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TOPIC A:

“Central African Republic
Armed Groups Preventing
Children from Getting an
Education”

NC
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2018





*“Over 20 million children of conflict are out of school.
Education is often forgotten”*

-Angelina Jolie

Nieves Padilla Rabell
Undersecretary of UNICEF

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Topic A:

Central African Republic Armed Groups Preventing Children from Getting an Education

UNICEF'S mandate expanded to help children whose lives were at risk in developing countries, it works in 190 countries and territories to protect the rights of every child. UNICEF has spent 70 years working to improve the lives of children and their families. Defending children's rights throughout their lives requires a global presence, aiming to produce results and understand their effects.

For years, a war has been raging in the Central African Republic (CAR). In October 2013, the Seleka group, made up of a Muslim majority, rebelled against the government, accusing it of neglect and marginalization. They plundered entire towns and villages, leading to the formation of the anti-Balaka movement. Originally, a defense group comprising a majority of Christians, over time, the militia fell into the hands of uncontrollable gangs of armed youth.

In 2016, CAR voters elected an official government, but its power and control does not extend outside the capital, Bangui. Instead, the country has become increasingly polarized along religious and ethnic lines. Fourteen armed rebel groups are now active in the country.

Armed groups in the Central African Republic have occupied, looted, and damaged school buildings, preventing children from getting an education. Schools have been taken by these groups because they are the best buildings, they have good roofs, they have good concrete floors and they don't leak when the rains come. This, of course, has had a negative

impact on children. For years they have been deprived of their right of an education. At least 10,000 children have been unable to resume their education since 2016 because paramilitary groups have set up base in their schools.

A third of all schools have either been struck by bullets, set on fire, looted or occupied by armed groups

Children have lost years of education in many parts of the Central African Republic because armed groups have failed to treat schools as places of teaching for children. Armed groups in the Central African Republic have occupied, looted, and damaged school buildings, preventing children from getting an education. Soldiers from the United Nations, known as MINUSCA, have used school buildings as bases or barracks, or based their forces near school grounds. Some places are more peaceful, so nowadays, children dream of an education. Unfortunately, they don't have any books or material to study with, because they were destroyed.

Points to address:

- How can children receive education in the middle of the civil conflict?
- What programs can be used for child soldiers?
- How UNICEF and your country involved in this situation?

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