

Panel to review UN response to child sexual abuse allegations in CAR

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by ChildFund Alliance

ChildFund Alliance welcomes news of Panel to review UN response to child sexual abuse allegations in Central African Republic

ChildFund Alliance welcomes the news that a panel has been established to investigate the UN's response to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse of children by foreign military forces in the Central African Republic.



The appointment of the three-member panel was announced on Monday by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Solène Edouard, Global Operations Manager for ChildFund Alliance said: “Any abuse of children, whether physical or psychological is abhorrent. Allegations must always be thoroughly investigated and the fact that an independent panel is carrying out the review is to be welcomed. The panel’s recommendations should include how the UN should respond to similar allegations in the future, any shortcomings in existing procedures and that collectively we must all ensure it does not happen again. This event shows why the protection of children from violence during and after emergencies should be at the centre of humanitarian action, as well as a global priority.”

While the troops were not under UN command, the panel will receive unrestricted access to all UN records and full access to staff and other personnel.

The panel will begin work in July and aim to submit its report within 10 weeks. They will work independently and make the report public, subject to due process and confidentiality considerations.

Stephane Dujarric ,spokesperson for the UN chief said "The panel will review the United Nations' response to the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse of children by foreign military forces not under UN command and assess the adequacy of the procedures in place. This will include any allegations of abuse of authority or retaliation by senior officials. The panel will also look at any shortcomings in existing procedures covering serious crimes by United Nations and related personnel, host State forces and non-State actors that it may become aware of during the review."

The panel will be chaired by Marie Deschamps, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. The other members are Hassan Jallow, Prosecutor at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and Yasmin Sooka, Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa.