



## **Statement by the Secretary-General on the One-Year Anniversary of the Abduction of Schoolgirls in Chibok, North-eastern Nigeria**

**New York, 14 April 2015-** One year ago, over 276 girls were abducted by Boko Haram from their school in Chibok, Borno State, in north-eastern Nigeria. While some of the girls were fortunate to have escaped, the fate of many still remains unknown. We must never forget the kidnapped Chibok girls, and I will not stop calling for their immediate release and their safe return to their families.

Over the past 12 months, Boko Haram intensified its brutal attacks on boys and girls in Nigeria and neighbouring countries. Hundreds of thousands of children have been displaced from their homes, and deprived of their rights to live and grow up in safety, dignity and peace. Boko Haram's killing, abduction and recruitment of children, including the use of girls as "suicide bombers", is abhorrent.

I also remain deeply concerned by the group's repeated and cowardly attacks targeting schools, in grave violation of international humanitarian law. Going to school should not have to be an act of bravery. The children of north-eastern Nigeria and neighbouring countries must be allowed to live in peace and enjoy their right to a safe education.

The legitimate response to Boko Haram's attacks must be fully consistent with international law and not create additional risks for the protection of children. On this day, I reaffirm my support to the governments and peoples of the region in the fight against Boko Haram. I stand in solidarity with the families of all abductees, especially children, their communities and society at large.