



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

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INTERVENTION AT THE SIDE EVENT
“CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT IN UKRAINE”
ON THE SIDELINES OF THE 29TH OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Łódź, 1 December 2022

I would like first of all to sincerely thank our panelists for the interesting discussion and insightful accounts of Russia’s brutal war of aggression against Ukraine and of its devastating consequences on children in Ukraine.

It is important to keep a strong focus on this issue and I am pleased that Italy together with Belgium, Norway and Poland have organized this side event on children and armed conflicts on the margins of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Italy is at the forefront of international action to protect children living in armed conflicts and humanitarian situations and we are strongly committed to a number of initiatives in this regard. In this respect, let me mention our “open pledge” at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and the Crescent in 2019 to call on all actors to reduce the impact of armed conflicts on the life of children.

We strongly support the work of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflicts and we participate in several international initiatives, like the Safe Schools Declaration.

Italy’s humanitarian assistance also delivers concrete aid to children affected by conflicts, humanitarian crises and emergencies in many countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. By doing so, we pay particular attention to ensuring their safety, mental and physical health as well as promoting their education.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Italy has welcomed many Ukrainian refugees, of which almost 50 thousand are minors. A particular focus of our action has been the situation of unaccompanied minors who are more at risk of trafficking and abuse

Italy strongly believes that the OSCE, thanks to its comprehensive concept of security, can and should play a more active role in alleviating the physical and psychological consequences of armed conflicts on children. The violations of children rights documented by the Moscow Mechanisms reports are a concrete contribution of this Organization to accountability and justice for the war in Ukraine.

The OSCE should further integrate the political-military and human dimensions on this topic and it should better leverage the contribution of the Autonomous Institutions like ODIHR and of the field missions. Italy stands ready to work together with other participating States on the important issue of children and armed conflicts.

If we truly want to build peaceful, safe, and sustainable societies, then we must prioritize protection of children on every international agenda. We owe it to our children, who are our hope for a better future. We cannot fail them.