⁰

In the same period, the intelligence service, DAS, reported five attacks on education buildings. On 13 March 2006, FARC guerrillas burned down a school in Puerto Jordan that had been used as a voting centre in Congressional elections. On 7 June 2007, a bomb was detonated in the car park of the University of Technology, Pereira. On 29 October 2008, a grenade was detonated in the refectory of Alfonso Guiles College, Miraflores. On 15 June 2008, a village school was burned down by the ELN near Sabanalarga. On 24 January 2009, the Antonia Santos School was damaged during an attack by FARC guerrillas on security checkpoints. On 14 May 2009, another bomb was exploded at the University of Technology, Pereira.³⁷¹

Universities were reported to have been infiltrated by paramilitaries and guerrilla groups during the reporting period. On 15 November 2008, the rector of Colombia's largest university, the National University, Bogotá, said it had received 312 threats from paramilitaries, the latest of which was a letter from Águilas Negras (Black Eagles) declaring that 32 of the university's students were military targets. The paramilitaries

367 Elver Herrera Arenas and Leydi Sanjuán, *Informe Sobre las Violaciones a los Derechos Humanos de los y las Sindicalistas Colombianos en el Año 2007* (Medellin: Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS), 2008).

368 OCHA, *Colombia: Assassination of Non-unionized Teachers 2006-2008* (map, OCHA Colombia, December 31, 2008), [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/FB42542E7C632DB4C12575630031BC08/\\$File/map17.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/FB42542E7C632DB4C12575630031BC08/$File/map17.pdf?OpenElement); and OCHA, *Colombia: Assassination of Unionized Teachers 2006-2008* (map, OCHA Colombia, December 31, 2008), [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/A18A9866D6109DC1257563003205AF/\\$File/map18.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/A18A9866D6109DC1257563003205AF/$File/map18.pdf?OpenElement).

369 Figures supplied by FECODE.

370 Figures supplied by ENS.

371 DAS data supplied by Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos (DDHH) y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (DIH), Vicepresidencia de la Republica de Colombia.

said they were imposing a curfew from 6pm to 6am on the campus for those they suspected of being left-wing activists.³⁷²

Human rights violations against students increased dramatically over the three years, according to a joint report by the University and College Union, the NGO Justice for Colombia and the National Union of Students, all of the UK.³⁷³ From 2006 to 2008 alone, 99 violations were recorded – more than the 93 violations recorded over two decades between 1985 and 2004. They included the assassination of 12 university students and the forced disappearance of another: on 14 June 2007, a 20-year-old student, Andres Felipe Villa Mesa, was taken away by six members of the DAS (intelligence service), which reports to the Colombian president, and has not been seen since. Another five students were killed in the first half of 2009.³⁷⁴

In the same period, 57 death threats were directed at individual student leaders or student organizations. Physical injury was caused in at least eight cases, as these threats were being made. In at least seven cases, students were forced to leave their universities. Diego Fernando Marin, the National Secretary of the ACEU (the largest student organization in Colombia) and student representative on the superior council of the National University of Colombia, was granted political asylum in Norway after a series of death threats against him. There were 20 incidents of students being detained without arrest warrants and subjected to physical abuse or in some cases torture. For instance, on 24 May 2007, Miguel Oswaldo Avellaneda Lizano, a student at the University of Los Llanos and a member of the Student Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, was detained, physically beaten, threatened and accused of being a guerrilla.³⁷⁵

Children were reportedly recruited by armed opposition groups FARC and ELN. A reported 200 children had not been demobilized by AUC and other paramilitary groups

372 Adrian Alsema, "Paramilitaries Threaten University 312 Times," *Colombia Reports*, November 15, 2008, <http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/2041-paramilitaries-threaten-university-312-times.html>.

373 National Union of Students (NUS)/University and College Union (UCU)/Justice for Colombia (JFC), *Colombia: Students in the Firing Line: A Report on Human Rights Abuses Suffered by Colombian University Students* (2009).

374 Stephanie Peacock, "Colombia: Testimonies of Terror and Torture," May 4, 2009, <http://www.prensarural.org/spip/spip.php?article2265>.

375 Ibid.

by the end of 2006. Child recruitment by FARC was recorded in eight departments. Girls were reportedly subjected to rape and forced abortion.³⁷⁶

A teacher was shot in front of her pupils in January 2006 in Tuluá, Valle, allegedly by FARC. Two adolescents were illegally arrested at their school in Trinidad, Casanare, by army personnel on 29 April 2006. The next day, the Brigade XVI military authorities produced their bodies and identified them as guerrillas killed in combat. On 7 March 2006, when army troops took up positions inside the Ecological School, Cuembí in Puerto Asís, Putumayo, FARC announced that they would attack it. On 12 July 2006 in Ricaurte, Narino, members of the No.3 Mechanized Cavalry Group seized 100 villagers in Cumbas and held them in a school for three days.³⁷⁷

According to War Child, 14,000 children were child soldiers in Colombia by 2007. About half the soldiers used by the two largest guerrilla groups, FARC and ELN, and in the paramilitaries were children. One in four was under the age of 15. Many child soldiers in Colombia appear to be recruited from schools. Some are kidnapped by armed groups who wait outside school buildings for students to leave at the end of the day.³⁷⁸

The UN Secretary-General reported in March 2009 that both FARC and ELN were recruiting child soldiers from school. In some cases, children were tortured or killed by these groups when they resisted recruitment or attempted to escape.³⁷⁹

According to the UN, illegal armed groups continued to attack or occupy schools for military purposes and target teachers from mid-September to the end of 2008. Schools were also often damaged as a result of military clashes between armed groups and the Armed Forces. For instance, in May 2008, two schools in Dagua Municipality, Valle del Cauca Department, were seriously damaged as a result of clashes between FARC and the national police and national army respectively.³⁸⁰ In June 2008, four teachers in Narino Department were abducted and killed by FARC,

376 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia*, E/CN.4/2005/10 (February 28, 2005); Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), *Violence and Discrimination against Women in the Armed Conflict in Colombia*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 67, October 18, 2006; Defensoría del Pueblo/UNICEF, "Caracterización De Las Niñas, Niños, y Adolescentes Desvinculados De Los Grupos Armados Ilegales: Inserción Social y Productiva Desde Un Enfoque De Derechos Humanos," *La Niñez y Sus Derechos* Boletín 9 (Bogotá: Defensoría del Pueblo, November 2006); and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia*, A/HRC/4/48 (March 5, 2007); all as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*.

377 UNGA, *Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia*.

378 War Child, *Child Soldiers: The Shadow of Their Existence* (March 2007), 19.

379 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 23.

380 *Ibid.*, 24-5.

reportedly because they were suspected of being army informants. The UN had also verified information on the occupation of schools by the Armed Forces. For example, a school in Montana was occupied by troops, then attacked and seriously damaged by FARC on 13 June 2008.³⁸¹

■ The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo witnessed a significant number of attacks on education over the reporting period. Sexual violence against schoolgirls was widespread. Both the military and armed rebels forcibly recruited child soldiers from schools, using trucks to take them away. Teachers and schoolchildren were also shot or abducted. Schools were ransacked, and it is estimated that up to 100 schools a year were occupied by the military, armed groups or IDPs in the territories of Rutsuru and Masisi, North Kivu.³⁸²

In July 2007, one principal was shot dead by rebels from the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) in Masisi after speaking against infiltration of school programmes by political and armed groups;³⁸³ another principal was abducted on 8 September from Buyaga Primary School and killed by Mayi Mayi combatants.³⁸⁴ In September 2007, 200 young men aged 16 to 30, including children and students, were forcibly recruited by CNDP rebels in Muheto-Nyamitaba, North Kivu Province, though it is not known whether they were recruited from schools.³⁸⁵ In October, 320 children were reportedly recruited from schools by CNDP rebels in Masisi.³⁸⁶

In December 2007, an international NGO convoy transporting teaching and learning materials for schools was ambushed.³⁸⁷

In March 2008, police looted a school.³⁸⁸ In April 2008, children were blocked on their way to school and recruited by the national army, FARDC, in several incidents in Masisi. Though figures are not confirmed, the number recruited is estimated to be up to 270. In September 2008, 90 children were forcibly recruited from one primary

381 Ibid.

382 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

383 Ibid.

384 United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), "MONUC Monthly Human Rights Assessment: September 2007," November 9, 2007.

385 Ibid.

386 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

387 Ibid.

388 MONUC, *Special Enquiry into the Bas Congo Events of February and March 2008* (May 2008).

and one secondary school by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).³⁸⁹ After abducting the children, the LRA is reported to have looted and burned down the schools.³⁹⁰ By October 2008, an estimated 3,000 children were being held captive by armed groups and some teachers were taken for forced labour.³⁹¹ On 7 November 2008, Save the Children reported that there had been an "explosion" in recruitment of child soldiers over the previous few weeks.³⁹² On 10 October 2008, another three teachers and seven children were abducted outside a secondary school in Masisi by an armed group, though they escaped after two days.³⁹³ In Shasha, five miles from Sake, another secondary school was attacked by an armed group, with one child killed.³⁹⁴ Twenty-two schools were burned down by the LRA in September and October in Dungu, Haute Uele. The office of an NGO involved in providing education was also attacked by an angry mob and an armed group in Rutsuru.³⁹⁵

In early November 2008, the corpses from a massacre were left in a school compound in Kiwanja. A large number of children were recruited by CNDP rebels, who took them from schools in Rutsuru in truckloads. Estimates of the number taken range from 50 to 300 but have not been verified.³⁹⁶

In the same month, the army was reported to be occupying schools in Kayembe, Mutaho and Kibati, while CNDP was reported to be constantly present at a school in Kanyanja.³⁹⁷ The chief of the city of Kayna reported that the military had ransacked three schools in Kayna, Kanyabayonga and Kirumba, and had used classroom benches as firewood.³⁹⁸ In December, an education aid worker was shot dead in Rutsuru.³⁹⁹

Between 24 December 2008 and 13 January 2009, the LRA abducted another 160 children, according to Human Rights Watch.⁴⁰⁰

389 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

390 HRW, *The Christmas Massacres: LRA Attacks on Civilians in Northern Congo* (New York: HRW, 2009).

391 IRIN News, "DRC: Recruitment of Child Soldiers Rising," November 11, 2008.

392 Sky News, "Child Soldiers Recruited in Congo," November 7, 2009.

393 Save the Children, "Schoolchildren Seized as Congo Armed Groups Recruit Child Soldiers," November 7, 2008, www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/41_6942.htm.

394 Save the Children, "Schoolchildren Seized."

395 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

396 Ibid.

397 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "DR Congo: OCHA Humanitarian Situation Update No. 17 - North Kivu," November 26 - December 1, 2008; and OCHA, "DR Congo: OCHA Humanitarian Situation Update No. 15 - North Kivu," November 20 - 21, 2008, www.reliefweb.int.

398 OCHA, "DR Congo: OCHA Humanitarian Situation Update No. 16 - North Kivu," November 22 - 25, 2008, www.reliefweb.int.

399 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

400 Agence France-Presse (AFP), "At Least 100 LRA Victims Found: UN," January 29, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?view=article&catid=25%3Adrc-security&id=11448%3Aat-least-100-lra-victims-found-un-&option=com_content&Itemid=100168.

Sexual violence is widespread in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the victims include schoolgirls. In the first half of 2009, it is estimated that thousands of women and young girls were raped by Rwandan and rebel groups in eastern Kivu and Orientale Province.⁴⁰¹ Between 2007 and 2008, the UN recorded 5,517 cases of sexual violence against children in the conflict areas of Ituri and North and South Kivu; 31 per cent of sexual violence victims were children, according to Human Rights Watch.⁴⁰² In Kisangani, in the northern part of the country, 60 per cent of cases of sexual and gender-based violence involved victims aged 11 to 17, according to Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General.⁴⁰³ The Minister for Gender, Family and Children estimates that more than one million women and girls have become victims of sexual violence.⁴⁰⁴ Girls are targeted mostly on their way to or from school and at markets, according to UNICEF.⁴⁰⁵ Victims' lack of access to clinics and the stigmatizing of rape victims are serious obstacles to obtaining accurate figures.

In April 2009, one abducted school director in Masisi reportedly died of exhaustion during forced labour.⁴⁰⁶

Between December 2008 and May 2009, eight schools were attacked due to an order to LRA soldiers to abduct and integrate 1,000 new persons, aged 25 and below, into the force. Most of the abductions took place in March.⁴⁰⁷

In higher education, 47 academics applied to the Scholar Rescue Fund for relocation grants from 2002 to 2007 to avoid acts of persecution, including death warrants, torture and illegal detention.⁴⁰⁸

401 AFP, "Major Rise in Attacks on DR Congo Civilians: Rights Group," July 2, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?view=article&catid=25%3Adrc-security&id=14343%3A-major-rise-in-attacks-on-dr-congo-civilians-rights-group&option=com_content&Itemid=100166.

402 HRW, "Taking the Next Step: Strengthening the Security Council's Response to Sexual Violence and Attacks on Education in Armed Conflict," April 20, 2009.

403 T.V. Siriam, "Karuna faction recruiting child soldiers in Lanka: UN," *PTI*, January 31, 2008, <http://www.rediff.com/cms/print.jsp?docpath=/news/2008/jan/31tte1.htm>.

404 HRW, *Soldiers Who Rape, Commanders Who Condone: Sexual Violence and Military Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo* (New York: HRW, 2009).

405 IRIN News, "DRC: Rape Crisis Set to Worsen Amid Kivu Chaos," November 19, 2008; and information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

406 Information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

407 MONUC figures and information supplied by UNICEF Eastern Congo Zonal Office, Goma.

408 Henry G. Jarecki and Daniela Zane Kaisth, *Scholar Rescue in the Modern World* (New York: Institute of International Education, 2009); see also Brendan O'Malley, "A Deadly Silencing of Scholars," *University World News*, April 19, 2009.

■ Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA) was closed down by the Government and ordered to hand over its assets and name, a decision upheld in the courts in February 2008. It was replaced by a new pro-government union by the same name. In 2009, the Government refused to allow the registration of an alternative independent union, the National Teachers' Association. The decision to close the original ETA, the largest independent membership organization in the country, was the culmination of years of harassment and intimidation of ETA members.⁴⁰⁹ This included the killing of ETA Deputy General Secretary Assefa Maru; the six-year detention of former ETA President Taye Woldesmiat; the imprisonment of many ETA officials; and the detention and torture of ETA activists and their families.⁴¹⁰

In mid-December 2006, three ETA officers, Tilahun Ayalew, Meqha Mengistu and Anetenech Getenet, were arrested and tortured in an attempt to extract confessions to being members of the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF), a rebel group. Ayalew, a teacher in Dangella, chair of the ETA Awi region and a father of seven children, had been seized by security agents, taken to a jungle and beaten for four days until he fell unconscious. He was then detained incommunicado until a court freed him, but was recaptured by police and held until the Federal First Instance Court heard his case. When he arrived at court he could hardly walk due to a fractured leg, reported to have resulted from attempts by his captors to obtain confessions from him. They had also denied him medical treatment.⁴¹¹

The court freed Ayalew on 22 March 2007. Meanwhile, Getenet had regularly been suspended with his arms and legs tied; and Mengistu had been severely beaten.⁴¹² The *2007 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights*, published by the International Trade Union Confederation, reported clear evidence of torture when the three ETA activists appeared in court: Ayalew had suffered a fractured leg bone, Mengistu had a bleeding ear and hearing difficulties, and Getenet had scars on his arms, both of which were twisted.⁴¹³

409 Fred van Leeuwen, "Refusal to Register EI's Member Organisation in Ethiopia," *Education International Urgent Action Appeal*, May 27, 2009.

410 Ibid.

411 Fred van Leeuwen, "Arrests of Ethiopian Teachers' Association Activists Resumed," *Education International Urgent Action Appeal*, June 22, 2007; Wondimu Mekonnen, "Ethiopian Teachers Face Another Cycle of Brutality," *Addis Voice*, January 3, 2007; and Fred van Leeuwen, "Torture of Ethiopian Teachers' Association Activists," *Education International Urgent Action Appeal*, January 3, 2007.

412 Ibid.

413 ITUC, *2007 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights* (ITUC, 2008).

After leaving court, Mengistu and Ayalew were prevented from returning to work. Their school directors asked them to provide written justification for their absences during their detention and trial, but the police in Addis Ababa refused to produce the necessary documents.⁴¹⁴

Getenet, who almost died of his injuries, suffered severe health problems, among them lung deficiencies, which made speech difficult and forced him to give up teaching.⁴¹⁵

Mengistu, chairman of ETA's East Gojam branch and a member of ETA's committee for implementing the Education International/ETA Education for All/HIV-AIDS programme, and Getenet, a member of ETA's Addis Ababa regional council, were rearrested in May 2007. On 28 May, when Ayalew heard that he, too, was due to be arrested, he fled into hiding. His wife was arrested in an attempt to pressure her to reveal his whereabouts, but was later released.⁴¹⁶

ETA leader Waldie Dana was arrested in early June. All four teachers were charged with belonging to the EPDF. In August, Dana's wife, Wibit Legamo, and another ETA member, Berrbanu Aba-Debissa, were arrested. At the end of 2007, only Mengistu remained in detention. Four of the other five had been released, but there was no news of Ayalew.⁴¹⁷

Also in August 2007, police stormed a meeting of the Addis Ababa branch of ETA and arrested the General Secretary, Tesfaye Tirga, after finding Education International postcards calling for the release of the ETA activists. He was interrogated and beaten before being released.⁴¹⁸

In 2009, Meqcha Mengistu and Wibit Legamo were sentenced to three years' and one year's detention respectively on unsubstantiated charges of subversion.⁴¹⁹

414 New Zealand Educational Institute, "Teacher Unionists Released from Prison," *NZEI Rourou* 19, no. 3 (April 19, 2007), 4.

415 Leeuwen, "Arrests of Ethiopian Teachers' Association Activists Resumed."

416 Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, "Ongoing Arbitrary Detention of Five Leaders of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association," October 23, 2007, <http://www.fidh.org/Ongoing-arbitrary-detention-of-five-leaders-of>.

417 ITUC, *2007 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights*.

418 Ibid.

419 Leeuwen, "Refusal to Register EI's Member Organisation in Ethiopia."

■ Georgia

On 7 and 8 August 2008, shelling by Georgian forces hit civilian buildings, including the university and several schools and nursery schools in Tskhinvali and outlying villages in South Ossetia. Some of the buildings were being used as defensive positions by South Ossetian forces.⁴²⁰

During the ensuing Russian military operation in the same month, schools and a youth summer camp were bombed, shelled, burnt down, fired upon and looted, according to the Georgian Ministry of Education. Ninety-nine education institutions were reportedly destroyed or damaged by military action; and school furniture and learning materials were damaged, including school laboratories, libraries and computer equipment. An estimated 230 kindergartens, vocational education centres, schools, arts centres, special schools for children with disabilities, research institutions, higher education institutions and student dormitories were reassigned to shelter IDPs for up to a year.⁴²¹

■ Guatemala

Members of a team from the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation received death threats in February 2008. The foundation excavates mass graves to look for evidence of genocide and other crimes against humanity committed by the Guatemalan military during the 36-year-long civil war, which ended in 1996. The head of the foundation, Fredy Peccerelli, his colleagues and relatives had also received threats via text messages and emails in May and June 2007, warning that they were being watched and threatening them with rape, torture and death. Members of the team and their relatives had earlier been threatened in person – by gunmen pushing a gun against their head on the street, for instance – or by letter, warning them to stop their work.⁴²²

420 HRW, *Up in Flames: Humanitarian Law Violations and Civilian Victims in the Conflict Over South Ossetia* (New York: HRW, 2009).

