Starting the Lesson 2.2

For an interactive start to lesson 2.2, ask learners:

*Why do peacekeepers have a legal and moral obligation to protect children?*

**OVERVIEW**

This lesson will explore the child protection framework that applies to all United Nations peacekeepers. The discussions should engage learners from the outset.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Understand the legal obligation, mandate and authority to protect children;
- Understand the main guiding frameworks on child protection:
  - The international legal framework for the protection of children in armed conflict;
  - Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, and child protection provisions in peacekeeping;
  - DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017);
  - The Paris Principles and the Vancouver Principles.

**ACTIVITIES**

- Child Protection Framework scenario exercise
- Optional group discussions
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In this lesson, we will explore the Child Protection Framework that applies to all United Nations peacekeepers. Children are entitled to special protection and care under international human rights and humanitarian law.

Key Message: It is imperative that military Child Protection Focal Points understand the legal framework on child protection in order to promote the obligations and the authority of military personnel to protect children.

The legal framework on child protection is vast. There is not enough time to cover all the legal issues in detail in this presentation. Provide a general overview of the legal provisions so that learners obtain a basic understanding. While learners will not be called upon to act as lawyers, they must be aware of the legal frameworks that guide child protection and the legal obligations of United Nations peacekeepers.

In this lesson, you will develop a thorough understanding of the main guiding frameworks for child protection:

1. The international legal framework for the protection of children in armed conflict, which includes international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and conventions and protocols on child protection.
3. The DPO-DOS-DPPA framework, which includes DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, as well as other policies and guidelines such as the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy, civilian protection...
policies and guidelines, the United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM) developed by DPO, DOS and DPPA.

4. Guiding principles such as the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007), and the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers (2017).

SLIDE 3: OVERVIEW OF FRAMEWORKS

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The legal framework on child protection can be divided into three pillars: the international legal framework, the Security Council framework and the DPO-DOS-DPPA framework.

- The slide presents an overview of the child protection frameworks for peacekeepers. We will explore each one in this presentation.
Key Message: International humanitarian law is intended to limit suffering during conflict by specifically prohibiting attacks against civilians. This also applies to peacekeepers.

International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict.

1. International humanitarian law applies in times of armed conflict – both international and non-international (i.e., internal) – armed conflicts.

2. International humanitarian law comprises a set of rules aimed at limiting the negative impact of armed conflict and reducing suffering during wartime. The parties to conflict must, at all times, distinguish between the civilians and combatants. Attacks may be made only against military object and must be consistent with the principle of proportionality. Torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited at all times and in all circumstances.

3. International humanitarian law protects persons who are not/no longer participating in hostilities, such as civilians, wounded persons, prisoners, medical personnel and humanitarian workers.
4. International humanitarian law restricts the means and methods of warfare; the use of certain weapons, such as incendiary weapons (i.e., weapons that cause a fire), is not permitted, because they can cause undue suffering.

5. The main rules of international humanitarian law can found in the Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols (1977).

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**SLIDE 5: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW**

**Protection of Children under International Humanitarian Law**

- Children shall not be the objects of attack;
- Children are entitled to special protection, care and aid;
- Children must be evacuated from besieged or encircled areas;
- If detained or interned, children must be held in separate quarters from adults;
- Prohibitions apply to recruitment of children, participation of children in hostilities, the death penalty for children under 18 years of age.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** International humanitarian law contains specific provisions to safeguard children during conflict.

- **Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions (art. 77)** sets out the principle of special protection for children: "Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault. The parties to the conflict shall provide them with the care and aid they require, whether because of their age or for any other reason." These provisions apply in both international and non-international (i.e., internal) conflicts as customary humanitarian law.

- **Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions (art. 4)** stipulates that: "Children shall be provided with the care and aid they require," and lists special measures devoted exclusively to children.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message**: All parties to a conflict are bound by international humanitarian law. That law also applies to United Nations military components.

