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From Words to Action

Final Conference Report

The International Conference on War-Affected Children

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September 10 to 17, 2000

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Note: The recommendations contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of any government or organization.

Foreword

The driving force behind Canada's decision to host the International Conference on War-Affected Children in September 2000 was the urgent need to mobilize international action on this critical issue. As we look back on Winnipeg, the Government of Canada is proud of the progress we made towards achieving that goal. At the same time, we are also conscious of the significant challenges that still need to be overcome.

The Winnipeg Conference brought together a *critical mass* of individuals and organizations working on the issue of children and armed conflict to create an international plan of action. More than 800 delegates participated in the Conference: governments worked side by side with non-governmental organizations, journalists debated issues with researchers and academics, young people challenged government ministers to action. Their contributions resulted in several strong outcome documents, including the *Agenda for War-Affected Children*, endorsed by all 132 governments; *Caught in the Crossfire No More*, the plan of action generated by the Experts' Meeting; and the Youth Statement.

At the Conference, we heard first-hand from young women and men affected by armed conflict. These young people challenged us to see them as more than just the victims of war; they compelled us to see them as thoughtful and committed activists for peace, working to rebuild their lives, as well as those of their families and communities.

We must maintain the momentum behind the Winnipeg commitments. Civil society, governments, youth, and local and international organizations have already begun to respond to the priorities set out last September through their respective policies, programming, and advocacy. This work must continue—the lives and future well-being of too many children around the world depend on it.

The special synergy created by the Winnipeg Conference triggered a new global momentum on war-affected children. It is our duty to follow through on the promises we made to protect the rights and improve the lives of girls and boys affected by armed conflict.

John Manley
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Maria Minna
Minister for International Cooperation

Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPA	Child Protection Advisors
CPCC	Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee
CRC	<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
IHL	International humanitarian law
IHR	International human rights
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NCDDR	National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OP	Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SRSR/CAC	UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNCIVPOL	United Nations Civilian Police
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Executive summary

“After this conference...when we come to the next Special Session of the UN on Children...we’ll be able to say: 'Winnipeg made a difference. There are results'.”

—Graça Machel
September 15, 2000

The International Conference on War-Affected Children was hosted by the Government of Canada from September 10 to 17, 2000, in Winnipeg, Canada. It was the first truly global meeting on war-affected children, and it succeeded in galvanizing the international community around this issue. The conference consisted of three cascading meetings:

- the **Youth Meeting** (September 10 to 12);
- the **Experts’ Meeting** (September 13 to 15), co-hosted with UNICEF; and
- the **Ministerial-Level Meeting** (September 16 to 17), co-hosted with the United Nations (UN) Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

The conference attracted more than 800 participants, including 132 country delegations (45 headed by ministers), 50 young people, representatives of 126 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the media, the corporate sector, academia, representatives of the UN system and regional organizations, and international agencies from all over the world. The quality and diversity of the participants was strong. Discussions were substantively rich and resulted in several significant outcomes.

Each of the three meetings produced a policy outcome document. The Youth Meeting issued a Youth Statement. The Experts’ Meeting produced a summary by the chairs, *Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children*, which synthesized the major recommendations that emerged from the three days of discussions. The Ministerial-Level Meeting produced a 14-point call to action, *The Agenda for War-Affected Children*, endorsed by all 132 governments. The NGO plan of action, *Peace is Every Child’s Right*, was presented at the Experts’ Meeting, where many of its recommendations were incorporated into the final Experts’ Meeting summary.

In all the outcome documents, the following emerged as some of the key areas for immediate action: accountability and impunity, education, HIV/AIDS, monitoring and follow-up of children’s rights abuses, the differential impact of conflict on girls and boys, research and information collection on the situation of war-affected children, youth participation in discussions and decision-making that affects them, and an end to the abduction and targeting of children.

International and Canadian NGOs, which played a very substantial role in the development of the conference and its outcomes, agreed to establish an international network to contribute to and

monitor follow-up activities. The conference also featured the ground-breaking integration of youth into the Experts' and Ministerial-Level Meetings, which may serve as a model of youth engagement for other international conferences.

1. Introduction and background to the conference

1.1 General objectives

This conference was the first international gathering of this size on war-affected children. It built on the growing international momentum emerging from recent intergovernmental, non-governmental and regional meetings, resolutions, and declarations on the many issues related to war-affected children.

In hosting the conference, the Government of Canada set out to accomplish the following:

- to review the progress made to date in protecting war-affected children since 1996, when Graça Machel first presented her study, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, to the UN;
- to examine innovative approaches to dealing with the challenges facing war-affected children and to identify gaps in knowledge, policy, and practice to better support these children;
- to establish and commit to an international set of priorities for all actors working with war-affected children; and
- to involve young people in discussions and decision-making on the issue of war-affected children.

1.2 Overall achievements

The conference brought together more than 800 people—a large, diverse, interdisciplinary mix of organizations and individuals—to exchange insights and experiences around a complex set of issues. Key to this mix were the youth delegates from conflict zones on four continents who brought first-hand experience of war, as well as their creativity and desire to effect change. The conference fostered a sense of community over the course of a week—informal networks were established, existing ties were strengthened, and new connections were formed. Momentum for action and change was created as it became clear that it was up to everyone at the conference to take responsibility for the situation of war-affected children and to take action to remedy this situation. The sense of urgency, commitment, and a will to act was palpable.