421 Government of Georgia, "Russian Invasion on Georgia: Impact on Georgia's Educational System," *Georgia Update*, October 8, 2008; and "Russian Invasion of Georgia: Facts and Figures," September 20, 2008, <http://www.slovensko-gruzinsko.sakartvelo.eu/DownloadHandler.ashx?pg=8645d3f2-b8df-48b0-ba9b-7bcb17d9b6da&ion=8ea0fe0b-f587-407e-ae5-39eb4cffc414&file=Russian+Invasion+20+09+08.pdf>.

422 Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR), "Death Threats to Guatemalan Forensic Anthropologists," February 12, 2008; NEAR, "Urgent Action for Guatemalan Forensic Anthropologists," June 5, 2007; and NEAR, "Death Threats Against Forensic Anthropologists," September 14, 2005.

■ Haiti

On 13 and 14 December 2006, 30 schoolchildren, aged 13 to 15, were abducted from school buses near Cité Soleil, causing the Ministry of Education to end the school term early. They were the latest in a string of kidnappings that resulted in at least two deaths. But the problem continued: 80 children were kidnapped in 2007 and 69 in the first eight months of 2008.⁴²³ A total of 126 children, including 60 girls, were reportedly abducted by armed elements in the period from September to December 2007. The majority of girls abducted were also raped or sexually abused.⁴²⁴

Students on their journey to or from school have been specifically targeted by abductors, according to child protection officials with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). These abductions are carried out by armed criminal gangs and take place as children are on their way to or from school. Child victims are often tortured and some are killed, despite the ransom being paid. Girls, who account for almost half of under-age victims, are frequently raped or sexually abused.⁴²⁵

On 9 August 2007, the United Nations Police (UNPOL) and MINUSTAH reported that the director of a primary school had been kidnapped in Cap Haïtien, North Department. On 12 September 2007, the directors of three schools in Cité Soleil told local media that there were increasing acts of looting in their schools, perpetrated by gang members. On 13 November 2007, three girls and one boy were kidnapped in Carrefour on their way out of school.

In February 2008, an 11-year-old boy was killed on his way home from school in Port-au-Prince when armed assailants opened fire. On 23 May 2008, in Port-au-Prince, a 16-year-old boy was kidnapped outside his high school and was later killed, despite the payment of a ransom. When his body was found in a popular neighbourhood in northern Port-au-Prince, it showed signs of torture.⁴²⁶

■ Honduras

In August 2009, riot police entered the campus of the National Autonomous University, Tegucigalpa, in tanks, firing tear gas and deploying water canons to

423 UN News, "Haiti: UN Mission Alarmed as Another Child Kidnapping Victim is Killed," August 19, 2008.

424 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009).

425 UN News, "Haiti: UN Mission Alarmed."

426 Information on incidents supplied by MINUSTAH via UNESCO Haiti.

disperse 3,000 students and staff protesting against the 28 June coup. Police beat many of the protestors. The rector, Julieta Castellanos, was beaten by police as she tried to calm both sides. Police reportedly opened fire on students inside the campus, injuring some of them.⁴²⁷

Education International reports that teacher union leaders have been targeted specifically. Primary schoolteacher Roger Vallejo, 38, a COPEMH union member, was shot in the head and killed during a demonstration on 30 July. Another union (COPRUMH) activist, Martin Florencio Rivera, died after being stabbed 27 times as he left Vallejo's wake. Saturnino Sanchez, president of one of the teachers' unions, COLPROSUMAH, was severely beaten.⁴²⁸

■ India

Attacks on education have been reported in a number of states affected by the Naxalite (Maoist) conflict, most notably Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. In addition, there have been reports of incidents in the north-eastern states of Assam, Manipur and Meghalaya, where separatist movements are active, as well as in several other states where armed criminal gangs are operating or where there has been religious or caste-related violence. In some states, more than one of these factors may be at work.

In the Naxalite conflict, between January and July 2009, at least 11 schools in Jharkhand and nine schools in Bihar were blown up, and at least 37 schools were occupied at some point by security forces in Jharkhand, according to Human Rights Watch. Over the whole of 2009 at least 50 schools were attacked in Jharkhand and Bihar.⁴²⁹ Maoists torched the house of a parateacher in Chowka, Jharkhand, and beat him up.⁴³⁰ In April 2009, a boy in Mandar, Jharkhand, was reported to have been tortured for refusing to join the Naxalites' children's brigade.⁴³¹ In Bihar, four schools

427 NEAR, "Police and Students Clash at Honduras University," August 6, 2009.

428 Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), "Statement on the Violence Against Students and Teachers in Honduras," August 13, 2009; and Education International, "Teachers Killed in Violent Repression in Honduras," August 4, 2009.

429 Bede Sheppard (HRW), interview with the author, July 9, 2009; Raj Kumar, "State Police Launch Leaflet War on Rebels," *The Telegraph, Calcutta, India*, June 26, 2009; Zeenews.com, "Maoists Blow Up School Building in Jharkhand," May 23, 2009; Press Trust of India (PTI), "Maoists Blow Up School Building, Health Centre," March 23, 2009; PTI, "School Building Blown Up by Maoists in Palamau," April 10, 2009; Shahnawaz Akhtar, "Maoists Blow Up School," *The Telegraph, Calcutta, India*, April 21, 2009; and Indo-Asian News Service (IANS), "Maoists Blow Up Railway Station, School in Jharkhand," April 22, 2009.

430 Kumud Jenamani, "Rebels Torch Teacher's Home," *The Telegraph, Calcutta, India*, April 9, 2009.

431 Kumar, "State Police Launch Leaflet War."

were blown up and a generator was seized from one of them.⁴³² In Chhattisgarh State, a 15-year-old student was shot three times and stabbed by Maoist guerrillas in front of his teacher and classmates after finishing an examination in March 2009.⁴³³

Unrelated to the Naxalite conflict, on 30 October 2009, a schoolboy, Ayush Ankit, aged nine, was kidnapped by unidentified armed men on his way to school at Awa More, Gopalganj, Bihar.⁴³⁴ On 16 October 2009, a class 11 schoolgirl was abducted on her way home from private tuition in Maida District, West Bengal.⁴³⁵ On 14 September 2009, Shresth Sanjay (Shreya), a class 1 student of Christ Church School, was kidnapped at gunpoint by three armed men on his way to school in Patna, Bihar.⁴³⁶ In Mangalore, Karnataka, a Catholic teacher was attacked and beaten by Hindu extremists in January 2009.⁴³⁷

On 17 July 2008, the Manipur state government made it mandatory for all children aged 10 to 16 to be accompanied by parents, following increasing reports of missing children and after parents had stopped sending children to school for fear of abduction by armed opposition groups for the purpose of forced recruitment. A survey by the All Manipur Elementary School Teachers' Association found that attendance in primary and junior high schools, both government and private, had dropped from 80 per cent to 40 per cent since students started disappearing across Imphal Valley.⁴³⁸

Armed groups were also targeting schools and universities for extortion. On 19 June 2008, the KCP (MC) Lanchanba group demanded that six teachers from Manipur University pay Rs100,000 each. On 1 July 2008, the authorities decided to close the school due to other extortion demands from other armed groups including the Kuki National Army and Naga National Council.⁴³⁹

On 22 October 2008, the Supreme Court of Orissa asked the state government to provide compensation to every school and college damaged during attacks on Christians in August that year.⁴⁴⁰ On 28 October 2008, the headteacher of St George School, Ryngku, Meghalaya, was allegedly tortured by personnel of the Border

432 Abdul Qadir, "Maoists Blow Up School, Health Centre in Bihar," *The Times of India*, April 27, 2009; The Hindu, "Maoists Blast Dynamite in Bihar School," April 6, 2009; and The Times of India, "Maoist Diktat in Bihar: Send Kids to School," June 11, 2009.

433 Hindustan Times, "Class 9 Boy Shot and Stabbed by Maoists Outside School," March 20, 2009.

434 The Hindu, "Schoolboy Kidnapped in Bihar," October 31, 2009.

435 The Hindu, "Kidnapped Student Untraced," October 19, 2009.

436 Thaindian News, "Class 1 Student Kidnapped in Patna," September 14, 2009.

437 Union of Catholic Asian News (UCAN), "India: Attacks on Christians Continue in Karnataka," January 14, 2009.

438 The Telegraph, "Abductions Keep Kids Home – Manipur Schools Register 40% Drop in Attendance," July 30, 2008, as quoted in Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR), *India Human Rights Report 2009* (New Delhi: ACHR, 2009), 128.

439 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2009*, 134.

440 Ibid., 161.

Security Force.⁴⁴¹ On 19 November 2008, Khukul Khatun, a 17-year-old student, was shot by Border Security Force personnel on her way home from school at Hatkhola, Nadia District, West Bengal, after she refused his attempts to molest her.⁴⁴²

In the Naxalite conflict in 2008, two schools were blown up by Maoists in Jharkhand. In the same state, around 40 schools were occupied as paramilitary camps in rural areas. Several had been occupied for 20 years. On 30 November, suspected Maoists blew up a school building in Paki block, Palamau District, and left a pamphlet at the scene of the incident, which said the building was destroyed to prevent security forces using it in future. On 9 July 2008, Ramesh Singh Munda, a member of the legislative assembly, was shot dead by suspected Maoists while attending a programme at a school near Ranchi. A 17-year old student was also killed. On 2 January 2008, two teachers were killed in Sikri village, Chatra District, for refusing to make payments to the rebels.⁴⁴³

In Chhattisgarh, Maoists were reported to have used children under 12 “in droves”. Children, aged 6 and above, were indoctrinated and trained as informers; then, from age 12, were recruited into the ranks and trained to use arms and explosives. Government-backed Salwa Judum vigilantes have used children to attack Naxalite-influenced villages, and state police have used child recruits for anti-Naxalite combing operations.⁴⁴⁴ In Machkandna, West Midnapore District, West Bengal, on 22 February 2008, Maoists dragged Karamchand Singh, a headteacher, from his chair, shot him, and smashed his head with a stone in front of his students.⁴⁴⁵

Unrelated to the Naxalite conflict, in 2008 in Assam, an eight-year-old boy was kidnapped by suspected militants near his school, Tangla English Medium High, Tangla, Udalguri District on 25 August. Rahul Roy, age six, was kidnapped from his school in Diphu on the same day.⁴⁴⁶

On 15 August 2008, in Maharashtra State, MNS (a far-right group) damaged a school in Pune for allegedly failing to celebrate Independence Day.⁴⁴⁷

On 6 August 2008, an MBA student, Pratibha Anand, was kidnapped on her way home from dropping fees off at her college, Zakir Hussein Management Institute, Patna, Bihar. The kidnappers demanded a ransom.⁴⁴⁸

441 Ibid., 140.

442 Ibid., 199.

443 Ibid., 90-2.

444 HRW, “India: All Sides Using Children in Chhattisgarh Conflict,” September 5, 2008.

445 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2009*, 202.

446 Ibid., 125.

447 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: India* (US Department of State, 2009).

448 Anand Mohan Sahay, “Bihar: MBA Student Kidnapped,” *Rediff India Abroad*, August 9, 2008, <http://www.rediff.com/news/2008/aug/09patna.htm>.

In Charkhi Dadri, Haryana, on 17 July 2008, a 17-year-old Dalit student was abducted from outside her school, bundled into a car, threatened with murder and raped by four people.⁴⁴⁹

On 6 July 2008, in Manipur State, the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) abducted four boys in two incidents. Two were released. The others were said to have voluntarily joined the group.⁴⁵⁰

On 15 March 2008, nuns from St Mary's School, Sangoti, Raigad District, Maharashtra, were attacked by a mob who claimed they were converting adivasis (indigenous people) to Christianity.⁴⁵¹

In January 2008, in the north-east, security forces tortured Majab Ali, headteacher of Dhula High School, Mangladai, Assam. He had been assaulted by a group of army personnel.⁴⁵²

During the Naxalite conflict in 2007, in December, village teachers in Kannaiguda said they had stopped going to school because Salwa Judum members beat them for allegedly assisting Naxalites.⁴⁵³

On 25 October 2007, Maoists blew up a school building used to house security personnel in Sobaranpur Giridih District, Jharkhand.⁴⁵⁴

It was reported in July 2007 that 25 schools had been converted into police camps in Jharkhand, and many education facilities remained closed due to both the military occupation of schools and the targeting of schools by Naxalites. In some cases, children were forced to learn their lessons in the open air while security personnel lived in school buildings.⁴⁵⁵ A report, in June 2007, said 250 schools had been blown up in Chhattisgarh over the previous two years.⁴⁵⁶

On 10 April 2007, Maoists blew up a middle school and a high school in Munger, Bihar, which previously housed a CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force).⁴⁵⁷

449 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2009*, 72.

450 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: India*.

451 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2009*, 125.

452 *Ibid.*, 21.

453 HRW, "*Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime*": *Government, Vigilante, and Naxalite Abuses in India's Chhattisgarh State* (New York: HRW, 2008).

454 The Times of India, "Maoists Destroy School Buildings in Jharkhand," October 25, 2007.

455 ACHR, "The Naxal Conflict: Killings Decrease, Conflict Intensifies," *Naxal Conflict Monitor* 2, no. 2 (July 4, 2007), 8.

456 The Indian Express, "Another Blow by Naxalites, This Time It's Kids' Education," June 30, 2007, as quoted in ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008* (New Delhi: ACHR, 2008).

457 PTI, "Naxalites Blow Up Two Schools in Bihar," April 10, 2007.

In March 2007, Maoists killed 55 police officers in a full-scale attack on a police outpost attached to a girls' residential school in Rani Bodli village.⁴⁵⁸

In the first three months of 2007, the Jharkhand government converted 25 schools into police camps.⁴⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch reported that 20 schools were deliberately destroyed in Chhattisgarh before February 2007 to prevent police from using them for their operations.⁴⁶⁰

In February 2007, the Chhattisgarh government claimed that more than 250 schools had been blown up in recent months by Maoists and announced that it would move many schools to the vicinity of police stations or Salwa Judum camps.⁴⁶¹

In January 2007, the Asian Centre for Human Rights was told that 250 schools and ashrams (adivasi resident hostels that often include residential schools) were being used by security forces in Dantewada District. The government acknowledged that 150 schools/ashrams were in the possession of security forces.⁴⁶²

Away from the Naxalite conflict in 2007, four Christian missionaries from the Don Bosco High School, Mumbai, were attacked and injured on 19 December, reportedly by Hindu activists.⁴⁶³

On 26 October 2007, in Assam, Rajen Das, a headteacher at Ulubari IP School, was allegedly tortured and died in police custody.⁴⁶⁴

On 19 October 2007, teacher Abid Rashid Mir was tortured and later shot dead in army custody in Whokibal, Kupwara District, Jammu and Kashmir.⁴⁶⁵

On 28 August 2007, Nandakumar Sharma, the suspended Joint Director of the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur, was shot in the knee reportedly by KyKI (Kanglei Yawol Kunna Lup, an armed group in Manipur) on charges of corruption. He had been suspended by the state government for his alleged involvement in the illegal appointment of teachers.⁴⁶⁶

458 Purnima S. Tripathi, "Strike By Night," *Frontline* 24, No. 6 (March 24 - April 6, 2007).

459 The Hindustan Times, "Jharkhand Schools Become Police Camps," April 18, 2007.

460 HRW, "*Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime.*"

461 Indian Express, as quoted in The South Asian, "Naxals disrupt Chhattisgarh Classes, Schools Move Base," February 23, 2007, http://www.thesouthasian.org/blog/archives/2007/the_new_s_about_naxals.html.

462 Tripathi, "Strike By Night"; also see www.achrweb.org for information on the conflict up to 2007.

463 The Indian Express, "Missionaries Attacked in Tribal Gujrat, FIR Says It Was VHP Mob," December 21, 2007.

464 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2009*, 17.

465 Shabir Ibn Yusuf, "Kupwara Killing By Army Personnel – Teacher Tortured Before He Was Shot Dead in Custody," *The Kashmir Times*, October 23, 2007.

466 The Indian Express, "Manipur Militants Shoot Education Official in Knee for Corruption," August 29, 2007, as quoted in ACHR, *Indian Human Rights Report 2008*, 113.

On 7 June 2007, armed militants kidnapped schoolboy Rjat Agarwalla, 12, on his way to school in Sonari, Sivsgar, Assam.⁴⁶⁷

On 14 May 2007, Tabassum Noor, a student from Mandoora Tral High School, Jammu Kashmir, was seriously injured after being allegedly beaten on the head and back with rifle butts by CRPF troops on her way to school.⁴⁶⁸

On 6 April 2007, Dr Iboton Singh, principal of the Central Academy School, Mantripukhri, Manipur, and teacher Mohammed Janabuddin were shot in their legs by suspected Kykl cadres for allegedly running the National Open School, which had been banned by the armed group.⁴⁶⁹

On 26 February 2007, schoolteacher Tuhin Samata was shot dead during a political clash over the election of the governing body of the Chanduli Higher Secondary School, Latwa, Bardhaman District, West Bengal.⁴⁷⁰

On 6 February 2007, Tapswar Hazarika, a staff member of Goreswar HS School, Baksa District, Assam, was arbitrarily arrested.⁴⁷¹

Between November 2006 and January 2007, the Adivasi National Liberation Army kidnapped one school student, Sourav Bhoumik, of Borsing Memorial English School in Sarupathar, Assam; a teacher, Keshob Sahu; and Anil Keketa, the general secretary of the students' union at Sarupathar College.⁴⁷²

In the Naxalite conflict in 2006, Maoists blew up three schools – a primary school, a middle school and an ashram school – at Koitpal District in Dantewada, and two schools in Kanker District, all in Chhattisgarh during October.⁴⁷³

In May 2006, Naxalites in Jharkhand were reported to be destroying all buildings that could shelter security personnel, including schools.⁴⁷⁴ One primary school in Herhang, Lathehar District, was hit three times in the same year.⁴⁷⁵

467 The Indian Express, "Militants Abduct Schoolboy in Assam," June 8, 2007, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/militants-abduct-schoolboy-in-assam/33010/>.

468 Shabir Dar, "CRPF Men Beat Up Class X Girl Student," *The Kashmir Times*, May 14, 2007.

469 The Kangleonline, "Principal, Teacher Shot in the Legs," April 7, 2007, as quoted in ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008*, 113.