- All parties to conflict are bound by the rules of international humanitarian law. The law applies once a conflict has begun, and equally to all sides, regardless of who started the fighting. International humanitarian law also applies to United Nations forces if they are actively engaged in hostilities as combatants, and to the extent and for the duration of their engagement.

- The obligations of United Nations peacekeeping personnel under international humanitarian law are stated in the Secretary-General’s bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13 of 6 August 1999, on observance of United Nations forces of international humanitarian law.

- Particularly for training courses with contingent commanders, trainers should consider handing out a copy of the Secretary-General’s bulletin, which is available from [http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/unobservance1999.pdf](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/unobservance1999.pdf).
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Human rights is at the core of United Nations peace operations.

International human rights law applies in times of both war and peace, and to all human beings.

The universality of human rights is highlighted in the Charter of the United Nations, which commits Member States to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, colour, sex, language or religion. The United Nations Charter is a binding international treaty.

No one can take away a person’s human rights. A person’s human rights may be violated – and they often are – but this doesn’t mean that they have been taken away from the person concerned.

Human rights are interdependent and indivisible. This means that the realization of one human right is linked to the realization of the others. For example, in order to be able to express their political opinion by voting, citizens must have access to adequate and relevant information.

Over time, human rights have come to be protected by domestic laws, national constitutions and international law. Human rights are established in international law, therefore they are legal and internationally guaranteed.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Under international human rights law, children are entitled to special protection in times of conflict.

Children are entitled to special protection and care under international human rights law.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989, outlines the fundamental rights of children, including the right to protection from economic exploitation and harmful work, all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and physical and mental violence. Children are entitled to special protection in times of war. The Convention is one of the most widely ratified human rights treaties.

There are three Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child: one outlaws the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, one prohibits the involvement of children in armed conflict, and one focuses on a communications procedure, through which children can report violations of their rights.

The Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC), adopted in 2000, obligates States Parties to take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not reached the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities (art. 1). It prohibits non-State armed groups from recruiting or using in hostilities, under any circumstances, persons under the age of 18.
years, and obligates States Parties to take measures to prevent, prohibit and criminalize such practices (art. 4).

Any voluntary recruitment into armed forces of individuals under the age of 18 must include sufficient safeguards.

In times of conflict, those safeguards usually cannot be ensured. Peacekeepers encountering a child (anyone under 18 years) in national armed forces or non-State armed groups must report it as a violation.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** There is no impunity for those who commit violations against children. Peacekeeping missions play a key role in reporting and documenting such violations.

Impunity is defined as the “exemption or freedom from punishment, harm, or loss”. Perpetrators of crimes against children WILL BE punished.

The *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998)* has established conscripting or enlisting into national armed forces or using children under the age of 15 years in hostilities as a war crime.
The participation of children between 15 and 18 years in hostilities is prohibited by the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC) and is deemed a grave violation, but it does not constitute a war crime.

SLIDE 10: THE CASE OF THOMAS LUBANGA DYILO

The Case of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo

Thomas Lubanga Dyilo was found GUILTY of forcibly enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years. Lubanga was the first war criminal convicted by the International Criminal Court and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment on 10 July 2012.
Key Message: The International Criminal Court plays a key role in seeking justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the recruitment and use of children in hostilities.

On 26 January 2009, the International Criminal Court opened its first trial in the case against Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga Dyilo. Lubanga was the first person charged in the Democratic Republic of Congo case as well as the Court’s first detainee. The trial marked a turning point for the Rome Statute, the International Criminal Court’s founding treaty, which entered into force only in 2002. The Lubanga proceedings included the first test of formal victim participation in an international criminal trial. The case also highlighted the gravity of recruitment, enlistment and conscription of children. As the alleged leader of the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) and the commander-in-chief of its military wing, the Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo (FPLC), Lubanga was accused of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years and using them to actively participate in hostilities from September 2002 to 13 August 2003.

