

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9256

To require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on the effects of child soldiering in Africa on United States national security interests.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 10, 2026

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself and Mr. PANETTA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on the effects of child soldiering in Africa on United States national security interests.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Ending Child Soldiers
5 in Africa Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. REPORT REGARDING CHILD SOLDIERS IN AFRICA.**

7 (a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days
8 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary

1 of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State
2 and the Commander of the United States Africa Com-
3 mand, shall submit to the congressional defense commit-
4 tees a report on the effects of child soldiering in Africa
5 on United States national security interests.

6 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under sub-
7 section (a) shall include—

8 (1) an assessment of the connections between
9 child soldiering and—

10 (A) violent extremism;

11 (B) terrorism;

12 (C) transnational criminal organizations;

13 (D) forced population displacement;

14 (E) regional instability in the Sahel and
15 West Africa, including the Lobito corridor; and

16 (F) threats to access to critical minerals
17 and strategic supply chains throughout Africa;

18 (2) an assessment of the methods used by ex-
19 tremist organizations to recruit and indoctrinate
20 children in Africa, including the exploitation of reli-
21 gion and ideological narratives;

22 (3) an evaluation of current efforts by the
23 United States and allies and partners of the United
24 States to prevent child soldier recruitment in Africa
25 and support demobilization and reintegration efforts;

1 (4) an assessment of lessons learned from suc-
2 cessful African-led reconciliation, rehabilitation, and
3 reintegration initiatives, including community-based
4 programs and nongovernmental organizations oper-
5 ating in formerly conflict-affected regions;

6 (5) an assessment of the feasibility of creating
7 programs within the United States Central Com-
8 mand, the United States Southern Command, and
9 the United States Indo-Pacific Command to combat
10 child soldiering in each respective region, and spe-
11 cifically in Bolivia, Cambodia, the Dominican Repub-
12 lic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama,
13 Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Tajikistan, and
14 Syria, based on information collected pursuant to
15 submission of the report required in subsection (a);

16 (6) a feasibility assessment regarding the estab-
17 lishment of an Africa-based center or coordinating
18 mechanism to—

19 (A) consolidate lessons learned and best
20 practices related to preventing child soldier re-
21 cruitment;

22 (B) support research, training, and capac-
23 ity building to combat child soldier schemes for
24 governments, militaries, civil society organiza-

1 tions, and private sector stakeholders in covered
2 countries;

3 (C) counter extremist recruitment and
4 radicalization of children; and

5 (D) promote regional stability and post-
6 conflict reconciliation;

7 (7) an assessment of the feasibility of the estab-
8 lishment of such Africa-based center or coordinating
9 mechanism within a country that is a member of the
10 East African Community, and in Uganda specifi-
11 cally; and

12 (8) a description, with respect to such Africa-
13 based center or coordinating mechanism, of—

14 (A) potential models for staffing and sup-
15 port of such center or coordinating mechanism
16 using existing United States Government per-
17 sonnel, covered country participation, non-
18 governmental organizations, and regional civil
19 society expertise;

20 (B) opportunities to leverage existing rec-
21 onciliation and rehabilitation expertise devel-
22 oped in covered countries; and

23 (C) the potential role of such a center or
24 mechanism in supporting broader United States
25 Africa Command objectives related to coun-

1 tering transnational threats and promoting re-
2 gional stability.

3 (c) COVERED COUNTRY DEFINED.—In this section,
4 the term “covered country” means a country that has en-
5 tered into a partnership with the United States Africa
6 Command and—

7 (1) has entered into a memorandum of under-
8 standing with the United States regarding the
9 America First Global Health Strategy of the Depart-
10 ment of State, including—

- 11 (A) Angola;
- 12 (B) Botswana;
- 13 (C) Burkina Faso;
- 14 (D) Burundi;
- 15 (E) Cameroon;
- 16 (F) Cote D’Ivoire;
- 17 (G) Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- 18 (H) Eswatini;
- 19 (I) Ethiopia;
- 20 (J) Guinea;
- 21 (K) Kenya;
- 22 (L) Lesotho;
- 23 (M) Liberia;
- 24 (N) Madagascar;
- 25 (O) Malawi;

1 (P) Mozambique;

2 (Q) Niger;

3 (R) Nigeria;

4 (S) Rwanda;

5 (T) Senegal;

6 (U) Sierra Leone; and

7 (V) Uganda; or

8 (2) with respect to which a waiver is in effect

9 pursuant to section 404(c)(1) of the Child Soldiers

10 Prevention Act of 2008 (22 U.S.C. 2370c–1(c)(1)).

○