470 The Tribune, "Violence in Court Over Killing of Schoolteacher By Cop," March 1, 2007, as quoted in ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008*, 159.

471 ACHR, *India Human Rights Report 2008*, 19.

472 Sarat Sarma, "Extortion Network Expands – Adivasi Group on the Prowl," *The Telegraph, Calcutta, India*, January 21, 2007.

473 The Hitavada, "Naxals Blow Up 3 School Buildings," October 29, 2006.

474 The Telegraph, Calcutta, India, "Security Shelter on Rebel Radar – Maoists Target and Destroy Buildings Used By Police to Take Cover and Rest," May 3, 2006.

475 Daily News and Analysis India, www.dnaindia.com.

In March 2006, the Asian Centre for Human Rights called on the state government to vacate 250 schools and ashram schools being used by security forces and Salwa Judum, and to conduct an inquiry into the recruitment of child soldiers among the Special Police Officers. It also called on the Communist Party of India (Maoist) to stop recruiting children for hostilities and ban Bal Mandal, its Children's Division.⁴⁷⁶ The districts of Dantewada and Bijapur, in Chhattisgarh, reported that 40 per cent of children aged 6 to 16 residing in Salwa Judum camps were not attending school in 2005.⁴⁷⁷

There was a reported increase in the recruitment of children by Maoists between 2005 and 2007. Children aged 14 and 15 were reportedly recruited into armed squads in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. Some were taken from school without their parents' consent. Similarly, other armed opposition groups in Jammu and Kashmir were said to be actively recruiting children as young as 13 or 14 from schools and mosques.⁴⁷⁸

In December 2007, villagers in Kannaiguda and Mukudtong, Dantewada District, also said that students stopped going to school when Salwa Judum began operating in the area because they abducted children.⁴⁷⁹

■ Indonesia

On 25 July 2008, 18 students of the Arastamar Evangelical School of Theology in Jakarta (also known as Setia College) were injured when a mob of angry local Muslim residents stormed their campus, brandishing bamboo spears and Molotov cocktails, it was reported. Later, stones were thrown at the school building, damaging several student dormitories. Local residents claimed Setia students were behind a spate of petty thefts and public disturbances. The school temporarily relocated to another section of Jakarta, with 600 female students living in tents at Cibubur campsite and male students dispersed throughout the city. By the end of 2008, students had not been allowed to return to the campus to retrieve their library books, chairs, beds or other property. Since 2003, people in the surrounding Kampung Pulo had protested

476 ACHR, *The Adivasis of Chhattisgarh: Victims of the Naxalite Movement and the Salwa Judum Campaign* (New Delhi: ACHR, 2006).

477 HRW, "Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime."

478 Christian Science Monitor, "Maoists Spread Across Rural India," August 22, 2006; Times of India, "Children at War in Insurgency Zone," May 29, 2007; and HRW, "Everyone Lives in Fear": *Patterns of Impunity in Jammu and Kashmir*, HRW report 18, no. 11(C) (New York: HRW, 2006); all as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 170.

479 Ibid.

against the Christian school. After the incident, the government advised the school to move away from Jakarta to Cikarang in West Java.⁴⁸⁰

In 2007, Human Rights Watch reported that in Papua, eastern Indonesia, there were continuing cases of rape of girls on their way to or from school and widespread looting of schools by security forces. Previously, in 2005, an unspecified number of schools had been burned and destroyed by the Mobile Brigade of elite paramilitaries.⁴⁸¹ In October 2005, three Christian schoolgirls were beheaded near Poso, central Sulawesi.⁴⁸²

■ Iran

In 2007, the Iranian government reportedly attempted to curtail the independent activities of civil society, including dissident expression among students, trade unionists, university teachers and intellectuals – with recurring waves of arrest and arbitrary sentencing.⁴⁸³ Previously, in 2006, just one prominent scholar had been arrested and was held for four months. But following student protests against President Ahmadinejad in December 2007, four students were reported to have fled into hiding after vigilantes came looking for them in their dormitories. Under a new star-rating system, politically active students were allegedly rated according to the threat they posed, which resulted in some being banned from studying.⁴⁸⁴ Since then, a succession of academics, teachers and students have been arrested during the 2007-2009 period on charges of conspiring with “enemy governments”, endangering national security, insulting Islam and its clerics, “intent to commit propaganda” or participating in demonstrations. In one incident, 300 teachers were arrested in March 2007 for protesting about working conditions.⁴⁸⁵

In February 2007, a Montreal doctoral student was released after a month in jail, where she was reportedly subjected to daily interrogations. She had travelled to Iran

480 Information supplied by Lala Amiroeddin, UNESCO Jakarta office; and The Jakarta Post, “Attack Forces Indonesian Christians Off Campus,” August 22, 2008.

481 HRW, *Out of Sight: Endemic Abuse in Papua's Highlands*, HRW report 19, no. 10 (C) (New York: HRW, 2007).

482 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 174.

483 FIDH, *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2007 – Iran* (FIDH, 2008); and Education International, “Teachers Will Continue to Strike Despite Threats,” *NEAR Alert*, April 13, 2007. In its Resolution on Iran, the European Parliament expressed its deep concern “about the dramatic increase in the repression of civil-society movements in Iran over the past year” and called on “the Iranian authorities to put an end to harsh repression against women’s rights defenders, [...] student movements, minority rights defenders, intellectuals, teachers, journalists, web loggers and trade unionists” European Parliament, *European Parliament Resolution of 25 October 2007 on Iran*, P6_TA(2007)0488 (October 25, 2007).

484 The Guardian, “Students Flee Fearing for Their Lives (sic),” *NEAR Alert*, December 19, 2006.

485 Education International, “Teachers Will Continue to Strike Despite Threats.”

to make a documentary about the burial rites of Iran's minorities, but had stumbled upon a mass grave of regime opponents executed in 1988. After she was released, she was re-arrested and prevented from leaving the country for nearly a year.⁴⁸⁶

Two US-Iranian academics were arrested in 2007 and charged with spying and endangering national security. Kian Tajbakhsh, a planning consultant at the Soros Foundation's Open Society Institute, was arrested in May and held in Evin Prison for four months.⁴⁸⁷ Haleh Esfandiari, Director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson Centre, Washington DC, was held for three months, during which she was subjected to interrogations and solitary confinement and was forced to make a "television confession".⁴⁸⁸

In October 2007, three members of a reformist student organization at Amir Kabir University were given jail sentences of up to three years for allegedly insulting Islam and its clerics in a newsletter that the students said had been fabricated by hardliners. The three denied the charges. They were refused access to their families and lawyers, and were reportedly subjected to physical and psychological abuse in the Evin Prison.⁴⁸⁹ Originally, five other students from the university were arrested and also held in solitary confinement. According to Human Rights Watch, even the judiciary admitted that the students had had nothing to do with the forged publications.⁴⁹⁰

In December 2007, nine teachers were sentenced for taking part in nationwide protests by teachers and academics over working conditions. The sentences ranged from three years' compulsory displacement to a two-grade pay cut.⁴⁹¹ According to Education International, threats, beatings, arrests and dismissals had become commonplace across Iran, and more than 700 teachers identified in the protests had had their pay cut, 86 had been suspended and 39 were banned from teaching.⁴⁹²

In April 2008, four students active in the group, Students Seeking Freedom and Equality, were reported to have been tortured.⁴⁹³ Two, Behrooz Karimizadeh and Peyman Piran, were arrested in Tehran in December 2007 and taken to Evin Prison. There they were reportedly subjected to long periods of solitary confinement and physical and psychological ill-treatment. A third, Ali Kantouri, was arrested in Ghazvin. Majid Purmajid was arrested by Ministry of Information agents in Tabriz on 29

486 AFP, "Detained French-Iranian Journalist Student Released," *NEAR Alert*, January 22, 2008.

487 The Guardian, "US-Iranian Academic Released on Bail," *NEAR Alert*, August 27, 2007.

488 Ibid.

489 Iran-Va-Jahan, "Three Iranian Student Leaders Sentenced to Jail Terms of Up to Three Years," *NEAR Alert*, October 18, 2007.

490 HRW, "Eight Detained Students at Risk of Torture," *NEAR Alert*, June 25, 2007.

491 Education International, "Nine Teachers Sentenced to Jail by a Criminal Court in the Province of Hamadan," *NEAR Alert*, January 7, 2008.

492 Ibid.

493 HRW, "Detained Students at Risk of Torture," *NEAR Alert*, April 14, 2008.

March and was hospitalized on 2 April. All were denied access to their lawyers. After December 2007, 40 members of the group were arrested, apparently in connection with demonstrations planned on campuses to commemorate Students' Day on 7 December 2007.⁴⁹⁴

In August 2008, Dr Mehdi Zakerian, an assistant professor of international law and human rights at Islamic Azad University, Tehran, was detained and held for two months at a Ministry of Intelligence detention centre without being charged. He was dismissed from his university post at Tehran University in September 2007 without explanation in a wave of academic sackings following the election of President Ahmadinejad.⁴⁹⁵ But he had since become professor of human rights at Islamic Azad University, an independent institution that has been criticized by Ahmadinejad. At the time of his disappearance, he was awaiting clearance from the US Department of Homeland Security to travel to the US to teach at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.⁴⁹⁶

One teacher remains on death row: Farzad Kamangar, an Iranian Kurdish teacher who campaigned on human rights and was sentenced to death in February 2008 for endangering national security. He was arrested in 2006 and reportedly tortured to such an extent that he required medical attention in the prison hospital, according to evidence received by Human Rights Watch. There was no jury at his trial.⁴⁹⁷

The Government sets very high bail rates for women activists seemingly to intimidate them. Esha Momeni, a student at California State University Northridge, arrested on 15 October 2008 while visiting Tehran, was held in solitary confinement until her bail of 2,000 million Rials (Euros 160,000) was met on 10 November 2008.⁴⁹⁸

On 6 November 2008, Yasser Goli, a Kurdish rights activist and Secretary General of the Kurdish Students' Union of Iranian Universities, detained since 9 October 2007, was sentenced to 15 years in prison and banished to Kerman, in the east of the country, for having contacts with "illegal Kurdish organizations". The crime is punishable by death.⁴⁹⁹

494 Ibid.

495 Scholars at Risk, "Scholar of Human Rights and International Law Detained in Iran," *NEAR Alert*, September 3, 2008; and Amnesty International, "Iran: Further Information on Fear of Torture or Ill Treatment/Incommunicado Detention: Dr Mehdi Zakerian (m)," November 28, 2008.

496 The Chronicle of Higher Education, "Legal Scholar Held in Iran Was Scheduled to Teach at Penn," September 3, 2008.

497 Education International, "Iranian Teacher Unionist Could Be Executed Today," *NEAR Alert*, November 26, 2008; and Education International, "Iran: Farzad Kamangar Still at Risk of Being Executed," December 15, 2009.

498 FIDH, *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2009*, 313.

499 Ibid., 314.

Two leading international researchers were sent to jail in January 2009, convicted of cooperation with the US government in fomenting a “velvet revolution”. Dr Kamiar Alaei and his brother, Dr Arash Alaei, were found guilty of “communicating with an enemy” on the grounds that they had participated in international HIV & AIDS conferences. They had worked with government and religious leaders on education programmes for young people and in prisons.⁵⁰⁰

On 14 June 2009, the Bassij (paramilitary police) invaded dormitories at Tehran University, attacking students and burning bedrooms. Three male students and one female student were shot dead, according to Reuters, and rooms were set alight. In another incident, the Bassij attacked Golshan Dormitory of the Polytechnic University, Tehran, beat students with batons, used tear gas and broke equipment. They also stormed the engineering faculty of Tehran’s Shiraz University, beating one female student and shooting dead at least one student.⁵⁰¹

More violent attacks by security forces on students were reported in the provincial towns of Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz, Bandar Abbas and Mashad.⁵⁰²

The attacks on dormitories echoed events of 1999 when widespread student protests for reform led to the storming of student dormitories, the arrest of students and reports of torture by police and vigilantes.⁵⁰³

On 25 June 2009, 70 university professors were arrested, after a meeting of members of the Islamic Association of University Teachers of Iran with former presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi.⁵⁰⁴

On 21 July 2009, Dr Klan Tajbakhsh, the Iranian-American social scientist, was re-arrested in Tehran without legal justification and taken to an undisclosed location.⁵⁰⁵

500 International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, “Iranian Doctors Remain in Prisons, Despite Lack of Evidence,” *NEAR Alert*, June 16, 2009.

501 Amnesty International, www.nearinternational.org; Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, www.ncr-iran.org; and International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, www.iranhumanrights.org.

502 HRW, “Turmoil in Iran Extends to Universities,” *NEAR Alert*, June 22, 2009.

503 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News, “Iran Student Protests: Five Years On, Account of Victim Mohammad Reza Kassrani,” July 9, 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3879535.stm.

504 UCU, “Arrest of Iranian Academics Condemned,” *NEAR Alert*, June 30, 2009.

505 AP, “Iranian-American Academic Detained in Tehran,” *NEAR Alert*, July 21, 2009.

The paramilitary Bassij, under the control of the Revolutionary Guards, has recruited boys from middle schools and high schools since 1979.⁵⁰⁶ In November 2009, the Revolutionary Guards announced that the Bassij militia would soon be established in elementary schools.⁵⁰⁷

■ Iraq

Between March 2003 and October 2008, 31,598 violent attacks against educational institutions were reported in Iraq, according to the Ministry of Education (MoE).⁵⁰⁸ Although overall security in Iraq had improved, the situation faced by schools, students, teachers and academics remained dangerous.⁵⁰⁹ The MoE reported 259 academics assassinated, another 72 abducted and 174 in detention between 2003 and 2008. The Ministry of Human Rights, however, reported 340 university professors and 446 students killed by insurgents and militias between 2005 and 2007. UNAMI Human Rights Reports indicate that between July 2005 and late March 2007 more than a hundred students were killed, mostly by suicide bombs, car bombs and mortar rounds targeted at universities and schools, with more than half the deaths occurring in two incidents in January 2007.⁵¹⁰

Education under Attack (2007) reported that 296 people serving as education staff were killed in 2005; and 180 teachers were killed between February and November 2006.⁵¹¹ In 2007, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MODM) reported that at least 30 per cent of professors, doctors, pharmacists and engineers had fled the country since 2003.⁵¹²

506 Wahied Wahdat-Hagh, "Basij – the Revolutionary People's Militia of Iran," *Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Inquiry and Analysis Series* no. 262 (February 1, 2006), <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/1594.htm>; and Global Security, "Ansar-I-Hizbullah: Followers of the Party of God," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/iran/ansar.htm>; all as cited in

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 177.

507 Uruknet.info, "Brainwashing Children: Basij Militia to Be Established in 6,000 Elementary Schools," November 12, 2009, <http://www.uruknet.de/?p=60000>.

508 Brendan O'Malley, "Iraq: Killing Academics Is a War Crime," *University World News*, November 9, 2008.

509 UNESCO, "Stop Jeopardizing the Future of Iraq," (briefing document, International Conference *Right to Education in Crisis-Affected Countries*, Paris, October 30 - November 1, 2008).

510 United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), *Human Rights Reports from May 2005 to December 2007*, <http://www.uniraq.org/docsmaps/undocuments.asp#HRReports>; Brendan O'Malley, "Iraq: Killing Academics is a War Crime," *University World News*, November 9, 2008; Working Group on the Protection of Iraqi Intellectuals, academics, teachers, students and educational institutions, www.unesco.org/fileadmin/unesco/...of...protection%academics.pdf.

511 Brendan O'Malley, *Education Under Attack: A Global Study on Targeted Political and Military Violence Against Education Staff, Students, Teachers, Union and Government Officials, and Institutions* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007).

512 US Department of State, 2008 *Human Rights Report: Iraq* (US Department of State, 2009).

The number of attacks on education targets reached a peak in 2006 and fell with the drop in the overall level of violence in Iraq, following the introduction of 30,000 extra US troops in June 2007.⁵¹³ By June 2008, the number of civilian deaths per month was down 75 per cent from July 2007 and the number of sectarian deaths in Baghdad had fallen from 1,600 in December 2006 to zero.⁵¹⁴ By December 2008, the number of daily attacks in Iraq had dropped by 95 per cent from 180 per day to ten, according to the US military.

Attacks on education targets continued throughout 2007 and 2008 at a lower rate – but one that would cause serious concern in any other country. In 2007, 53 academics and one student were assassinated and one academic went missing, presumed assassinated, according to the Brussels Tribunal Group. Nineteen of the victims were kidnapped or abducted before being killed; one was beheaded.⁵¹⁵

Analysis of English-language press reports of incidents in 2008 suggests that as many as ten academics and two intellectuals, one university student, 28 school students and two education ministry officials were killed; and one academic and one university student were injured. One academic (among those killed) and 60 students were kidnapped. Twenty academics were detained.⁵¹⁶ Threats to education institutions remained at a high level in some areas; in the case of Basra University, threats against female students were openly pinned to billboards or spray-painted on walls.⁵¹⁷

In one incident on 22 January 2008, a suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance to al-Mutwra school in Ba'qubah, injuring 17 students and four teachers.⁵¹⁸ On 22 March 2008, armed elements blew up a school building in Saydiyah.⁵¹⁹ MNF-I, the Iraqi Army and Iraqi police units occupied more than 70 school buildings for military purposes in the Diyala governorate.⁵²⁰

In 2008, kidnapping was a serious problem for university students, particularly on the roads leading to Kirkuk city. On 20 April, nine students and two drivers were kidnapped at a fake checkpoint near Baquba. On 12 May, six university students were kidnapped by armed men near Baquba. On 24 June, four students were kidnapped on their way to Mosul university by gunmen. In addition, on 26 June five students

513 Aseel Kami, "Sharp Drop in Violence in Iraq Since June – Ministry," *Reuters*, October 22, 2007.

514 Thaindian News, "US Reports Drop in Violence, Increase in Security in Iraq," June 13, 2008.

515 The Brussels Tribunal, "List of Killed, Threatened or Kidnapped Iraqi Academics," <http://www.brusseltribunal.org/academicsList.htm>.

516 Analysis by author of Iraqi media reports.

517 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Iraq*.

518 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 13.

519 *Ibid.*, 14.

520 *Ibid.*, 14.

were wounded when the bodyguards of the Minister of Education fired on student protests in Sabe' Abkar.⁵²¹

Most of the academics killed were tracked down and assassinated at their place of work, at home or in a vehicle.

In May 2008, residents and government officials of Sadr City accused the Mahdi Army of closing down 86 schools and threatening teachers, staff and families of students.⁵²²

In central and southern Iraq, there were reported threats by militia, extremists or insurgent groups against schools and universities, urging them to modify activities, favour certain students or face violence. The institutions often complied with the threats, according to the US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.⁵²³

In the first half of 2009, English-language media and human rights reports suggest six academics, three university students and four school students were killed; upwards of 20 university students and 12 schoolchildren were injured. The reduced numbers reflected continuing falls in the level of general violence.