For more information, see:
1. http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/cases/thomas-lubanga-dyilo
2. http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/situations and cases/situations/situation icc 0104/related cases/icc 0104 0106/Pages/democratic republic of the congo.aspx

Another significant case was that of Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia, who, in 2012, was indicted, tried, and found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity by an international criminal tribunal – the Special Court for Sierra Leone –, including for enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years and using them in active and direct participation in hostilities. He was sentenced to 50 years' imprisonment.

For more information, see http://www.rscsl.org/Taylor.html
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** These conventions also provide specific provisions aimed at protecting children and prohibiting specific weapon systems that disproportionately impact them.

In addition to international human rights and humanitarian law and the Statute of the International Criminal Court, other conventions also protect children.

The International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 (1999) on the worst forms of child labour established “forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in hostilities” as *one of the worst forms of child labour*.

Mines and explosive remnants of war pose a substantial threat to civilians, especially children in post-conflict areas, such as serious injuries and maiming. The Mine Ban Treaty (1997) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2008) prohibit the use of those weapons and contain specific provisions for risk education, and gender- and age-appropriate victim/survivor assistance for individuals and communities affected by explosive remnants of war.
Key Message: Peacekeepers must uphold and protect children in line with international child protection standards.

- National laws differ from country to country. One point that often causes confusion, especially among military peacekeepers, is the relationship between national and international laws, and how to respond if the two systems of law are in conflict. In such cases, international laws and standards supersede national laws.

Ask learners:
How old should one be to join your national armed forces?

- Many of you may have been 17 years. Does that mean that you were child soldiers? Note that, under national laws, the army may be able to recruit individuals under the age of 18; however, under international law, an army shall not use soldiers under 18 years in active or direct combat.

Ask learners:
Should you report violations of international laws if they contradict national laws?

- Absolutely!

Even if the age of adulthood in the country is 15 years, peacekeepers must report violations against children, i.e., persons under 18 years;
Even if under the country’s laws, the minimum age of service is 15 years, peacekeepers must monitor and report any child soldier, i.e., a person under 18 years.

**Key Message:** Security Council resolutions are legally binding on Member States, peacekeeping missions and peacekeepers.

- The Security Council has adopted resolutions that spell out peacekeepers' obligations on child protection. Security Council resolutions are legally binding documents by which all peacekeepers must abide.
Security Council Action – Child Protection

- Graça Machel’s report, Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996), revealed the terrible impact of war on children;
- In its resolution 1261 (1999), the Security Council decided that the situation of children in armed conflict was an international peace and security concern;
- Specific child protection language is now included in peacekeeping mandates;
- Peacekeeping missions have specific responsibilities regarding child protection.

Key Message: The establishment of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC) in 1996, and Security Council resolution 1261 (1999) are considered key milestones that enhance the protection of children in conflict.

In 1996, Graça Machel, an expert appointed by the Secretary-General, prepared a ground-breaking report (A/51/306) on the horrific impact of armed conflict on children, and called upon the international community to take action.

In 1997, upon the recommendation of General Assembly resolution 51/77, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was established as the global advocate for children in armed conflict.

In 1999, the Security Council (resolution 1261 (1999)) recognized that the protection of children in armed conflict situations was an international peace and security issue and decided to include it on its agenda going forward. Since then, the Security Council includes specific language on child protection in mission mandates and has also decided to deploy Child Protection Advisers in peacekeeping missions.
Depending on their future roles in the mission, some learners may be interested in learning more about Security Council resolutions and the MRM. Refer them to the Child Protection Adviser in the mission or the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, and recommend the Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection and the suggested references.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Security Council resolutions define specific responsibilities for Member States and peacekeeping missions, including training on child protection for all peacekeepers, and monitoring and reporting the six grave violations.

Security Council resolution 1261 (1999) recognized that the situation of children in armed conflict was a concern for international peace and security, as evidenced by the prevalence of child soldiers, and condemned the six grave violations against children in armed conflict.
Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) established an elaborate monitoring and reporting mechanism to track the six grave violations against children. Parties to conflict who commit any of the six grave violations, namely recruitment or use, killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction, attacks against schools or hospitals, denial of humanitarian access, will be listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General’s annual reports on children and armed conflict.

