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## **EU Commission: “Protect schools and the right of every child to grow in a safe environment”**

On the occasion of the International Day to Protect Education from Attack, celebrated on 9 September, the EU “reaffirms its commitment to promote and protect the right of every child to grow in a safe environment, have access to quality education, and build a better and more peaceful future”, said EU Commissioner Janez Lenarcic. “Attacks on schools, students and teachers have a devastating impact on access to education, education systems and on societal development. Sadly, their incidence is increasing at an alarming rate. This is all too clear from the recent developments in Afghanistan, and the crises in Ethiopia, Chad, Africa’s Sahel region, in Syria, Yemen or Myanmar, amongst many others”. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack has identified more than 2,400 attacks on education facilities, students, and educators in 2020, a 33% increase since 2019. “Attacks on education - the EU Commissioner said - also constitute violations of International Humanitarian Law, the set of rules seeking to limit the effects of armed conflict. Such violations are multiplying, while their perpetrators are seldom called to account”. In this view, “we are putting compliance with International Humanitarian Law consistently at the heart of the EU’s external action. As one of the largest humanitarian donors, the EU will hence continue to promote and advocate for global respect for International Humanitarian Law, both by states and non-state armed groups during an armed conflict”.

Valentina Bombelli