By March 2009, insurgent attacks in Iraq had fallen from an average of 130 attacks per day in 2008 to about ten, according to Army Major General David G Perkins, Director for Strategic Effects at Multi-National Force, Iraq.⁵²⁴ Nevertheless, attacks on education targets continued, mostly in Mosul and Baghdad.⁵²⁵

On 11 February 2009, the morgue in Anbar, west of Baghdad, received the body of an Anbar university psychology professor, Izz al-Din Ayyoub, who was shot down near Falluja by gunmen as he left his house for work.⁵²⁶ On 26 February, a blast aimed at a police patrol wounded a number of Baghdad University students in southern Baghdad.⁵²⁷ On 26 February, gunmen reportedly killed a literature professor in Mosul.⁵²⁸ In early March, a car bomb exploded near the Medical University in Mosul killing three Iraqi soldiers and wounding ten civilians (mostly college students), the majority of whom were critically injured. There was light damage to the university

521 UNAMI, *Human Rights Report, 1 January – 30 June 2008*, 11.

522 IRIN News, "Iraq: Shia Militiamen Attack Aid Convoys in Baghdad Suburb," May 1, 2008.

523 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Iraq*.

524 Gerry Gilmore, "Iraq Violence Continues to Ebb as Security Improves, General Says," March 25, 2009, www.mnf-iraq.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=25890&Itemid=128.

525 Steven Lee Myers and Campbell Robertson, "Insurgency Remains Tenacious in North Iraq," *New York Times*, July 9, 2009.

526 Al-Jazeera, "Academician Shot Down Near Fallujah," February 11, 2009.

527 Aswat al-Iraq, "IED Kills Officer, Injures 6 in Baghdad," February 26, 2009.

528 Campbell Robertson, "Iraq Hands Death Penalty to 28 Cultists for Attacks," *New York Times*, February 26, 2009.

building.⁵²⁹ On 14 March, Dr Murad Ahmed Shihab, a professor at the College of Administration and Economy at Mosul University, was killed by gunmen.⁵³⁰ On 17 March, a student of management and economy was reported killed by gunmen in Western Mosul.⁵³¹ On 25 March, four female schoolchildren were killed and seven others wounded when an explosive detonated near a primary school in Mosul as the children were leaving to go home. They were all under 12 years old.⁵³² On 21 April, a female university professor was assassinated in front of her home in western Mosul; police declined to give her name.⁵³³ On 24 May, an unnamed university teacher was ambushed by gunmen and shot dead in Al Andulus, Mosul.⁵³⁴ On 25 May, gunmen opened fire on three female students in Mosul as they left their school in 17 Tamouz neighbourhood, wounding all three.⁵³⁵ On 22 June, three university students were killed, and 12 other students and their minibus driver were injured when a roadside bomb was detonated during the rush hour in Sadr City, a Shiite neighbourhood of Baghdad.⁵³⁶

The UN Secretary-General reported “frequent attacks on schools, children and teachers” in Iraq between 2006 and 2007. In January 2007, members of an armed group were believed to have deliberately targeted a girls’ school in western Baghdad, killing five students and injuring 21 others. In June 2007, members of an armed group reportedly abducted 30 students, aged 17 to 19, from a secondary school in Saydiyah.⁵³⁷

■ Israel/the Palestinian Autonomous Territories

During the Israeli military operation in Gaza at the turn of 2008-2009, ten schools and eight kindergartens were destroyed and at least 262 other schools and kindergartens

529 Daniel W. Smith, “Students Wounded, Policewoman Killed in Mosul,” March 14, 2009, http://iraqslogger.powweb.com/index.php/post/7336/Students_Vwounded_Policewoman_Killed_in_Mosul?PHPSESSID=5428def7b492ec4ccdf478fdbf6aaff9.

530 Kurdish News Agency (AKnews), “A University Professor is Killed in Mosul,” March 15, 2009.

531 Aswat al-Iraq, “University Student Killed in Ninewa,” March 17, 2009.

532 Xinhua, “Four Schoolchildren Killed in Bomb Attack in Iraq’s Mosul,” March 25, 2009.

533 Press TV, “Another Iraqi Professor Killed”, April 21, 2009, <http://www.presstv.ir/det ail.aspx?id=92155§ionid=351020201>; and The Journal of Turkish Weekly, “Iraqi Professor Assassinated in Mosul,” April 21, 2009, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/73456/-iraqi-profess or-assassinated-in-mosul.html>.

534 Rod Nordland, “At Least 22 Killed in Iraq Attacks,” *New York Times*, May 24, 2009.

535 Aswat al-Iraq, “Gunman Wounds 3 Female Students in Mosul,” May 25, 2009.

536 AFP, “Six Killed in Baghdad Bombings,” June 22, 2009.

537 UNSC, *Report of the UN Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, A/62/609-S/2007/757* (December 21, 2007), as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 179.

were damaged or severely damaged. Six university buildings were destroyed and 16 were damaged.⁵³⁸ An Israeli air strike also destroyed the American International School in Gaza, killing the guard.⁵³⁹ According to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), 250 students and 15 teachers were killed, and 656 students and 19 teachers were injured.⁵⁴⁰ According to the UN, the main causes of the killings included shootings during Israeli Defence Force raids, missile strikes and tank shellings by Israeli forces, and armed clashes between Palestinian factions. Ninety-six per cent of the killings resulted from Israeli military action, while four per cent were caused by Palestinian factional fighting. The UN Secretary-General reported 27 incidents of raids on government and UNRWA schools by the Israeli Defence Force and Israeli settlers from September 2007 to December 2009.⁵⁴¹ There have been allegations that Hamas used children as shields and used schools, or areas in their proximity, to launch rockets into Israel. The UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict reported one incident of Israeli Defence Forces using an 11-year-old boy as a shield even when fired upon.⁵⁴²

Gaza's 346 government-run schools, 214 UNRWA schools and 28 private schools closed, leaving approximately 441,452 students without access to education during the Israeli military operation.⁵⁴³ The UN schools re-opened on 24 January.⁵⁴⁴ By 24 February attendance was up to 80 per cent in UNRWA schools and 89 per cent in MoEHE schools.⁵⁴⁵

Between 281 and 337 Palestinian children were being held in Israeli prisons and detention centres at any given point from September 2007 to December 2008. There were unconfirmed reports of children being trained or used by Palestinian militant groups in Gaza.⁵⁴⁶

538 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA), *The Gaza Blockade: Children and Education Fact Sheet* (July 28, 2009), http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/un_ngo_fact_sheet_blockade_figures_2009_07_28_english.pdf. The earlier figures used by the Secretary-General in March 2009 were 7 schools destroyed and 157 government schools damaged in Gaza.

539 Ameerah Ahmad and Ed Vulliamy, "In Gaza, the Schools Are Dying Too," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2009; and OCHA, "Gaza Humanitarian Situation Report," January 3, 2009.

540 AIDA/OCHA, *The Gaza Blockade: Children and Education Fact Sheet*.

541 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 18.

542 *Ibid.*, 18.

543 OCHA and AIDA, *The Gaza Blockade: Children and Education Fact Sheet*; UNICEF, "As UN aid operations are suspended, a Gaza teenager describes his life amidst conflict," January 8, 2009.

544 "UN reopens schools in Gaza," BBC, January 24, 2009.

545 Save the Children, "Children of the Gaza Crisis: Education Fact Sheet," February 24, 2009, <http://www.scsmena.org/Alliance%20Gaza%20Child%20Rights%20Fact%20Sheet%20no.10%2026%202%2009.pdf>.

546 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 19.

In Israeli territory, nine schools were hit and damaged by rockets launched by Hamas during the same period. Four Israeli children were killed by a Palestinian gunman in an attack on a Jewish seminary in West Jerusalem.⁵⁴⁷

Under the Fourth Protocol of the Geneva Convention, article 50, occupying powers shall “facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children”. The ICRC’s interpretation is that the occupying power must not only refrain from hindering the operation of education institutions, it must seek to “support them actively and even encourage them if the responsible authorities of the country fail in their duty”.⁵⁴⁸

According to the Right to Education Campaign in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Palestinian child detainees held in seven detention camps in the West Bank are being denied education. Only two out of five prisons in Israel provide any form of education: one offers two hours a week and the other, nine hours a week.⁵⁴⁹

In 2007, an alleged 3,000 young Palestinians detained in Israeli prisons were not allowed to sit the final-year examination for secondary schooling.⁵⁵⁰

The International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion on the Wall (the 703 km-long Israeli West-Bank Barrier, being built to prevent suicide attacks) found that it illegally impeded the exercise of Palestinians’ right to education by cutting off teachers and students from their schools in east Jerusalem.⁵⁵¹

Since 2004, the Israeli army has arrested more than eight elected representatives of the Student Council of Birzeit University, five of whom were presidents of the Council at the time of arrest. Their role was to represent the interests of some 7,000 students before the university administration, take responsibility for welfare programmes for students, provide sports and cultural activities and help with registration, fee payment and their studies. Fadi Hamad, who as president was arrested by Israeli military special forces on 25 November 2007, said: “The arrested students who worked for the Student Council focused solely on providing local academic support for students and nothing else”.⁵⁵²

547 Ibid., 18-19.

548 ICRC, *Commentary on the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War* (Geneva: ICRC, 1958), 286.

549 Defence for Children International/Palestine Section (DCI/PS), *Submission to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education in Advance of the Annual Report to Be Presented to the Human Rights Council in 2009* (December 2008), 5.

550 Palestinian Ministry of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, as cited in The Right to Education Campaign, *Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review of Israel, December 2008* (July 2008), 2.

551 International Court of Justice (ICJ), *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Territory*, ICJ Rep 136, Advisory Opinion (July 4, 2004), para. 111.

552 The Right to Education Campaign, *Submission to UNHRC, December 2008*, 4. The Right to Education Campaign promotes and defends the right to education of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

In 2008, the Right to Education Campaign noted that 21 of 40 cases represented by Birzeit University's lawyers involved political prisoners who were jailed solely for belonging to student societies or political parties; many of them held positions of leadership in the Student Council at the time of arrest. They were being denied their freedom, their freedom of association, and their education.⁵⁵³

On 10 January 2008, Palestinians launched a rocket attack on the American International School in Gaza. Large parts of the school were damaged by RPG mortar and other explosive devices.⁵⁵⁴

On 6 March 2008, eight students were killed when an armed gunman attacked a Jewish religious school in Jerusalem.⁵⁵⁵

On 16 May 2008, a bomb detonated outside of Zahwa Rosary School in Gaza City.⁵⁵⁶

On 31 May 2008, assailants entered El-Manera School in Gaza City and beat two school guards before stealing a bus. It was a copy of a similar attack against the same school on 21 February 2008.⁵⁵⁷

In June 2006, Hizbollah shelling of northern Israel resulted in damage to 23 schools and 11 kindergartens and the deaths of seven children, though it is not known if the schools were deliberately targeted.⁵⁵⁸

A Gazan boy, aged 17, told the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict that many boys had been approached by Palestinian militant organizations outside their school in Gaza to join paramilitary training. They resisted but feared they would be taken by force one day.⁵⁵⁹

553 Ibid.

554 Reports aggregated on www.israellycool.com, July 10, 2008.

555 United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict, "Middle East: The Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Calls for All Parties to Protect Schools and Children," March 7, 2008, <http://www.un.org/children/conflict/pr/2008-03-07179.html>.

556 Compass Direct News, "Unknown Assailants Attack Christian School in Gaza," June 5, 2008, <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Persecution/Default.aspx?id=130902>.

557 Ibid.

558 Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, *Report: Visit of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to the Middle East: Lebanon, Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory, 9-20 April 2007* (July 2007), as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 185.

559 Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, *Report: Visit of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to the Middle East*, 15.

■ Kenya

Schools in Kenya's Rift Valley Province have been burned and looted in the ethnic conflict between Kalenjin warriors and other tribes. The attacks on schools and the more general tribal clashes have forced a number of schools to close, leaving others bulging with increased numbers due to influxes of IDPs. Data from 16 districts in the province show that eight primary schools were burned down in 2008 and 400 teachers asked to be transferred from their current schools. Officials allowed 300 secondary pupils and 248 primary schoolchildren to be temporarily relocated to 18 schools in Nakuru Municipality. An Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment noted instances of schools remaining closed because parents who lived nearby were unwilling to send their children to them out of fear of attack.⁵⁶⁰

■ Lebanon

Three hundred schools were damaged and 40 were totally destroyed during the 33-day Israeli military operation against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon in 2006, according to the Ministry of Education.⁵⁶¹

■ Mexico

Teachers at six schools in Juarez, in the northern state of Durango, were threatened by members of a drug cartel. In a series of written warnings posted on school walls from 12 November 2008, armed drug gangs threatened to kidnap students if the teachers failed to pay Christmas bonuses to the traffickers. Several of the schools evacuated all of their students and closed for three or more weeks.

On 17 March 2009, in Triqui Region, San Migel Copola, in the state of Guerrero, more than 20 high-calibre cartridges were found on the campus of Oaxaca's 83rd Baccalaureate Studies Institute following a raid by armed gangs on a community along its perimeter. Continuing armed attacks attributed to the Union of Social Welfare of

560 Inter-Agency Team, *Kenya IDP Emergency: Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment on Child Protection, Education and Gender-Based Violence* (January 2008).

561 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Lebanon Humanitarian Emergency: USG Humanitarian Situation Report no. 33, FY 2006, September 1, 2006.*

the Triqui Region (UBISORT), a paramilitary group, forced primary and secondary high schools to suspend classes during April 2009.⁵⁶²

■ Myanmar

The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict reports that the Myanmar Armed Forces have occupied educational facilities for military purposes, recruited teachers and students for forced labour, and planted landmines close to or on the paths to schools. The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has reportedly set fire to schools as part of a policy of burning whole villages to prevent people from returning to them.⁵⁶³ Schools have also reportedly been shelled or destroyed using other methods by both state and non-state forces.⁵⁶⁴

Armed forces and proxies abduct children on their way to or from schools in rural areas, according to the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, and subject them to forced labour, rape and trafficking.⁵⁶⁵

Children as young as seven have been victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence, including gang rape, Burmese women's organizations have reported; they have also been abducted, ill-treated and tortured by Myanmar Armed Forces and NSOAGs. Girls have been attacked at school as well as at home, resulting in severe injury and, in some cases, death.⁵⁶⁶

The women's groups have collected more than 1,800 reported cases of rape by the Armed Forces against women and children in ethnic minority areas, including the Chin, Shan, Kayin (Karen), Kayah (Karenni), Mon, Rakhine (Arakan) and Kachin States, between 1995 and 2008; but the real number may be substantially higher, as survivors are afraid to speak out, fearing reprisals or stigmatization.⁵⁶⁷

Cases of abduction for forced child soldier recruitment have been reported across the country, according to Human Rights Watch.⁵⁶⁸ Myanmar's armed forces are

562 Telesis News, "Niños Dejan La Escuela Por Amenaza De Secuestro En México," December 21, 2008; El Siglo De Torreón, "Evacúan Escuelas Por Amenaza De Extorsión," December 17, 2008; and Patricia Briseno, "Agresiones y Amenazas Cierran Escuelas Triquis," *Excelsior*, April 1, 2009.

563 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No More Denial: Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Myanmar (Burma)* (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, May 2009).

564 Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB), *Forgotten Future: Children Affected By Armed Conflict in Burma* (November 2008), 73, 75.

565 *Ibid.*, 58-60.

566 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No More Denial*, 30.

567 *Ibid.*, 30.

568 HRW, *Sold to be Soldiers: The Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers in Burma*, HRW report 19, no. 15(c) (New York: HRW, 2007).

reported to have been recruiting and using child soldiers for more than 20 years, and have been listed in four consecutive Reports of the UN Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict to the UN Security Council. In 2002, Human Rights Watch calculated, based on research samples, that there may be as many as 70,000 child soldiers in Myanmar, the highest number in any country.⁵⁶⁹ The *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008* noted that thousands of children were still being recruited by the army and armed groups, and local NGOs have compiled evidence that recruitment is ongoing.⁵⁷⁰ It is not known what percentage of them is recruited at or on their way to or from school, but there is evidence that this occurs.

In early 2006, soldiers reportedly entered a village in Fallam Township, Chin State, and abducted 22 high school students, 15 of whom were aged 15 to 17. They were held at a recruitment centre for four months before escaping.⁵⁷¹ In early 2007, in Kachin State, a 15-year-old girl was recruited on her way home from school in Myitkyina because her family had not met the quota for girl recruitment imposed by the Kachin Independence Organization/Kachin Independence Army.⁵⁷²

■ Nepal

Following the end of the Maoist insurgency in November 2006, the number of teachers and students abducted dropped dramatically, but the combined number of teachers and students killed continued at similar rates as during the conflict.⁵⁷³

The number of abducted teachers decreased from 1,360 in 2006 to 36 in 2007, 34 in 2008 and six in the first half of 2009. The number of students abducted fell from 3,154 in 2006 to 78 in 2007, but rose to 90 students in 2008; however, it appears to have decreased again, at 24 in the first half of 2009.

In the last year of the conflict, 2006, two teachers were killed. This number increased to eight in 2007 but fell to seven in 2008 and one in the first half of 2009. The number of students killed rose from 28 in 2006 to 35 in 2007 and 39 in 2008; in the first half of 2009, 18 students were killed.

569 HRW, "Burma: World's Highest Number of Child Soldiers," October 15, 2002.

570 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 240.

571 HREIB, *Forgotten Future*, 59.

572 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Myanmar, S/2007/666* (November 16, 2007), para. 21.

573 Figures for Nepal supplied by HR Documentation and Dissemination Department, Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), Kathmandu. INSEC is a partner in the Children and Armed Conflict Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism Taskforce for Nepal.

In other words, despite a fall in abductions, the killings have continued at similar rates to those during the 11-year war between the Maoists and the government (1996-2006), when on average 13 teachers and 31 students were killed each year. While the number of teachers reported killed over the past three years has decreased, the number of reported student deaths has risen, as compared to the civil war average. This may be related to the fact that while Maoists and Royalists reached agreement to end the fighting, other groups have emerged, stoking ethnic and caste tension and calling for more devolved power in Terai region, where armed rebels, often described as criminal elements, are operating.⁵⁷⁴

In addition, it is reported that 48 teachers and 182 students were beaten by Maoist, state or other forces in 2007, and 37 teachers and 219 students were beaten in 2008.⁵⁷⁵ One school was destroyed in 2007 and five were destroyed in 2008.