This public naming and shaming have led many armed forces and armed groups to sign action plans with the United Nations to stop the recruitment and use of children as soldiers. The peacekeeping missions support the implementation of the action plans.

For example, action plans have been signed by FARDC – the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, SPLA – Sudan People’s Liberation Army (South Sudan), CMA – Coordination of Azawad Movements (Mali), MPC – Central African Patriotic Movement (Central African Republic), SAF – Sudanese Armed Forces (Sudan), as well as various armed groups in Sudan. For information on action plans, see [http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org](http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org).

The responsibility of peacekeepers is to monitor and report on these grave violations and support the implementation of action plans through screening of troops, capacity-building, among others.

Handout: Excerpts from Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Military peacekeeping components must ensure that child protection is fully emphasized in in-mission training, standard operating procedures (SOP) and military guidance.

- The criteria for listing in the Secretary-General’s reports have been expanded to include sexual violence against children, killing and maiming of children, attacks on schools and hospitals, and abduction of children.

On 7 March 2014, the Security Council adopted resolution 2143 (2014) on protection of children in armed conflict, and reiterated the importance of child protection training for United Nations peacekeepers (para. 20):

"Recommends that Member States include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate; ... that United Nations entities and United Nations peacekeeping troop and police contributing countries undertake targeted and operational trainings for the preparation of United Nations mission personnel, including troop and police contingents on their contribution in preventing violations against children so as to give all mission personnel the ability to effectively recognize, report and respond to violations and abuses committed against children and to successfully support child protection activities for better implementation of their respective mandates".
The latest Security Council resolutions 2225 (2015) and 2427 (2018) also stress the need for mandatory pre-deployment child protection training for peacekeepers.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Military peacekeepers play a key role in the monitoring and reporting mechanism.

- The diagram (slide 17) shows how the monitoring and reporting mechanism works.

Military peacekeepers are crucial to the reporting process. They play an important role as “the eyes and ears” of the mission on the ground. When peacekeepers see or hear about the commission of any of the six grave violations, it is their duty to alert the civilian Child Protection Advisers and Officers in the mission, who will investigate the information and include it in their reports to the Head of Mission.
The mission’s reports on violations are then sent to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC), for inclusion in the Secretary-General’s annual report to the Security Council.

Based on these reports, the Security Council can determine which parties to the conflict are committing grave violations, and take measures against the perpetrators, including sanctions.

SLIDE 18: UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD PROTECTION MANDATE

Understanding the Child Protection Mandate

Security Council resolution 2531 (2020) - Mali

Preambular paragraph: Strongly condemning all violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law ... as well as killing, maiming, recruitment and use of children, attacks against schools, humanitarian actors and services, and medical personnel and infrastructure ...;

28(a)(iii): ...to support the cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups ..., taking into account the particular needs of women and children ...;

28(c)(iii): To provide specific protection and assistance for women and children affected by armed conflict, including through Protection Advisors, Child Protection Advisors, Women Protection Advisors ..., and address the needs of victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict ...;

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Understand the child protection mandate. What are the specified and implied tasks for the military component?

Slide 18 contains an example of a child protection mandate in Security Council resolution 2531 (2020) on the situation in Mali. We will examine the child protection mandate in detail in Module 3.

But you can already see here that child protection involves more than the physical protection of children; it entails disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, monitoring and reporting, and other activities by which military peacekeepers support the implementation of the child protection mandate.
Handout: Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions on Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

Mention to learners that this handout will also be used in the exercise in Module 3.

SLIDE 19: DPKO-DFS-DPA POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION IN UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS

DPKO-DFS-DPA Policy on Child Protection in UN Peace Operations

- Designate a Child Protection Focal Point at mission HQ, and Child Protection Officers at Battalion and Company levels (military);
- Ensure that all peacekeeping personnel are trained on child protection (military, police and civilian components);
- Monitor and report on grave violations against children;
- Engage in dialogue for action plans on grave violations;
- Advocacy on child protection issues;
- Role and function of Child Protection Advisers;
- Collaborate with United Nations and non-UN actors.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations defines the scope and core responsibilities of missions and peacekeepers with regard to child protection.

