

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, author of the *Child Soldiers Prevention Act*, commented on yesterday's release of the State Department Trafficking in Persons Report. The 2012 Report is the third to contain the child soldiers reporting requirement, as signed into law in 2008. It lists repeat offenders Burma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Yemen. Libya is included for the first time. Notably, two-time offender Chad has been removed from the list after being sanctioned by Congress under a Fortenberry-authored measure.

"I am very pleased to see that the State Department has certified Chad has taken swift and meaningful action to demobilize child soldiers from its ranks," said Fortenberry. "Congress made it clear to Chad last year that the United States would not continue to tolerate its use of child soldiers. We declared then, as in 2008, that children belong on playgrounds, not battlegrounds, and that the U.S. would stop underwriting this pernicious form of modern-day slavery. We now must replicate this success story for the benefit of children in other countries.

"The House Foreign Affairs Committee has unanimously passed multiple measures to strengthen child soldiers laws. I look forward to working with the Administration on a comprehensive plan of action across all involved agencies to demobilize child soldiers from the other U.S. aid recipients' ranks."

Fortenberry is the Vice-Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights.

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