Armed criminal gangs have also been kidnapping schoolchildren. Khyati Shrestha was snatched in Kathmandu on 5 June 2009 and her kidnappers demanded a \$13,000 ransom. Weeks earlier, a 10-year-old girl was snatched on her way to school in Kathmandu by armed men riding on motorbikes. Police say this is not a new problem but often goes unreported because victims and their families prefer to keep it secret to avoid further complications.⁵⁷⁶

On 12 May 2009, a school in Dolakha was closed after the principal and a teacher were assaulted by Maoist activists.⁵⁷⁷ Around the same time, three teachers in Dhading District were threatened by Maoist activists. One was told not to come to school, another was threatened to leave and a third was reportedly forced out of his position in the School Management Committee.⁵⁷⁸

In April 2009, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon criticized the Prime Minister and Maoist chairman, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, for failing to ensure the release of 2,973 children from Maoist cantonments by the end of February 2009. In a report released on 21 April, he noted that abductions, killings, explosions of improvised devices and attacks on schools and teachers by armed groups in the Terai region continued, with children making up a disproportionate number of the victims.⁵⁷⁹

574 For background information on the Terai tension, see Magnus Hatlebakk, *Economic and Social Structure that May Explain the Recent Conflicts in the Terai of Nepal* (Bergen, Norway: CMI, 2007).

575 Figures for Nepal supplied by HR Documentation and Dissemination Department, INSEC, Kathmandu.

576 AFP, "Spate of Kidnappings Shocks Nepal," June 25, 2009.

577 Information supplied by UNESCO-Kathmandu.

578 Information supplied by UNESCO-Kathmandu.

579 Republica, "Maoists Committing Grave Violations: UN Chief," April 24, 2009.

On 26 September 2007, IRIN reported that 11 schools in Kapilvastu District remained closed following the outbreak of violence between the Pahade and Madhesi ethnic communities in southern Nepal ten days earlier. Some facilities had been burnt down and completely destroyed, according to child rights workers.⁵⁸⁰

On 21 May 2007, Maoists reportedly abducted Biswonath Shah, principal of the Janasewa Secondary School of Siraha, from his home in Siraha District over allegations of irregularities in the school's finances.⁵⁸¹

In February 2007, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers estimated that one in ten of the 30,000 soldiers in the Maoist army registered in cantonment sites under the November 2006 peace agreement were under 18.⁵⁸² By September 2009, these 3,000 child soldiers still had not been released.⁵⁸³

The UN Secretary-General's Report on Children and Armed Conflict in Nepal, published on 21 February 2007, provided evidence that children continued to be recruited. The report, prepared with the help of international and national child protection agencies, found at least 512 cases of child recruitment in September 2006 and more than 1,811 children associated with armed forces and armed groups.

The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism Task Force documented 1,995 children associated with the parties to the conflict, including 475 below the age of 15 at the time of recruitment. It reported that 1,576 were recruited after the April 2006 ceasefire, 896 of them in November 2006 alone. Most were enrolled in schools at the time of recruitment.⁵⁸⁴

Human Rights Watch reported in 2007 that Maoists had recruited children in a number of ways, including: kidnapping of individual children; abduction of large groups of children, often from school or at mass rallies they are forced to attend; and use of propaganda programmes in schools or at mass gatherings to attract children as "volunteers". Human Rights Watch interviewed children who had been recruited at schools: most were recruited at age 14, but some as young as age 10. Recruitment initially accelerated after the April 2006 ceasefire and then continued at a slower steady pace.

580 IRIN News, "Nepal: Children Severely Affected by Ethnic Violence in South," September 26, 2007.

581 South Asian Terrorism Portal, "Abductions by the CPN-Maoists Since the April 2006 Cease-fire," <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/nepal/database/ceasefire.htm>.

582 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 248.

583 Office of SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict, "Statement by SRSG Radhika Coomaraswamy: Ministerial Follow-up Forum to the Paris Commitments and Paris Principles on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups," September 29, 2009.

584 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 247.

In many cases after the ceasefire, schools were forcibly commandeered for the staging of “educational programmes”, often including singing and dancing, that led to recruitment.⁵⁸⁵ Once recruited the children stopped going to school. In some cases such sessions were used to identify children for forcible recruitment at a later date.

The South Asia Terrorism Portal reported that, on 17 January 2008, Prakash Karki, a pro-Maoist member of the All Nepal National Free Students’ Union national committee, alleged a group of 50 Maoists took under control three other students, Rita Poudel, Srijana Dhungel and Subba Rokka while they were in class.⁵⁸⁶

On 14 November 2006, a report from Dhading District stated that the Maoists had abducted schoolchildren from different places in the district to conscript them into the People’s Liberation Army.⁵⁸⁷

■ Niger

In 2008, 30 schools were closed in the north due to a combination of banditry, mine explosions, rebel attacks and military crackdowns, some of which involved attacks on schools. Bandits were robbing schools, stealing food off children and money from their parents. Landmines laid on roads approaching schools were blocking access to some schools. Teachers have reported being arbitrarily detained by the military and rebels for up to three months at a time.⁵⁸⁸

■ Nigeria

Boko Haram (“Western Education is Forbidden”), an Islamic group opposed to Western education, launched attacks across four northern provinces on 26 July 2009, which led to 154 deaths. They raided police stations and neighbourhoods and destroyed government buildings, including Goodness Mercy School, Maiduguri, which was reduced to rubble.⁵⁸⁹ Boko Haram leader Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf, who was later killed by security forces, said: “Democracy and the current system of education

585 HRW, *Children in the Ranks: The Maoists’ Use of Child Soldiers in Nepal*, HRW report 19, no. 2(C) (New York: HRW, 2007).

586 South Asia Terrorist Portal, “Abductions by the CPN-Maoists.”

587 Ibid.

588 IRIN News, “Niger: Thousands in North Sit Out Another School Year,” September 4, 2008.

589 AP Photo/Sunday Alamba, August 4, 2009. The photograph shows pupils studying at benches in front of the destroyed school building.

must be changed, otherwise this war that is yet to start would continue for long".⁵⁹⁰ Another senior member of the rebel group, Abdulmuni Ibrahim Mohammed, who was arrested in Kano State, said: "We do not believe in Western education. It corrupts our ideas and beliefs. That is why we are standing up to defend our religion".⁵⁹¹

■ Pakistan

In the Swat District in North West Frontier Province (NWFP), 172 schools were destroyed or damaged between 2007 and March 2009 as the Taliban fought and eventually took control of the area. Most were burnt down by Taliban militants; others were shelled, blasted, demolished or ransacked, leaving 108 schools fully destroyed and 64 schools partially damaged.⁵⁹² The action deprived 23,000 girls and 17,000 boys of their education.⁵⁹³ More schools were closed due to occupation by Taliban groups or by security forces, or because female teachers were being threatened.⁵⁹⁴ In August 2009, by which time the army had regained control of the Swat Valley but was still fighting the Taliban in pockets of the district and surrounding area, NWFP education minister Qazi Asad claimed that 356 schools had been damaged by the Taliban.⁵⁹⁵

In Waziristan, 100 schools were reportedly burnt down in 2007 and 2008.⁵⁹⁶

In late June 2009, the Taliban torched a school at Manyar.⁵⁹⁷

On 27 April 2009, 12 children were killed when a bomb hidden in a football, left near the compound wall of a girls' school in Dir, west of Swat Valley, exploded.⁵⁹⁸

590 David Smith, "150 Dead in Nigeria After Anti-education 'Taliban' Offensive to Impose Sharia Law," *The Guardian*, July 28, 2009.

591 Ibrahim Mshelizza, "Nigeria to Hunt Down Islamic Radicals – President," *Reuters*, July 28, 2009.

592 Figures supplied by Executive District Officer, Elementary and Secondary Education, Swat.

593 Thaindian News, "Fear of Taliban: In Swat 400 Private Schools Close Girls' Classes," January 16, 2009.

594 United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), "Statement on School Attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan," February 10, 2009.

595 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Schools in Swat Re-open," August 3, 2009.

596 Zahid Hussain, "Islamic Militants Threaten to Blow Up Girls' Schools If They Refuse to Close," *The Times*, December 26, 2008.

597 Declan Walsh, "New Crisis in Swat Valley as Residents Run Out of Food," *The Guardian*, June 20, 2009.

598 Zahid Hussain, "Many Reported Dead as Pakistani Army Attacks Taleban Near Swat," *The Times*, April 27, 2009.

On 6 April 2009, two female teachers, an education aid worker and their driver were shot dead near Mansehra, NWFP, an area where Islamists had previously attacked aid groups. They all worked for Rise International, which promotes education.⁵⁹⁹

On 24 March 2009, the Government Girls' Higher Secondary School in Hathian village, Mardan, was bombed. On 23 March, a rocket hit the courtyard of FG Girls' High School in Peshawar; it was launched from nearby hills.⁶⁰⁰ On 2 March, a suicide bomber attacked a girls' school in Baluchistan, eastern Pakistan.⁶⁰¹

In February 2009, girls' schools in Mardan District, north-east of Peshawar, were attacked.

Between 17 January and 26 January 2009, five schools were bombed in Swat, including both the government-run boys' high school and the girls' high school in Tahirabad, a suburb of Mingora.⁶⁰²

Eighteen schools had been occupied by armed forces engaged in fighting militants in Swat, affecting 7,000 students.⁶⁰³

On 16 January 2009, a government-run girls' middle school was blown up in Qambar, a suburb of Mingora, Swat.⁶⁰⁴

In December 2008, the Taliban warned girls' schools in Swat to close or face attack. Five hundred state schools and 400 hundred private schools, which were closed for holidays, were ordered to end classes for girls by 15 January 2009. After a public outcry, the ban was later "softened" to permit girls' education up to the end of Grade 4 only.⁶⁰⁵

599 The News, "Three Female NGO Workers, Driver Shot Dead," April 7, 2009, http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=21371; and *Reuters*, "Three Pakistani Women Promoting Education Killed," April 6, 2009.

600 Geo TV, "Girls' School Bombed in Mardan," March 24, 2009.

601 UNESCO, "Director-General Expresses Deep Concern About Girls' Education in Swat Valley: 'The Future of an Entire Country is Taken Hostage'," April 1, 2009.

602 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Government Assurances of Swat Schools Fall on Deaf Ears," January 26, 2009.

603 Thaindian News, "Fear of Taliban."

604 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Government Assurances of Swat Schools."

605 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Origins of the Violence in Swat Valley," February 26, 2009; IRIN News, "Pakistan: Timeline on Swat Valley Turbulence," February 11, 2009; Delawar Jan, "400 Private Schools in Swat Shut Down Girls' Classes," *The News*, January 16, 2009; Thaindian News, "Pakistan Condemns Militant Attacks on Schools," January 20, 2009, http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/politics/pakistan-condemns-militant-attacks-on-schools_100144868.html; BBC, "Fresh Attacks on Pakistan Schools," January 19, 2009; and Hussain, "Islamic Militants Threaten to Blow Up Girls' Schools."

On 2 August 2008, two schools were burned down in the Mingora area of Swat Valley. Police said 61 girls' schools had been burned down in the previous two months in Swat Valley.⁶⁰⁶

On 13 June 2008, militants bombed a girls' middle school at Namsir, Khall, Lower Dir, NWFP. On 12 June, a village English school for girls was bombed 200 km from Peshawar. On 10 June, a girls' high school was burnt in Wari. On 6 June, militants destroyed the government girls' middle school in Bibyawar and left a note saying it was attacked by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan for ignoring a warning on observing purdah.⁶⁰⁷

On 28 March 2008, a bomb attack badly damaged a girls' middle school in the Germany Qila area of Darra Adam Khel, NWFP. At least five other schools had been hit in the area in 2008, leaving parents terrified of sending their children to school.⁶⁰⁸

In February 2008, eight schools received telephoned bomb threats within three days in Lahore, causing fear and panic among parents.⁶⁰⁹

At least a dozen female education institutions and seven NGOs were bombed in NWFP in 2007.⁶¹⁰

In December 2007, a suicide bomber drove a car packed with explosives into a school bus 45 miles north-west of Islamabad, injuring six or seven children as well as the driver and guard.⁶¹¹

On 29 September 2007, a teacher was gunned down on her way home from school in Mohmand Agency, NWFP. She taught at a girls' community school. Teachers in 100 schools across Mohmand Agency had been told to wear the burkha or face death.⁶¹²

In September 2007, the Swat education department ordered schools to comply with an order issued by pro-Taliban groups for the wearing of the burkha to be made mandatory for all school-age girls. The Sangota Public School for Girls, Mingora, received a threatening letter warning it, too, to make wearing of the burkha

606 Thaindian News, "Two Girls' Schools Burnt Down in Pakistan," August 2, 2008.

607 Delawar Jan, "One More Girls' School Blown Up in Dir," *The News*, June 14, 2008; and ESL Daily, "Pakistan: Terror Attack, Girl School Bombed," June 12, 2008.

608 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Militants Target 'Western Entertainment' Shops, Girls' Schools," April 21, 2008.

609 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Schools in Lahore Face Bomb Threats Ahead of Polls," February 15, 2008.

610 IRIN News, "Pakistan: NGOs Worried About 'Volatile' Security Situation," January 14, 2008.

611 Reuters, "Suicide Bomber Rams School Bus in Pakistan, Kids Hurt," December 10, 2007.

612 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Teacher's Murder Heightens Fear in Northwest," October 14, 2007.

compulsory, even though it is a Christian missionary school.⁶¹³ In some parts of NWFP, primary schools were ordered to segregate classes for boys and girls.⁶¹⁴

On 22 July 2007, some 300 people were killed when security forces stormed Islamabad's Red Mosque and adjacent school, whose scholars and students had been campaigning to enforce sharia law in the capital.⁶¹⁵

In February 2007, in NWFP, five private schools in Mansehra District were closed after being warned to make wearing the burkha compulsory.⁶¹⁶

In June 2006, two teachers hired by the Barani Areas Development Programme to offer vocational training to women and girls were hacked to death with their children at the government girls' high school in Khwaga Cheri village, Orakzai Agency, south-west of Peshawar. IRIN reported that the crime was apparently carried out by tribesmen to send a message to NGO workers and other teachers.⁶¹⁷

In July 2009, Pakistan's Army claimed that up to 1,500 boys as young as 11 years old were kidnapped from schools and madrasas and trained in Swat by the Taliban to become suicide bombers. Many were used to carry out attacks on US and NATO forces in neighbouring Afghanistan.⁶¹⁸

Of two rescued recruits interviewed by The Times, one, aged 13, said he was studying in class five when he was abducted; the other, age 15, said he had been lured from classes in a madrasa. Both were taken from Mingora, Swat Valley, to a mountain base in Chuprial, where they underwent 16 hours a day of physical exercise and psychological indoctrination. They were rescued when army operations forced the Taliban to abandon their camps.⁶¹⁹ A Reuters report in July 2009 said 12 boys had been rescued from suicide training camps in NWFP.⁶²⁰ A report by Press TV the same month claimed as many as 200 boys aged 6 to 13 had been rescued.⁶²¹

US and Pakistani officials said children as young as 7 were being sold by one Taliban group, led by Baitullah Mehsud, to other Taliban and armed groups for use as suicide bombers. The rate quoted was \$7,000 to \$14,000.⁶²²

613 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Education the First Casualty in Swat," October 26, 2007.

614 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Teacher's Murder Heightens Fear."

615 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Education the First Casualty."

616 IRIN News, "Pakistan: Extremists Target Schoolgirls in North," December 10, 2007.

617 Ibid.

618 Zahid Hussain, "Teenage Bombers Are Rescued from Taleban Suicide Training Camps," *The Times*, July 27, 2009.

619 Ibid.

620 Reuters, "Pakistan Rescues Boys Trained as Suicide Bombers," July 28, 2009.

621 Press TV, "200 Child Suicide Bombers Rescued in Pakistan," July 28, 2009.

622 Sara A. Carter, "Taliban Buying Children for Suicide Bombers," *Washington Times*, July 2, 2009. Mehsud was reported killed by a CIA missile strike on August 5, 2009.

In May 2008, IRIN reported that journalists taken to Spinkai, a town in South Waziristan that had recently been cleared of Taliban, saw video footage of teenage boys carrying out executions of those deemed “enemies” by militants. Other pictures showed a classroom of boys being trained to fight.⁶²³ In Swat Valley, the authorities were investigating allegations that militants running madrasas in the region were recruiting and training children as soldiers. Six other students had been apprehended by police for alleged involvement in an attempted suicide attack.⁶²⁴

In February 2008, IRIN reported several cases of boys being either trained at or recruited from religious schools or seminaries to become suicide bombers.⁶²⁵ The Society for the Rights of the Child reported that 25 to 30 madrasa students, aged 7 to 15, had been used to carry out attacks by extremists and were being detained by security forces.⁶²⁶

In July 2007, a 14-year-old boy was reportedly returned to his family in Pakistan after being recruited from a madrasa in South Waziristan and trained as a suicide bomber to carry out an attack in Afghanistan. It was also reported that children between the ages of 11 and 15 were being recruited from schools in the tribal belt by pro-Taliban fighters, using propaganda and a degree of coercion, and were taken over the border to be trained in Afghanistan as suicide bombers.⁶²⁷

■ Philippines

In 2007, a wave of extrajudicial killings, thought to number as many as 68, were carried out against left-wing political leaders including leaders of teachers associations.⁶²⁸ In addition, 259 cases of forced disappearance were registered.

A school principal suspected kidnapped by members of the Islamic separatist group, Abu Sayyaf, was found beheaded on 9 November 2009, after his family could not afford to pay the ransom demanded. Gabriel Canizares, principal of Kanague Elementary School, Patikul, was on board a passenger jeepney (minibus) with other teachers when they were stopped by a group of armed men on 19 October. He was

623 IRIN News, “Pakistan: Child Soldiers in Swat Valley,” May 26, 2008.

624 Ibid.

625 IRIN News, “Pakistan: Child Suicide Bombers ‘Victims of the Most Brutal Exploitation’,” February 12, 2008.

626 Ibid.

627 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 267.

628 FIDH, *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2007 – Philippines* (FIDH, 2008).

the seventh state school teacher to be kidnapped in 2009. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers said the government's record on protecting teachers was "abysmal".⁶²⁹

In March 2009, gunmen seized three teachers from an elementary school in the village of Bangkaw-Bangkaw, Naga.⁶³⁰

On 23 January 2009, three teachers from Landang Gua Elementary School, Sacol Island, Zamboanga City, were kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf. Quizon Freires, 28, Janette Delos Reyes, 29, and Rafael Mayonado, 24, were returning from a work trip in a boat with seven other teachers when the vessel was intercepted by four men with assault rifles. The captors demanded a \$130,000 ransom and threatened to behead their prisoners.⁶³¹

Following the incident, teachers in the area refused to go to work out of fear for their safety, and classes for 700 children had to be suspended. The military pledged to increase detachments to island villages, monitor teachers' travel to the island communities and place marshals on boats ferrying teachers.⁶³² The four teachers were held for four months, but were released on 26 May 2009.