- Child protection responsibilities of peacekeeping missions and peacekeepers are outlined in the DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, which was adopted in June 2017. The Policy will be discussed in more detail in Module 3.

The purpose of the Policy is to strengthen, institutionalize and streamline DPO’s engagement in children and armed conflict, on the basis of specific provisions of Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict.

The Policy defines the scope of DPO’s engagement in the protection of children affected by armed conflict and applies to all peacekeeping personnel.
The Policy states, inter alia, that:

- Principles and obligations on child protection are mainstreamed and integrated across all operational decisions, activities and processes of United Nations peace operations, including considerations in relation to child protection in core mission planning and mandate implementation documents, and in the overarching documents guiding the work of the military, police and civilian components (para. 11);

- All personnel in a peacekeeping mission contribute to the protection of children (para. 5).

- It defines the core child protection responsibilities of peacekeeping personnel, including dealing with violations such as sexual exploitation and abuse, child labour, detention, use of schools by armed groups, and providing support to non-United Nations security forces.

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**SLIDE 20: MISSION-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

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**Mission-specific Guidance**

- Mission guidelines on child protection
- Force Commander’s directives/ guidelines on child protection for the military component
- Concept of operations (CONOPS), plans and orders
- Rules of engagement

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**
**Key Message:** Mission-specific guidance, including the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, operational and tactical orders and SOPs, supports peacekeepers' child protection activities.

In addition to international legal instruments and mandates contained in Security Council resolutions, there are mission-specific documents on child protection. The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive must be disseminated to the military component.

Battalion commanders, unit commanders and staff officers should refer to the mission-specific documents when making decisions about their activities in the field.

In carrying out their activities, peacekeepers should address their questions about the application of these instruments to their commanding officers and/or the mission’s legal adviser. If necessary, they may refer their questions to United Nations Headquarters.

See also other key operational documents, such as the concept of operations and rules of engagement, in the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials package. Explain to learners that rules of engagement, including directives on the use of force, will be addressed during the scenario discussions in Module 3.

**SLIDE 21: UNMISS MILITARY GUIDELINES**

**UNMISS Military Guidelines**

- Know to identify who is a child and the six grave violations;
- Know how to implement plans and procedures during military operations;
- Know the specific roles and responsibilities of the Force;
- Know how to report violations;
- Recognize the warning indicators of possible violations against children:
  - Presence of children
  - Gender ratio in a village
  - Military use of schools
  - Presence of military/weaponry
  - Movement of unaccompanied children
  - Changes in movement patterns, etc.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** All missions with a child protection mandate and a military component should develop specific guidance on child protection for military personnel.
Some missions have specific guidelines on child protection. See slide 21 for guidance based on UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

Handouts:
- UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive;
- Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions on Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

SLIDE 22: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES ON CHILDREN ASSOCIATED WITH ARMED FORCES OR ARMED GROUPS (THE PARIS PRINCIPLES)

Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (The Paris Principles)

- Guide international interventions to:
  - Prevent recruitment or use of children;
  - Facilitate the release and reintegration of children associated with armed groups/forces;
  - Ensure the most protective environment for children.

- Provides definitions and overarching principles for engagement with children associated with armed groups or armed forces;

- Addresses the specific situation of girls.

Key Message: The Paris Principles are a set of principles and guidelines intended to prevent and minimize the impact of the recruitment of children by armed forces and armed groups. The protection and needs of girls are emphasized.

The Paris Principles aim to guide interventions for the protection and well-being of children, with the following objectives (para. 1.11):

- Prevent unlawful recruitment or use of children;
- Facilitate the release of children associated with armed forces/groups;
• Facilitate the reintegration into society of all children associated with armed forces/groups;
• Ensure the most protective environment for all children.

The Paris Principles provide a framework for child protection and bring together ideas and approaches, which have been used successfully across the globe.

They recognize that there is usually a significant number of girls among children associated with armed forces or armed groups. For a range of reasons, however, these girls are rarely provided with assistance. While there are commonalities between the circumstances and experiences of girls and boys, the situation for girls can be very different in terms of the reasons and manner in which they join the armed forces or armed groups, the potential for their release, the effects of their experience on their physical, social and emotional well-being, and the consequences on their ability to reintegrate into community life (para. 4.0).

They also cover children in other situations, including refugee and internally displaced children, and children and justice mechanisms.
The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers

- Aim to prioritize and operationalize child protection within United Nations peace missions to ensure that peacekeepers are prepared to prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers;
- Specify actions that Member States should take with regard to training and planning, and the conduct of their national forces in peacekeeping;
- Contribute to monitoring and reporting, prevention, early warning, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, protection and care of children, including in detention.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Vancouver Principles aim to ensure that peacekeepers receive specific training on dealing with issues related to the recruitment and use of child soldiers, so as to enhance military capability to support child protection.

- The Vancouver Principles are a set of political commitments endorsed by Member States to prioritize and further operationalize child protection in United Nations peacekeeping, and to ensure that, in the context of peacekeeping operations, peacekeepers are prepared to prioritize the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The Principles specify the actions that Member States may undertake with regard to training, planning and the conduct of their national police and military forces, in a peacekeeping context:

- Prioritize the prevention of the recruitment and the use of child soldiers in the strategic and operational planning of all peacekeeping operations;
- Appoint child protection focal points throughout mission command structures, both military and police, to support the development of an international standard;
- Contribute to monitoring and reporting, prevention, early warning of violations, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, protection and care of children, including in detention.

**SLIDE 24: CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK**

**Child Protection Framework**

- **International Humanitarian Law**
- **International Human Rights Law**

**UNITED NATIONS DOCUMENTS ON CHILD PROTECTION**
- Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict

**MISSION MANDATE**
- Mission/Force directives and guidelines
- Mission rules of engagement (ROE)

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The child protection framework (slide 24) provides the legal authority and establishes the legal and moral obligation of peacekeepers to protect children in peacekeeping missions.

Slide 24 outlines the framework that protects children’s rights. It is based on international humanitarian and human rights law and refers to specific United Nations documents and mandates on child protection.

Although these are different types of documents, peacekeepers are bound by all of them.

This comprehensive legal framework gives peacekeepers the authority and the responsibility to act and respond to child protection violations that they encounter on the ground.

**SLIDE 25: TAKEAWAYS**
Key Message: All peacekeepers have a legal and moral obligation to protect children.

Military peacekeepers have a legal obligation to protect the rights of children.

In order to effectively protect children, officers and troops must be trained on child protection, and must be fully aware of the child protection mandate and the context of the mission, and of the common grave violations against children in their areas of responsibility.

Mission-specific directives and guidelines related to child protection must be key aspects of pre-deployment and in-mission training. Peacekeepers must also understand and correctly apply rules of engagement and guidance on the use of force, if they encounter child soldiers. International laws and other legal provisions presented in this training course apply to all peacekeepers.
Summary

Takeaways from Lesson 2.2:
- Peacekeepers must know the legal instruments on child protection and the mission’s mandate.
- Military peacekeepers have a legal obligation to protect children.
- Officers and troops must be trained on child protection, the child protection mandate, the mission context, and the six grave violations against children in the mission area.
- All military operations must be in full compliance with international humanitarian law and the rules of engagement of the mission.

References (1/3)

- United Nations, DPKO (Integrated Training Service), Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 2017
References (2/3)

- 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols
- International Labour Organization (ILO), Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), 1999
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998

References (3/3)

- Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (The Paris Principles), 2007
- The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, 2017
- International Criminal Court, Lubanga Case (https://www.icc-cpi.int/drc/lubanga)
Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.

Handout: List of references

Also encourage learners to conduct additional personal research to gain a more detailed and in-depth understanding of child protection mandates.