On 15 January 2008, gunmen, believed to be members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), abducted a teacher in Tawi-tawi.⁶³³

The ASG also recruited teenagers to fight and participate in its activities. There were reports that a significant number of ASG members staffing the group's camps were teenagers. Some Islamic schools in Mindanao reportedly served as fronts to indoctrinate children, and the ASG used children as couriers and spies.⁶³⁴

Use of children, some of them as young as 10 years old, was reported in other armed groups including the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the National People's Army (though there is no information on whether they were recruited from or on their way to or from school). In September 2009, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) signed a time-bound action plan to prevent the recruitment of child soldiers.⁶³⁵

629 ABS-CBN News, "Kidnapped School Principal Beheaded in Jolo," November 9, 2009.

630 Mindanao Examiner, "Gunmen Seized 3 Teachers in Southern Philippines," March 13, 2009, http://mindanaoexaminer.com/news.php?news_id=20090313102051.

631 AFP, "Four (sic) Kidnapped Teachers Freed in Philippines: Police," May 26, 2009; Reuters, "Gunmen Abduct Three Teachers in Philippine South," January 23, 2009; and GMA News, "Report: Sayyaf Threatens to Behead 3 Abducted Teachers," May 19, 2009.

632 Rusty Ferguson, "Teachers Kidnapped in Mindanao," *Living in the Philippines*, January 27, 2009; and Sun*Star Network Online, "Zambo: No Ransom for Kidnapped Teachers," January 26, 2009.

633 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Philippines* (US Department of State, 2009).

634 Ibid.

635 Ibid.

Arbitrary and unlawful killings during 2007 included the 19 January murder of university professor Jose Maria Cui in Catarman, Northern Samar, by two unidentified persons. Cui was a member of Bayan Muna, a left-wing organization, and a former secretary-general of the human rights group KARAPATAN (Rights) in Eastern Samar. On 15 February 2007, Farly Alcantara, a student at the Camarines Norte State College and member of the militant League of Filipino Students, in Daet, Camarines Norte, was killed by an unidentified assailant.⁶³⁶

The teachers' union, ACT, reported that one female college professor was stabbed in 2005; a male teacher was shot by masked gunmen in 2006 as he was walking home from school; and, in 2007, a teacher was shot dead in front of his students.⁶³⁷

Karen Empeno and Sheryn Cadapan, two students from the Centre of Nationalist Studies at the University of Philippines, were abducted at gunpoint by a suspected military attachment in Hagonoy, Bulacan, on 26 June 2006. Empeno was doing research on the plight of farmers for her sociology thesis, according to her family. The left-wing League of Filipino Students claimed Empeno as a member. Cadapan was a community organizer for the youth movement, Anakbayan.⁶³⁸ Two captured farmers, released by the military, said they met the two students in army custody. One farmer has testified that he saw them raped and tortured by soldiers and that soldiers later told him they had been killed.⁶³⁹

There were four cases of military occupation and use of schools as temporary camps between September 2007 and December 2008. Soldiers from the Philippine Army set up camps in a primary school in Tubo town, Abra, and conducted aerial operations from the location in March 2008. Similar cases were reported in Lianga Municipality, Surigao del Sur Province and in Barangay Ngan, Compostela Valley Province, Southern Mindanao.⁶⁴⁰

636 US Department of State, *2007 Human Rights Report: Philippines* (US Department of State, 2008).

637 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), "Philippines 'Another Colombia' for Murdered Union Activists," May 15, 2009, www.cupe.ca/global-justice/Philippines-another.

638 Mindanao Examiner, "Mothers of Disappeared Left to Seek Justice for Themselves: Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project," July 17, 2008; and T.J. Burgonio, "Families of 2 Missing UP Students Air Appeal," *The Inquirer*, July 11, 2006.

639 Thomas Bell, "900 People Killed in Philippines by 'Mysterious Death Squads'," *The Telegraph*, January 18, 2009.

640 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 25-26.

■ Somalia

On 20 May 2007, a large explosion killed one and injured others in the Mahmud Ahmad Ali Secondary School in Kaaraa District, Mogadishu, which was being used as a base for Ethiopian officials and soldiers.⁶⁴¹ On 9 June 2007, a bomb targeting Somali troops was detonated by remote control beside the 15 May School in Mogadishu.⁶⁴² On 26 August 2007, a roadside landmine targeted at a convoy of Ethiopian and Somali soldiers killed two children outside the Ahmad Gurey Secondary School in Mogadishu.⁶⁴³

Between mid-2007 and the end of 2008, 144 schools in Mogadishu were closed at various times, as they were attacked or risked being attacked in the conflict between ENDF, the Transitional Federal Government, AMISOM and anti-government armed groups, including Al-Shabaab and clan-based armed groups. According to the UN Secretary-General, these included targeted attacks by the Transitional Federal Government on students and teachers at Koranic schools in Mogadishu, due to a belief that children in the schools were being mobilized to join the insurgency. Thirty-four schools were temporarily occupied by armed groups or used as military bases by armed forces in the same period. On 22 October 2008, the President of the Somalia National Union of Teachers reported that the 34 schools and universities remaining open in Mogadishu had to be closed due to the general level of insecurity, the presence of government troops nearby and the increasing number of deaths of students and teachers.⁶⁴⁴

The situation in Somalia deteriorated in 2008 amid fighting between armed factions. Several UN agencies urged religious groups and traditional leaders to help stem the violence directed at educational institutions, but attacks continued.⁶⁴⁵

On 1 January 2008, an insurgent weapons cache hidden in a water tank at a Koranic school in Mogadishu was seized by Somali and Ethiopian forces.⁶⁴⁶

On 31 January 2008, ANISOM troops from Burundi set up a base at the former National University, Mogadishu.

641 International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), "IISS Armed Conflict Database," <http://www.iiss.org/publications/armed-conflict-database>.

642 Ibid.

643 Ibid.

644 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 21.

645 CRIN, "Somalia: UN Condemns Attacks on Students, Teachers and Schools," September 12, 2008.

646 IISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

On 14 April 2008, four teachers and a headmaster were killed by Al-Shabaab Islamist insurgents during a night-time raid on a private English-language school in Beledweyne, south-central Somalia.⁶⁴⁷ Two were Kenyan and two were Somali with British passports. Witnesses said 15 men armed with machine guns stormed the house where the foreign teachers were living. Later, gunmen set fire to the Aykab school, where all five worked.⁶⁴⁸

On 19 April 2008, up to 50 children, aged 9 to 14, were abducted, allegedly by Ethiopian soldiers, from a school at the al-Hidaya Mosque in Heliwaa District of north Mogadishu. Amnesty International called on the Ethiopian military to release the children.⁶⁴⁹

In mid-May 2008, a Kenyan university lecturer was kidnapped by unknown gunmen, bringing the number of teachers and aid workers held to eight, according to the UN.⁶⁵⁰

Also in May 2008, a young religious scholar who gave a lecture to students at a mosque, criticizing Al-Shabaab's politicization of religion and arguing that "Islam is about peace", was warned that Al-Shabaab fighters had been informed of his talk and intended to kill him, according to Human Rights Watch. The next day armed masked men reportedly came looking for him, but he had fled Mogadishu.⁶⁵¹

Human Rights Watch also documented an allegation by a student living in Mogadishu that Al-Shabaab members came into his high school, interrupted the lesson, wrote down the names of students and told them they had to attend classes every evening "otherwise anything could happen". During the classes, they were indoctrinated, pressured to join the armed group and given three days to make up their minds.⁶⁵²

On 31 May 2008, heavy fighting involving artillery and heavy weapons broke out at the former Somali National University, where Ethiopian troops were based.⁶⁵³

On 13 June 2008, an English teacher from Uganda was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen near Afgoye District, 30km south of Mogadishu. Students said the teacher had previously converted to Islam.⁶⁵⁴

647 Jeffrey Gettleman and Mohammed Ibrahim, "4 Teachers Are Killed in Raid by Islamists on Somali School," *New York Times*, April 15, 2008; also see allafrica.com, "Somalia: Al Shabaab Responsible for Slaying 4 Teachers," April 14, 2008.

648 IISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

649 IRIN News, "Somalia: UN Humanitarian Chief Calls for Protection of Civilians," April 24, 2008.

650 UN OCHA, "Somalia: OCHA Situation Report No. 20," May 23, 2008.

651 HRW, "So Much to Fear": *War Crimes and the Devastation of Somalia* (New York: HRW, 2008), 72.

652 *Ibid.*, 49.

653 IISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

654 [Allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com), "Somalia: Uganda Teacher, Elder Killed in Lower Shabelle Region," June 13, 2008.

On 19 June 2008, according to Human Rights Watch, Somali police entered the Al Mathal Primary and Secondary School in Mogadishu, after a mortar attack on the international airport that originated from the vicinity of the school. Witnesses said the police smashed and set fire to classroom supplies, beat up and robbed the school's watchman and fired bursts of gunfire across the premises. Classes were underway at the school at the time and one child was reportedly wounded by a stray bullet.⁶⁵⁵

The UN reported a surge in violent incidents coinciding with the re-opening of schools after the school holiday in August 2008.⁶⁵⁶

At the end of August 2008, the SYL Primary and Secondary School and Imam-Sahfici Primary School in Holan District were attacked, injuring five students and two teachers.⁶⁵⁷

On 3 September 2008, a three-day protest against targeted attacks on educational institutions shut down 90 per cent of schools in Mogadishu.⁶⁵⁸ That same day, Education Fraternity, a Somali NGO, reported that six schools had been attacked in the first eight months of the year, resulting in injuries to six students and two teachers.⁶⁵⁹

On 8 September 2008, two teachers were shot dead.⁶⁶⁰ Somali forces were accused of killing the two Koran-school teachers in Mogadishu's Dayniile District.⁶⁶¹ On 10 September, four people were killed and two wounded during fighting at Laanta Buuro Training School, Afgooye, southern Somalia.⁶⁶²

On 22 October 2008, Osman Mohamoud, President of the Somalia National Union of Teachers (SNUT), released a statement explaining the closure of the last schools within Mogadishu due to general insecurity and an increasing number of deaths among students and teachers. At that time, the final 34 schools and universities remaining open in the capital were reportedly closed due to the presence of government forces in close proximity. Mohamoud himself fled to Sweden to seek asylum after repeated

655 HRW, *"So Much to Fear."*

656 Office of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, "UN and NGOs Condemn Attacks on Somali Students, Teachers and Schools," September 10, 2008.

657 CRIN, "Somalia: UN Condemns Attacks."

658 IRIN News, "Somalia: Schools Close in Protest Over Insecurity," September 3, 2008.

659 Ibid.

660 CRIN, "Somalia: UN Condemns Attacks."

661 IISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

662 Ibid.

death threats issued against him by local armed groups and government military forces.⁶⁶³

On 24 October 2008, Banaadir secondary school in Hodan District, Mogadishu, was shelled.⁶⁶⁴

On 20 December 2008, the Somali police training college in Mogadishu came under mortar fire.⁶⁶⁵

In the last three months of 2008, five teachers and eight students were killed, and nine teachers and 15 pupils were injured during the shelling of a Mogadishu neighbourhood known as K4, Education International reported. As a result, the last 34 schools and universities remaining open were closed, ending all educational activity in the capital.⁶⁶⁶

Schools in south and central Somalia have long been closed due to two decades of fighting. Ethiopian and Somali government forces have targeted schools, while insurgent groups have launched attacks against soldiers close to school premises.⁶⁶⁷

In the first six months of 2009, at least 34 schools were temporarily occupied by armed groups, and at least six schools were raided or shelled between June 2008 and June 2009, according to UNHCR.⁶⁶⁸

Education programmes were affected by the targeting of development staff. On 16 June 2008, a CARE employee was abducted in the Galgadud region, the second staff member to be abducted in six weeks, prompting CARE to suspend its operations, including a primary education programme for 400 teachers and 5,000 students.⁶⁶⁹

On 19 October 2008, Mark Bowden, UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, said that with 28 aid workers killed in the past year, Somalia had become one of the most dangerous places in the world for humanitarian staff.⁶⁷⁰

663 Education International, "Somalia: The End of Education," October 22, 2008; and UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 21.

664 ISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

665 Ibid.

666 Abdurrahman Warsameh, "The End of Education in Somalia," *Worlds of Education* 28 (December 2008).

667 Ibid.

668 UNHRC, "Somalia Violence Escalates," *International News Safety Institute (INSI)*, June 15, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?view=article&catid=41%3Asomalia-security&id=13934%3Asomalia-violence-escalates&option=com_content&Itemid=100249.

669 IRIN News, "Somali: End Attacks Against Aid Workers, Agencies Urge," June 24, 2008.

670 BBC, "UN Worker Assassinated in Somalia," October 30, 2008.

A chairwoman of a branch of the Women's Development Organization, which provides housing, education and training, was killed on 25 October 2008.⁶⁷¹ On 6 January 2009, three gunmen shot and killed a Somali working for the World Food Programme while he was at a school monitoring a school feeding programme.

On 16 June 2009, the principal of SOS Hospital Nursery School was kidnapped by armed assailants. On 24 June, the principal was released.⁶⁷²

The Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a militia of 500 to 700 fighters, was reportedly responsible for significant levels of forced child soldier recruitment in late 2006. Children were recruited from schools in Mogadishu and the Hiran region, in accordance with a publicly declared intention to recruit from schools. Headteachers in Mogadishu were told to provide 300-600 teenagers for military training programmes of up to six months. In March and June 2006, the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT) recruited street children and children from schools, some of them forcibly.⁶⁷³

The UN Secretary-General reported in March 2009 that approximately 1,300 children had been recruited into the Transitional Federal Government forces, the remnants of the former ICU, Al-Shabaab and clan-based armed groups in central and southern Somalia, particularly in and around Mogadishu. Boys in Al-Shabaab were used as frontline combatants and girls were recruited into cooking and cleaning roles. Most of the recruitment took place in schools. In clashes in Guriel and Dhusamareb in December 2008, a reported 30 to 45 per cent of Al-Shabaab combatants were children. Seven of them were killed and three injured.⁶⁷⁴

■ Sri Lanka

During the most recent phase of the conflict (2006 to 2009) many schools were turned into IDP camps or military shelters and became military targets. In 2006 and 2007, both parties to the conflict attacked schools. Shelling by security forces in

671 FIDH, *Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Annual Report 2009 – Somalia* (FIDH, 2009).

672 IISS, "IISS Armed Conflict Database."

673 HRW, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu*, HRW report 19, no. 12 (A) (New York: HRW, 2007); US Department of State, *2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Somalia* (US Department of State, 2007); UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Somalia, S/2006/418* (June 20, 2006); and Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, "Developments in Somalia," March 26, 2009, www.un.org/children/conflict/english/somalia.html; all as quoted in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 306-7.

674 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009), 20.

the districts of Jaffna, Batticaloa, Mullaitivu and Killinochchi destroyed schools and resulted in the death and injury of students and teachers. Schools were also attacked in the districts of Trincomalee, Vavuniya and Mannar. On 8 November 2006, the Sri Lankan army shelled and fired rockets in and around Vigneshwara Vidyalayam school in Kathiravelli in response to alleged LTTE shelling from this area. The school was housing 2,000 IDPs: 62 people died and 47 were wounded. On 12 December 2006, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) similarly attacked a school in Kallar village, Trincomalee District, killing one child and wounding ten others. As of September 2007, 261 schools had been destroyed or damaged in fighting.⁶⁷⁵

On 29 January 2008, 11 children and six adults, including a school principal, were killed during a claymore mine attack on a school bus in rebel-held territory in Thatchanamadhu, Mannar District, northern Sri Lanka.⁶⁷⁶

In 2007, fear of abduction en route to or in school for recruitment into armed groups led some parents in IDP camps to keep their children from school. The LTTE had forcibly recruited children on their way to or from school and in the past had used schools as voluntary recruitment sites.⁶⁷⁷

In May 2009, children as young as nine years' old were abducted from camps for Tamil IDPs in northern Sri Lanka. Some were taken for ransom and others were abducted by paramilitaries for questioning over links to the defeated rebel movement, the LTTE.⁶⁷⁸ Sri Lankan NGOs reported that dozens of university students were targeted for government abductions and disappearances from 2005 to 2007.⁶⁷⁹ The UN found strong evidence of security forces sometimes supporting or participating in the abduction and forced recruitment of child soldiers by the Karuna Group. Both the Karuna Group and the LTTE were listed in the Annex to the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict in 2006 and 2007. The chairman of

675 HRW, *Return to War: Human Rights Under Siege* (New York: HRW, 2007); and Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No Safety No Escape: Children and the Escalating Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka* (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2008), 20.

676 BBCSinhala.com, "Schoolchildren Killed in Mannar," January 29, 2008. The UN later said 13 children were killed; see UNSC, *Report of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict* (2009).

677 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No Safety No Escape*, 21; HRW, *Living in Fear: Child Soldiers and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka*, HRW report 16, no. 13 (C) (New York: HRW, 2004); and HRW, *Complicit in Crime: State Collusion in Abductions and Child Recruitment by the Karuna Group*, HRW report 19, no. 1(C) (New York: HRW, 2007).

678 Gethin Chamberlain, "In Sri Lanka the War is Over But Tamil Tiger Remnants Suffer Brutal Revenge," *The Guardian*, May 21, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/21/sri-lanka-tamil-tigers-ltte-tamil-refugees-in-camp>.

679 HRW, *Recurring Nightmare: State Responsibility for "Disappearances" and Abductions in Sri Lanka*, HRW report 20, no.2(C) (New York: HRW, 2008).

the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict called on the LTTE to return children to their families and respect the neutrality of schools.⁶⁸⁰

Sudan

A British primary schoolteacher was arrested and sentenced to 15 days in jail for allowing her students to name a teddy bear “Mohammad”. She was released after five days in jail, following an international outcry, and was pardoned by the President. Many senior clerics had called for her to receive the maximum sentence of six months in jail or 40 lashes for insulting the Prophet. Protesters against the leniency of her sentence demanded that she be beheaded.⁶⁸¹

By April 2007, attacks on schools had become less frequent in the South but increased in other areas, particularly Darfur, where students and teachers were targeted by armed groups and many schools were forced to close.⁶⁸²

In Darfur, all attacks on schools occurred during ground attacks or clashes between armed groups. In September 2007, five schools were burned during an attack on Haskanita. The UN said that most looting of schools took place in western Darfur.⁶⁸³

In 2006, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attacked the Arapi Regional Teacher Training Institute near Juba, on 23 May, allegedly because it was operating a food distribution programme for students.⁶⁸⁴

In addition, several school children were reported killed by SLA-MM (Minni Minawi), a breakaway faction of the Sudanese Liberation Army, on their way to school on 5 July in Dalil, northern Darfur.⁶⁸⁵ It was later reported that 11 students and one teacher were killed in the same incident as they tried to escape from their school in Dalil during an attack by the SLA-MM faction.⁶⁸⁶

680 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Annual Report 2008*, 313-4; and UNSC, *Report of the United Nations Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka*, S/2006/1006 (December 2006).

681 NEAR, “Teacher Released After Presidential Pardon,” December 4, 2007.

682 Watchlist On Children and Armed Conflict, *Sudan's Children at a Crossroads: An Urgent Need for Protection* (April 2007), 5.

683 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict*, Report of the Secretary-General (2009), 22.

684 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Sudan's Children at a Crossroads*, 26; and UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Sudan*, S/2006/662 (August 17, 2006).

685 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Sudan*.

686 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Sudan's Children at a Crossroads*, 27.

Previously, in 2005, government and armed groups launched attacks and forcibly closed schools in the Zaghawa community in southern Darfur.⁶⁸⁷

On 11 February 2006, a large group of students was beaten by police while they were dispersing a protest over the failure to relocate Juba University back to southern Sudan. Around 200 protestors were arrested, 149 of them women. The women were released after representations by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, but the remaining detainees were reportedly tortured in "ghost houses", the name for unofficial National Security detention centres.⁶⁸⁸

In November 2008, UNICEF estimated that up to 6,000 children, some as young as 11, had been recruited by rebels and government forces in Darfur, and 2,000 in southern Sudan.⁶⁸⁹

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) admitted use and recruitment of child soldiers and pledged to end recruitment. But 47 children reported in the Kilo 7 barracks, Bentiu, Unity State, in July 2006 were not released until July 2007. They had been enticed by SPLA officers with the promise of education. In October 2006, the SPLA raided a school in Nasir, Upper Nile, and abducted 32 boys for use as child soldiers. Thousands of children were recruited from refugee camps by armed groups in Darfur and involved in the conflict in May and July 2006, but it is not known whether they were recruited from schools. In 2006, Sudanese children were recruited from the Djabal and Goz Amir refugee camps in eastern Chad, where teachers were among the recruiters.⁶⁹⁰ In 2003, adolescent boys in Khartoum reportedly faced potential abduction from schools by government forces for the purpose of being trained and deployed on combat duty.⁶⁹¹

■ Thailand

The Southern Teachers' Federation reported that 117 teachers had been killed by 16 June 2009, and two further killings brought the reported total to 119 by the end of July 2009.⁶⁹²

687 Ibid.

688 NEAR, "Sudanese Students Beaten, Detained and Reportedly Tortured," February 14, 2006.

689 Andrew Heavens, "Up to 6,000 Child Soldiers Recruited in Darfur: UN," *Reuters*, December 23, 2008.

690 UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict, A/62/609-S/2006/826*, (October 26, 2006), as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 319.

691 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Sudan's Children at a Crossroads*, 59.

692 AFP, "Female Teacher Killed in Thai South: Police," June 16, 2009, http://www.news.safety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

According to Ministry of Education (MoE) figures, the number of arson attacks against schools rose from 43 in 2006 to 164 in 2007, then fell to just ten in 2008 during a lull in the conflict. However, the MoE also reported that 14 schools were burned down in Narathiwat and Pattani in 2008.⁶⁹³

Although there appears to have been a relative respite in 2008, levels of violence seem to have again increased in 2009.⁶⁹⁴ Press reports indicate that the number of teachers killed was 11 in 2007 and 9 in 2008, but was already at 8 in the first six months of 2009.

The victims in attacks on education, according to press reports of incidents, include members of security details/guards, school janitors, school bus drivers and school builders, as well as students and teachers.

In 2009, as of July, eight teachers, one janitor and ten security guards/escorts had been killed; three teachers and 16 guards/escorts had been injured; and one teacher had been beaten.

In 2008, nine teachers, two janitors, one bus driver, five school builders and 11 guards/escorts were killed; one teacher, one school builder and 13 guards/escorts were injured; two students were tortured; and eight students were detained, two of them twice.

In 2007, 11 teachers, 20 students and 12 escorts/guards/bomb disposal officers were killed; three teachers, 14 students and seven guards/escorts were injured.⁶⁹⁵

The total number killed in education attacks was 43 in 2007, 28 in 2008 and 19 in the first half of 2009. The total injured was 24 in 2007, 15 in 2008 and 19 in 2009, as of July.

The killings included many incidents of security details being attacked via remotely controlled explosions while escorting teachers, or on their way to or from escorting teachers. In one incident, two soldiers from a security detail were beheaded.⁶⁹⁶

693 The Nation, "PM Plays Down Safety Concerns Ahead of South Visit," January 17, 2009; and US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand* (US Department of State, 2009).

694 Amnesty International, "Thailand: Five People Beheaded in Wave of Brutal Insurgent Attacks on Civilians," April 2, 2009, http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18140.

695 Figures for 2007, 2008 and 2009 are counts of incidents found reported in media reports mostly from AFP, but also from *The Nation*; *Reuters*; HRW, *Human Rights Watch World Report 2009: Thailand* (New York: HRW, 2009); HRW, "Thailand: Insurgents Target Teachers in the South," June 18, 2009; International Crisis Group (ICG), *Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand*, Asia Report no. 170 (June 22, 2009); *Voice of America*; AP; *Xinhua*; *China Post*; *Al Jazeera*; *Amnesty International*; US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand*; *IPS*; *Thai News Agency*; *AKI*; *CBS News*; and *New York Times*.

696 AFP, "Two Soldiers Beheaded in Thai South: Police," February 20, 2009, http://www.news.safety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

There were four reported cases of teachers being shot in front of pupils, two of them in front of pupils aged 9 to 11; four cases of teachers being shot or blown up in front of other colleagues; and one case of a teacher being incinerated alive in his car.⁶⁹⁷

Most of the teachers killed were assassinated individually, many of them by motorbike pillion passenger assassins following them to work or home, many others while riding on their own motorbikes to or from work.

A chillingly complex operation was carried out on 2 June 2009 when insurgents attacked a pick-up truck carrying six teachers home from schools in Ja Nae District, Narathiwat Province. Gunmen disguised as government soldiers on motorbikes overtook a truck carrying a group of teachers and forced it to stop at a fake roadblock set up by other gunmen in their group.⁶⁹⁸ Two Buddhist Thai teachers were singled out and killed: Atcharapon Tehpsor, a teacher at Ban Dusung Ngor School, who was eight months pregnant, and Warunee Navaka, a teacher at Barn Ri Nge School.⁶⁹⁹

Buddhist teachers were not the only targets. Muslim teachers were killed for "collaborating" with the state education system. There were also revenge killings on teachers in Muslim schools.

In the morning of 28 July 2009, an explosion in front of Dusongyor School, Cha-nae District, Narathiwat Province, injured six soldiers as their patrol unit passed in front of the school.⁷⁰⁰

On 30 June 2009, suspected militants followed and killed an Islamic teacher as he left evening class at a religious school in Narathiwat Province.⁷⁰¹ On 28 June, Muslim separatists shot a female teacher dead in Narathiwat Province.⁷⁰²

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- 697 AFP, "Teachers Targeted in Thailand's Deadly Insurgency," March 20, 2008; Amnesty International, "Thailand: Five People Beheaded in Wave of Brutal Insurgent Attacks on Civilians"; AFP, "Thailand: Bomb Injures 14 in Thai Muslim South," June 18, 2007; Marwaan Macan-Markar, "Thailand: Schools Prime Targets for Malay-Muslim Rebels," *IPS*, <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=38191>; and AFP, "Four Thais Killed, Five Injured in Southern Violence," July 2, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.
- 698 AFP, "Bombs Wound Five in Fresh Thai South Violence," June 4, 2009.
- 699 HRW, "Thailand: Insurgents Target Teachers."
- 700 Bangkok Post, "Many Injured by School Bomb in South," July 28, 2009; and The Nation, "6 Soldiers Injured in Narathiwat Bomb Ambush," July 28, 2009.
- 701 AFP, "Islamic Teacher, Teen Killed in Thai South: Police," June 30, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.
- 702 AFP, "Insurgents Kill Female Teacher in Thai South: Police," June 28, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

On 16 June 2009, at least two militants shot dead Lekha Issara, a teacher at Ban Poh Maeng School, as she rode to work on a motorcycle in Raman District, Yala Province.⁷⁰³

On 15 June 2009, suspected insurgents shot dead a school janitor on his way to work in Pattani.⁷⁰⁴

On 6 June 2009, militants killed Matohe Yama, a teacher at Ban Palukasamo, Bajoh District, Narathiwat Province.⁷⁰⁵

On 5 June 2009, two school guards - one Muslim, one Buddhist - were killed in drive-by shootings in Pattani Province.⁷⁰⁶

On 4 June 2009, two elementary teachers were critically wounded in a roadside bomb blast in Sungai Padi District, Narathiwat. The bomb was detonated by mobile phone as more than ten teachers were passing in a ten-vehicle security convoy. Also that day, three policemen in a teacher escort team were wounded in a roadside bomb attack in Raman District.⁷⁰⁷

On 19 May 2009, Natthapol Janae, an elementary teacher at Nikhom Pattana Park Tai School, Bannang Sta District, Yala Province, was shot dead as he rode home from work.⁷⁰⁸

On 26 March 2009, Bhuvanart Yeeji, a teacher in Khok Pho District, Pattani, was shot dead and Solahuddin Hayeewaeji, a school manager at Muhammadeeya School, was shot and wounded when gunmen broke into a staff meeting.⁷⁰⁹

703 HRW, "Thailand: Insurgents Target Teachers"; China Post, "Teacher Killed by Alleged Insurgents in Thai South," June 17, 2009, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/asia/thailand/2009/06/17/212492/Teacher-killed.htm>; and AFP, "Female Teacher Killed in Thai South: Police," June 16, 2009.

704 Reuters, "Thai Buddhist Beheaded, Another Shot in Muslim South," June 15, 2009.

705 HRW, "Thailand: Insurgents Target Teachers."

706 AFP, "Five Killed in Attacks as Thai PM Meets on Restive South," June 5, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

707 Post Reporters, "Teachers demand better protection," *Bangkok Post*, June 5, 2009; Bangkok Post, "Two More Injured in Bomb Attack," reproduced by *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, June 5, 2009; and AFP, "Bomb Wounds Five in Fresh Thai South Violence."

708 HRW, "Thailand: Insurgents Target Teachers"; AFP, "Teacher Among Two Dead in Thai South: Police," May 19, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

709 Amnesty International, "Thailand: Five people beheaded"; AFP, "Six Killed in Southern Thailand Violence: Police," March 26, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405; and Post Reporters, "Defence Plans to Arm Teachers," *Bangkok Post*, March 27, 2009, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/14053/defence-plans-to-arm-teachers>.

On 13 March 2009, two soldiers from a teacher protection team were ambushed and shot dead in Narathiwat Province; two others were wounded.⁷¹⁰ That night, insurgents burned down two schools in Pattani.⁷¹¹ On 12 March 2009, four soldiers waiting to escort a group of teachers to school were wounded when a bomb hidden on the roadside was detonated, in the village of Tasah, Takbai District, Narathiwat.⁷¹²

On 12 February 2009, suspected insurgents attacked ten soldiers returning from escorting teachers to school in Yala. Two soldiers who became separated from the main group were killed and decapitated.⁷¹³

Also on 12 February 2009, three policemen escorting teachers to work in Pattani were killed and one was injured in a roadside bombing.⁷¹⁴ On 11 February, two men were shot dead in front of a school in Pattani.⁷¹⁵

On 14 January 2009, Makosi Mama, a school defence volunteer, was shot dead.⁷¹⁶

On 7 January 2009, a bomb was detonated outside a school in Muang District, Yala Province, aimed at a passing teacher escort patrol.⁷¹⁷

The MoE reported that 304 schools had been burned down in the south of Thailand from 2004 to 2008.⁷¹⁸

On 29 December 2008, two soldiers inspecting a road to a school were shot dead by insurgents in Narathiwat.⁷¹⁹

Also on 29 December 2008, suspected militants shot at a teacher escort patrol in Yaha District, Yala, killing one soldier and wounding three others.⁷²⁰

On 26 December 2008, rebels fired shots into a school and burned a teacher's car in Yarang District, Pattani.⁷²¹ On the same day, in Krong Pinang District, Yala Province,

710 AFP, "Two Thai Soldiers Killed in Militant Ambush: Police," March 13, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

711 AP, "2 Wounded in Attacks in Restive Southern Thailand," March 14, 2009.

712 Xinhua, "Security Force Attacked by Suspected Militant Bomb in S. Thailand," March 12, 2009.

713 AFP, "Two Soldiers Beheaded in Thai South."

714 AFP, "Six Killed in Thailand's Troubled South," February 12, 2009, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

715 Ibid.

716 PSA Asia, *South Thailand: Security and Terrorism Report*, Event Summary (January 20, 2009).

717 Ibid.

718 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand*.

719 AFP, "Two Soldiers Shot Dead in Thai South: Police," December 29, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

720 PSA Asia, *South Thailand, Security and Terrorism Report*.

721 Ibid.

suspected separatists triggered a bomb explosion, injuring two soldiers in a student/teacher escort patrol.⁷²²

On 24 December 2008, three soldiers from a teacher escort unit were injured when a bomb was detonated on the grounds of a school in Sai Buri District, Pattani Province.⁷²³ In the same district, on 22 December 2008, one soldier was lightly injured when a teacher protection team came under fire.⁷²⁴

On 18 December 2008, a bomb was detonated outside a school in Bacho District, Narathiwat, injuring one police officer posted at the school.⁷²⁵ On the same day, in Yaring District, Pattani Province, two members of a teacher escort team were injured when a roadside bomb was detonated.⁷²⁶

On 16 December 2008, two soldiers were killed and one was injured when a teacher escort patrol came under attack in Thung Yang Daeng District, Pattani Province.⁷²⁷

On 24 November 2008, a teacher was shot and seriously wounded en route to school in Pattani.⁷²⁸

On 5 November 2008, a school janitor was shot dead on his way to work in Yala, and an elementary school was burned down in Narathiwat Province.⁷²⁹

On 3 November 2008, a bomb was detonated on a road to a school, as soldiers inspected the route in advance of a convoy of teachers arriving.⁷³⁰

On 19 September 2008, a school was burned down in Yala.⁷³¹ On 8 September 2008, a school janitor was killed on his way to work in Pattani Province.⁷³²

On 25 August 2008, six soldiers guarding teachers were wounded when a bomb was detonated outside an elementary school in Narathiwat.⁷³³

722 Ibid.

723 Ibid.

724 Ibid.

725 Ibid.

726 Ibid.

727 Ibid.

728 AFP, "Three Killed, Teacher Injured in Thai South: Police," November 24, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

729 AFP, "Four More Killed in Thailand's Bomb-Hit South: Police," November 5, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

730 AFP, "Two Killed in Thai South: Police," November 3, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

731 AFP, "Three Killed in Thailand's Muslim South," September 19, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

732 AFP, "Two Dead, Two Injured in Thailand's Restive South," September 8, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

733 AFP, "Six Soldiers Hurt in Thai South School Bombing: Police," August 25, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

On 25 July 2008, a teacher was killed in a drive-by shooting in Yarang District, Pattani.⁷³⁴

On 23 July 2008, two soldiers in a teacher escort unit were seriously wounded in a roadside explosion in Yala Province.⁷³⁵

On 14 July 2008, 11 teachers were moved from their school in Songkhla District after a member of their escort detail was killed in a bomb attack.⁷³⁶

On 2 July 2008, Veera Muenjan, principal of Ban Ma Hae elementary school, was shot dead by insurgents, triggering the closure of 55 government schools for several days.⁷³⁷

On 1 July 2008, a school bus driver was shot dead by insurgents in Yala on his way to pick up children from school, and five soldiers protecting teachers in Pattani Province were injured in a roadside explosion.⁷³⁸

On 24 June 2008, three soldiers in a teacher escort team were wounded in a bomb blast at a school in Yaring District, Pattani. Three shots were fired into Ban Krulae School, Raman District, Yala. Teachers ordered children to get out of the classroom for their safety.⁷³⁹

On 11 June 2008, a teacher was shot dead in Yala Province.⁷⁴⁰

On 9 June 2008, separatists killed eight soldiers, and decapitated one of them, when they ambushed a teacher protection unit in Chanae District, Narathiwat.⁷⁴¹

On 20 May 2008, suspected insurgents shot dead an Islamic teacher on his way to a school in Yala.⁷⁴²

734 AFP, "Four Killed in Restive South: Police," July 25, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

735 AFP, "One Killed, Two Hurt as Army Warns of Attacks in Thai South," July 23, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

736 Bangkok Post, "Staff Flee Songkhla School," July 15, 2008, http://www.bangkokpost.com/1/50708_News/15Jul2008_news08.php.

737 US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand*.

738 Post Reporters, "School Driver Dies in Ambush," *Bangkok Post*, July 2, 2008; and AFP, "Three Killed in Thailand's Restive Muslim South," July 1, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

739 Post Reporters, "Market Bomb Blast in Injures Six Shoppers, Four Soldiers," *Bangkok Post*, June 24, 2008, http://www.bangkokpost.com/250608_News/25Jun2008_news10.php.

740 AFP, "Four Shot Dead in Thailand's Muslim South: Police," June 12, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

741 Bangkok Pundit, "8 Soldiers Killed in Narathiwat," June 14, 2008, <http://us.asiancorrespondent.com/bangkok-pundit-blog/2008/01/8-soldiers-killed-in-narathiwat.html>.

742 AFP, "Two Shot Dead in Troubled Southern Thailand," May, 20, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

On 24 April 2008, militants shot dead five labourers who arrived at a school to construct a new school building. Another was wounded.⁷⁴³

On 29 February 2008, two rangers were killed in a gun battle when ten rebels attacked an army post at a primary school in Narathiwat Province.⁷⁴⁴

On 5 February 2008, a religious teacher at a private Islamic school was allegedly beaten, kicked, jumped on and suffocated with plastic bags by border police.⁷⁴⁵

On 8 January 2008, a religious teacher, aged 30, was shot dead in Yala Province.⁷⁴⁶

On 7 November 2007, two bomb disposal officers were killed and one injured, while trying to diffuse a bomb planted in front of a school in Pattani Province.⁷⁴⁷ Two teachers were reported killed in the first week of November.⁷⁴⁸

In late September 2007, three female teachers were wounded in a roadside bomb attack.⁷⁴⁹

On 27 August 2007, a teacher was shot dead by a drive-by assassin as she stepped off a bus in Pattani Province.⁷⁵⁰

On 7 August 2007, two soldiers were killed and two injured in a roadside bomb attack while escorting teachers home from school in Pattani Province.⁷⁵¹

On 31 July 2007, a bomb injured two marines protecting a convoy of teachers.⁷⁵²

743 AFP, "Rebels Kill Five Labourers in Thai South: Police," April 24, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

744 AFP, "Militants Attack Army Post at Thai School: Police," February 29, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

745 ICG, "Thailand: Political Turmoil and the Southern Insurgency," *ICG Asia Briefing* no. 80 (August 20, 2008).

746 AFP, "Three Muslims Killed in Restive Thai South," January 1, 2008, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

747 AFP, "Four Killed in Thai south," November 7, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

748 Ibid.

749 AFP, "Four Killed, Seven Wounded in Attacks in Thai South," September 27, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

750 AFP, "Two Killed in Thailand's Muslim South," August 26, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

751 AFP, "Four Killed as Thailand Steps Up Crackdown in Muslim South," August 6, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

752 AFP, "One Killed, 12 Hurt as Seven Bombs Rock Thai South," July 31, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

Between 11 and 18 June 2007, four teachers and eight soldiers from escort teams were killed; three soldiers from escort teams were injured in bomb attacks and shootings; 13 schools were burned down; and a vocational school was bombed.⁷⁵³

On 13 May 2007, an elementary school was burned down in Bangasod, Bannang Sata District, Yala.⁷⁵⁴

On 4 May 2007, two schools were burned down in Yala.⁷⁵⁵

Between 6 May 2007 and 17 September 2007, nine teachers were killed and six schools set on fire, according to government spokesman Yongyuth Mayalarp.⁷⁵⁶

On 23 April 2007, a school was set on fire by suspected insurgents in Narathiwat Province.⁷⁵⁷ Two schools were reported torched in Narathiwat on 19 February 2007.⁷⁵⁸

In November 2006, five teachers were killed, two were injured and ten schools were set on fire. On 24 November, insurgents shot and burned to death teacher Non Chaisuwan in front of staff and students in Sai Buri District, Pattani. The incident triggered the closure of nearly a thousand schools for a week.⁷⁵⁹

In July 2008, insurgents allegedly issued a fatwa permitting the targeting of students.⁷⁶⁰ However, students had already been targeted for some time with as many as 30

753 See Chapter 4, Timeline: Deaths and disruption, A deadly week in Thailand's schools: 11-18 June, this publication.

754 AKI, "Thailand: 3,000 Police on Guard Against Jihad Attacks as Schools Reopen in the South," May 16, 2007, <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2007/05/thailand-3000-police-on-guard-against-jihad-attacks-as-schools-reopen-in-the-south.html>.

755 Reuters, "Gun, Bomb Attacks Kill Six in Thai South," May 5, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

756 APF, "Five Killed in Troubled Thai South," September 17, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

757 AFP, "One Killed, 17 Soldiers Injured in Thai South," April 23, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

758 GMA News, "7 Killed in Series of Attacks in Thailand," February 19, 2007.

759 Marwaan Macan-Markar, "South Thailand: 'They're getting fiercer'," *Asia Times*, December 7, 2006, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/HL07Ae02.html; and Sai Slip, "Rights Group Condemns Thai Insurgents Targeting Schools," *The Irrawaddy*, November 30, 2006, http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=6461.

760 UNICEF, "UN Condemns Attacks on Schoolchildren in Southern Thailand," March 20, 2007, http://www.unicef.org.uk/press/news_detail.asp?news_id=915; Scott Conroy, "Attack on Thai School Kills 3 Students," *CBS News* March 18, 2007, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/03/18/world/main2581686.shtml>; AFP, "Nine Shot Dead in Thai Muslim South," March 14, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405; and US Department of State, *2008 Human Rights Report: Thailand*.

killed and 14 injured in 2007 and 2008 (as of 31 July) – mostly in incidents in which students were shot on buses or, in one case, in their dormitory.⁷⁶¹

On 1 July 2007, gunmen opened fire on a 58-year-old Islamic teacher and five students in Pattani Province, killing the teacher and two boys, aged 9 and 11.⁷⁶²

In two separate incidents in November 2007, a Muslim student was shot dead in Pattani Province⁷⁶³ and another was killed in Yala.⁷⁶⁴

On 18 March 2007, three students were killed and seven injured when assailants attacked an Islamic boarding school, Bamrungsart Pondok School, in Sabyoi District, Songkhla Province. Attackers hurled explosives and fired bullets into dormitories where 75 boys were sleeping. Two boys aged 14 and one aged 12 were killed. Seven students, aged 13 to 17, were treated for gunshot wounds and other injuries.⁷⁶⁵

On 14 March 2007, five primary pupils were injured when gunmen fired on their bus in Narathiwat, and two teenage girls were killed on their way to final examinations in Yala Province when their minibus was attacked. Rebels placed logs on the road to force it to stop and put chains of spikes down to stop other vehicles approaching.⁷⁶⁶

Human rights organizations alleged that separatists were recruiting children to carry out attacks. The most active separatist group, the National Revolutionary Front-Coordinate (BRN-C), reportedly selected students from Islamic schools for after-school study groups that were used to recruit children.⁷⁶⁷

The International Crisis Group warned in June 2009 that Thai insurgents continued to enlist young Malay Muslims, especially from private Islamic schools. The classroom is the first point of contact. Recruiters are believed to target devout, hard-working students to join extracurricular indoctrination programmes, during which their suitability is assessed.⁷⁶⁸

761 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Briefing Paper: Child Recruitment and Use in Southern Thailand* (December 2008), 8.

762 AFP, "Four Thais killed, Five Injured."

763 AFP, "Eight Killed in Turbulent Thai South," November 5, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

764 AFP, "Four (Sic) Killed in Thai South," AFP, November 7, 2007, http://www.newssafety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=153&Itemid=100405.

765 Scott Conroy, "Attack on Thai School Kills 3 Students."

766 UNICEF, "UN Condemns Attacks on Schoolchildren in Southern Thailand"; and AFP, "Nine Shot Dead in Thai Muslim South."

767 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*.

768 ICG, "Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand," media release, June 22, 2009.

■ Venezuela

Two students and two academics were injured on the campus of Universidad de Los Andes (ULA) in western Venezuela in August 2009 during an attack by a group of 30 suspected government supporters. The intruders, some of them carrying guns, burst into the canteen and attacked students. Witnesses said the attackers were known leaders of President Hugo Chavez's local movements. The attack appears to have been aimed at weakening opposition to the government's new education plans, which critics say will end university autonomy.⁷⁶⁹

During 2006, many children stopped attending school in areas close to the Colombian border for fear of being seized by armed groups responsible for forcible recruitment of children, kidnappings and unlawful killings.⁷⁷⁰

■ Zimbabwe

On 10 September 2007, police assaulted and arrested three leaders of the Students Representative Council at the Great Zimbabwe University.⁷⁷¹ On 11 March 2007, 26 students from Seke Teachers College, led by a general council member of the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU), Mehluli Dube (who was also the Student Representative Council vice president of National University of Science and Technology), were arrested in Chitungwiza on their way to a prayer meeting at which opposition leaders Morgan Tsvangirai and Artur Mutambara were arrested and one participant was killed.

On 13 March 2007, Promise Mkwanzani, Beloved Chiweshe and Lynnett Mudehwe, student leaders belonging to ZINASU, were arrested while rallying students to march for the release of opposition, civil society and student leaders in detention in Zimbabwe. Some 37 students were in detention at the time.⁷⁷²

Throughout 2008, there were reports of attacks on teachers and teacher trade unionists, including arrests, incarcerations, assassinations and threats of violence. The situation in rural schools in particular was described as a "war zone", with reports of militias moving from school to school, chasing teachers away and, in some cases,

769 Jonathan Travis, "Venezuela: Students and Staff Injured on Campus," *University World News*, August 30, 2009.

770 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*.

771 NEAR, "Student Leaders Attacked and Detained During University Orientation Week," September 10, 2007.

772 NEAR, "Student Leaders Arrested," March 13, 2007.

taking over the school. The perpetrators were mostly “Green Bombers”, drawn from youth or war veterans associated with the ruling party, ZANU-PF.⁷⁷³

On 14 February 2008, two leaders of the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe, Macdonald Mangauzani and Raymond Majongwe, were arrested at a primary school in Harare. The PTUZ had been on strike since 5 February. Mangauzani, 37, was tortured by police in custody; after his release the next evening, his health deteriorated and he died on 27 May 2008. He had been arrested 19 times before. Majongwe, who was released on the same day, fled into hiding. In April 2008, he learned his name was on a list of people to be eliminated. In September, he received several death threats by telephone and the union's head office was ransacked.⁷⁷⁴

Eleven local PTUZ leaders were taken in for questioning at the beginning of February. Teachers on strike from three schools in Glen Norah, a suburb of Harare, were beaten and several were forced to eat chalk by police.⁷⁷⁵

In Muzorori School, near Harare, the principal was beaten in front of students.⁷⁷⁶

In May 2008, two teachers were reportedly beaten to death in Guruve Province, northern Zimbabwe, reportedly by ZANU-PF militia.⁷⁷⁷ Following widespread assaults on teachers, 9,000 failed to report for work on the first day of term.⁷⁷⁸ Teachers who ran as candidates for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change in the March 2008 parliamentary and presidential elections were targeted, and more than a hundred polling officials, most of them teachers, were arrested or kidnapped, according to Human Rights Watch.⁷⁷⁹

On 5 June 2008, the body of Sheperd Chegwu, principal of Katsukunya Secondary School in Mutoko District, was found by his colleagues. He had been kidnapped two days earlier, and his body bore marks consistent with torture.⁷⁸⁰

On 13 June 2008, two teachers and a principal were kidnapped from three different schools: K. Ndoro, a teacher at Vengere High School, Chitombo, a teacher at

773 UNESCO contribution to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy*, A/HRC/12/49 (July 30, 2009).

774 ITUC, *2008 Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights*.

775 Ibid.

776 Education International, “Zimbabwe: Two Teachers Dead, Three More Missing,” June 20, 2008, <http://www.ei-ie.org/africa/en/newshow.php?id=804&theme=rights&country=zimbabwe>.

777 IRIN News, “Zimbabwe: Schools and Teachers Suffer Post-Election Violence,” May 2, 2008, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=78032>.

778 Catherine Philp, “Too Scared for School: The Plight of Zimbabwe's Teachers,” *The Times*, May 2, 2008.

779 IRIN News, “Zimbabwe: Schools and Teachers Suffer.”

780 Education International, “Zimbabwe: Two Teachers Dead, Three More Missing.”

Dumbamwe Secondary School, and Hamadziripi, headteacher of Nyahukwe Primary School.⁷⁸¹

On 14 June 2008, Simbarashe Chikomba, a teacher at Zaka Secondary School in Zaka District, was kidnapped from his home and found dead the next day.⁷⁸²

Education International reports that PTUZ leaders and members were assaulted or abducted nearly every day in June 2008. An estimated 100 polling officers, most of them teachers and some of them principals, were detained. The Student Solidarity Trust alleges that seven teachers were killed while 60 others were harassed and tortured in 2008, many of them between the time of the elections and the presidential run-off on 27 June.⁷⁸³ Teachers were also illegally detained, “disappeared” and abducted by armed groups or state security forces, or had their homes burned.⁷⁸⁴ Three teachers interviewed in a documentary for the American Federation of Teachers testified to being beaten, one of them with iron rods and logs, and two of them were sexually abused violently.⁷⁸⁵ Teachers’ unions estimated that at least 1,700 teachers had fled the country to escape the violence.⁷⁸⁶

On 3 December 2008, 14 teacher union leaders and members were detained in response to protests against the humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe.⁷⁸⁷ PTUZ General Secretary Raymond Majongwe, National Coordinator Oswald Madziwa and President Takavafira Zhou were among those arrested in Harare, Masvingo, Buluwayo and Gweru.⁷⁸⁸

Also in 2008, there were reports of schools being used as bases for the Green Bombers (ZANU-PF youth militia), and other state forces.⁷⁸⁹

Students were similarly targeted during the election period. According to University World News, by 11 May 2008, nearly 50 students had been arrested, 15 tortured, ten expelled and two given death threats in the run-up to and during Zimbabwe’s chaotic elections. The Student Solidarity Trust alleged in its April report that 17 students – ten from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), six from Bindura

781 Ibid.

782 Ibid.

783 Andrew Moyo, “7 Teachers Killed in Political Violence: Report,” July 2, 2009. http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul2a_2009.html#Z12.

784 Ibid.

785 Ingrid Gavshon/Angel Films, *Oh My Zimbabwe*, <http://www.filmcontact.com/south-africa/zimbabwe-oh-my-zimbabwe>.

786 BBC News, “Zimbabwe Teachers Threaten Strike,” May 5, 2008.

787 Education International, “Zimbabwe: Ten Teachers Released but Four Still Incarcerated,” December 4, 2008, <http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/show.php?id=929&theme=rights&country=zimbabwe>.

788 Ibid.

789 Information supplied by UNESCO Harare.

University of Science and Technology and one from Great Zimbabwe University – were arrested for protesting against the election result. It said the ten students arrested at NUST were “tortured and assaulted by police”.⁷⁹⁰ The Student Solidarity Trust also reported that 85 student activists were abducted, arrested or assaulted by security forces in 2008.⁷⁹¹

The field activities of all NGOs, including those involved in education were banned for a long period in 2008. NGO members were persecuted and forced to close down their field operations. The ban included UN agencies.

Human Rights Watch reported in June 2009 that up to 300 children were being forced by soldiers of Zimbabwe’s army to work in the diamond fields instead of going to school.⁷⁹²

In July 2009, Raymond Majongwe expressed concern on behalf of the PTUZ that high-ranking military officials had been appointed to the Ministry of Education and youth militia members were demanding offices in every school. They posted “youth coordinators” at schools, and demanded the establishment of youth councillors who report back to the youth militia about problems at the school. Some youth militia centres were running history clubs at schools.⁷⁹³ Teachers said the setting up of militia bases at schools left them in fear of their lives.⁷⁹⁴

In October 2009, Takavafira Zhou, president of the PTUZ, said three schools a day reported threats and beatings by ZANU-PF members and youth militia. On 21 October, 15 teachers were rounded up and beaten. In Gutu, youth training centres had been set up where youths were forced by ZANU-PF members to do military drills. Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) members were touring schools and interrogating staff in a campaign of “systematic targeting and intimidation” of teachers.⁷⁹⁵

In October 2009, 200 youths, aged 14 to 15, missed school at Dimbe, Dhirihori and Masikana Schools in Chief Svosve area to undergo semi-military training with the auxiliary police at Rudhaka stadium. The training included practising military drills and shouting war cries. Some of them were reportedly forced to attend. Several local

790 Clemence Manyukwe, “Zimbabwe: Students Arrested, Tortured, Expelled,” *University World News*, May 11, 2008.

791 Moyo, “7 Teachers Killed in Political Violence.”

792 HRW, *Diamonds in the Rough: Human Rights Abuses in the Marange Diamond Fields of Zimbabwe* (New York: HRW, 2009), as cited in David Smith, “Children Forced to Mine Zimbabwe Diamonds,” *The Guardian*, June 26, 2009.

793 IRIN News, “Zimbabwe: Political Violence Growing in Rural Areas,” July 27, 2009.

794 Mike Makomo, “ZANU PF Sets Up Bases in Schools,” *The Zimbabwe Telegraph*, June 19, 2009.

795 Alex Bell, “Violence Against Teachers on Rise in Rural Areas,” *SW Radio Africa*, October 28, 2009.

residents expressed fears that the children were being readied for use as a political terror machine.⁷⁹⁶

In a separate report, the PTUZ said youth militias had set up initiation camps at schools in Masvingo Province to train schoolchildren and teachers in ZANU-PF philosophy and to chant party slogans. In the same province, it was reported that some education officials had been hounded out of their schools and houses for supporting the Movement for Democratic Change.⁷⁹⁷

Also in October 2009, youth militia were deployed to schools with war veterans to force striking teachers to return to work. They told teachers to leave the area if they did not want to work.⁷⁹⁸

The youth militia were reported to be heavily involved in the violence and intimidation of opponents of Robert Mugabe in the 2008 election and are salaried civil servants. Since then, they are reported to have carried out beatings, torture and harassment of teachers.

School leavers faced compulsory national youth service training, also known as youth militia training from 2003 to 2007, aimed at people aged 10 to 30. Several thousand young people were given 120 days' training in paramilitary skills and political education, and allegedly torture and killing techniques. Trainees were also sent to kill political opponents of Robert Mugabe, according to a camp commander. It was reported that girls were repeatedly raped by trainees and other staff. Youth militias were used to harass political opposition and enforce government measures such as price reductions in the supermarkets. Killings, torture, rape and destruction of property by ZANU-PF youth militias continued up until the end of 2007.⁷⁹⁹

Compulsory national service was introduced in January 2003 in a manner that undermined equity in the education system. The Minister of Higher Education, Samuel Mumbengegwi, announced that no students leaving high school would be given their A- or O-level certificates until they had completed six months' service. In November 2002, circulars were sent to all tertiary institutions informing that admission preference had to be given to youth militia and that no letters of admission would

796 Taurai Bande, "ZANU Militarise Rural Areas," *The Zimbabwean*, October 16, 2009.

797 The Zimbabwean, "Zanu (PF), War Vets Terrorise Teachers," October 16, 2009.

798 Tony Saxon, "Zanu Youth Terrorise Teachers," *The Zimbabwean*, October 7, 2009.

799 IRIN News, "Zimbabwe: Youth Militia Camps May Close, September 6, 2007; Solidarity Peace Trust, *National Youth Service Training – "Shaping Youths in a Truly Zimbabwean Manner"* (September 5, 2003), http://www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/reports/youth_militia.pdf; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, monthly reports, www.hrforumzim.com; Hilary Andersson, "Zimbabwe's Torture Training Camps," *BBC*, February 27, 2004; and BBC One, "Panorama: Secrets of the Camps," February 28, 2004; all as cited in Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, 371.

be sent to ordinary applicants until each institution had been sent an official list of militia who had to be given first priority. At the same time there was only a capacity to train 20,000 of the 300,000 school leavers.⁸⁰⁰ In November 2009, MPs were told that 80,000 young people had been trained in the militia and 14,000 were currently employed as “youth ward officers”.⁸⁰¹

800 The Herald, “National Service to Be Compulsory,” July 2, 2002, as cited in Solidarity Peace Trust, *National Youth Service Training*, 20.

801 Lebo Nkatazo, “80,000 Complete Youth Service: Minister,” *The Zimbabwe Situation*, November 24, 2009, http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/nov24a_2009.html#tocPos.

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Acronyms list

ACHR	Asian Centre for Human Rights
AUC	United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia
BRN-C	National Revolutionary Front-Co-ordinate (Thailand)
CARA	Council for Assisting Refugee Academics
CNDP	Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple
CPN-I	Communist Party of India-Maoist
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
CRIN	Child Rights Information Network
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ELN	National Liberation Army (Colombia)
ENS	Escuela Nacional Sindical
ETA	Basque Fatherland and Liberty (Spain)
ETA	Ethiopian Teachers Association
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FECODE	Federación Colombiana de Educadores
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICL	International Criminal Law
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICG	International Crisis Group
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IDP	Internally displaced person
IHL	International humanitarian law (or the laws of war)
IHRL	International human rights law
IIE	Institute of International Education
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre

IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo)
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines)
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MNF-I	Multi-National Force-Iraq
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province (Pakistan)
NSOAG	Non-state organized armed groups
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSRSG-CAAC	Office of the Special Representative for the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict
OTP	Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court
PTUZ	Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe
SAR	Scholars at Risk Network
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPO	Special Police Officer (India)
SRF	Scholar Rescue Fund
SZOP	Schools as Zones of Peace
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	The UN Refugee Agency
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe Africa National Union-Patriotic Front

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