The conference succeeded in concretely demonstrating the capabilities of young people—a group of people who are not frequently consulted in a meaningful way—to contribute to a high-level, international meeting. Canada wanted to support the role of young people in breaking cycles of violence and rebuilding their communities by engaging them as full participants at the conference, and by addressing the role of youth as a substantive topic at the conference.

The conference brought together a number of policy inputs that enriched the discussions and outcomes. Foremost among these was *The Machel Review 1996–2000: A Critical Analysis of Progress Made and Obstacles Encountered in Increasing Protection for War-Affected Children*, an update of the 1996 seminal study by Graça Machel. *The Machel Review* was an essential background piece to the conference, providing rich material and analysis for the discussions and final declarations.

The major tangible products of the conference included the Youth Statement, the final declaration of the Experts' Meeting, *Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children*, and the final outcome document of the Ministerial-Level Meeting, *The Agenda for Action on War-Affected Children*. The NGO community refined and presented a detailed plan of action, *Peace is Every Child's Right*, to the Experts' Meeting, a plan they had developed through electronic consultations around the world in the weeks leading up to the conference (for the full text of the NGO plan of action, visit the following Web site: www.cpcc.ottawa.on.ca/cachm.htm).

1.3 Conference structure

Youth Meeting

(see Appendix 1 for program)

September 10 to 12

The International Conference on War-Affected Children undertook a bold new model of meaningful youth participation at a high-level, international meeting. The Youth Meeting was structured to allow the 50 young men and women—24 Canadian youth and 26 youth from war-affected countries—a significant period to work in a youth-only environment before joining the other delegates at the conference. Over the three-day meeting, the sessions allowed the youth to share their experiences with each other, engage in dialogue with a number of dignitaries, interact with journalists and NGOs, and develop ideas and recommendations on each of the issues being addressed at the Experts' and Ministerial-Level Meetings.

Experts' Meeting

(see Appendix 1 for program)

September 13 to 15

The Experts' Meeting consisted of three days of presentations and workshop discussions on key geographic, thematic, and sectoral issues related to war-affected children. It brought together more than 500 representatives from government, NGOs, the media, the private sector, academia, and UN and regional organizations, as well as youth. Since the goals of the International Conference on War-Affected Children dovetailed with a major initiative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), called the Global Movement for Children, the Government of Canada was pleased to co-host the Experts' Meeting with UNICEF.

Ministerial-Level Meeting

(see Appendix 1 for program)

September 16 to 17

The Ministerial-Level Meeting was comprised of two full days of plenary sessions and workshops, and was co-hosted by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu. It consisted of approximately 800 delegates and observers, and featured the participation of representatives from 132 governments, including 45 ministers, 40 non-governmental and international organizations, and 20 youth. Most of the delegates at the Experts' Meeting stayed on as observers to the plenary sessions of the Ministerial-Level Meeting.

1.4 Policy inputs

The Machel Review

Graça Machel captured the world's imagination about the situation of war-affected children when she presented her study, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, to the UN General Assembly in 1996. In this seminal study, she examined the multidimensional dangers facing young people in the midst of conflict, and put forward a comprehensive set of recommendations to better protect these children. Four years later, the international community responded to a number of Machel's recommendations, with such actions as the appointment of a UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; the adoption of the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*, which raises the age of participation in hostilities from 15 to 18 years; increased protection of internally displaced and refugee children; and the Ottawa Treaty, which bans anti-personnel land mines.

In the lead-up to the International Conference on War-Affected Children, Machel agreed to conduct a systematic review of progress to date on child protection. *The Machel Review* served as the principal background document at the conference. It takes into account the developments to protect children, and exposes new issues linked to war-affected children, such as small arms, media and communications, HIV/AIDS, and women and the peace process. The review puts forward a detailed set of recommendations for action by the international community into the next decade. Key areas for action include the need to focus on adolescents, the emergence of a peace and security agenda for children, the impact of HIV/AIDS on armed conflict (and vice versa), and the importance of recognizing the particular impact of conflict on girls and women. The review was commissioned by the governments of Canada and Norway, and was developed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNICEF under the direction of Graça Machel. The review is the product of consultation with local and international NGOs, governments, and UN agencies.

Background papers

Several background papers were selected and made available to delegates at the conference. These papers covered a range of issues, including the role of girls in fighting forces, education in conflict situations, psychosocial healing, rehabilitation and reintegration of former child soldiers, and youth participation in peacebuilding. The complete list of background papers follows. To obtain copies of the full set, please visit the conference Web site at www.waraffectedchildren.gc.ca.

Geographic case studies

- *The Re-integration of Child Soldiers and Abductees: A Case Study of Palaro and Pabbo, Gulu District, Northern Uganda*
Stavros Stavrou and Robert Stewart, with Amanda Stavrou, Institute of Strategic Studies, South Africa
- *Case Study of Children From the Fighting Forces in Sierra Leone*
UNICEF, Sierra Leone
- *Consequences of Armed Conflict and Internal Displacement for Children in Colombia*
Maria Cristina Salazar, Defence for Children International – Colombia Section
- *Stolen Childhood: The Impact of Militarized Violence on Children in Sri Lanka*
Kenneth Bush, Dalhousie University, Canada
- *Promoting Kosovar Adolescent/Youth Protection and Capacities: Youth-Identified Problems and Solutions*
Kosovar Youth Council, with the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children and the International Rescue Committee
- *Children and Adolescents in Palestinian Households: Living with the Effects of Prolonged Conflict and Forced Migration*
Randa Farah, Oxford University, United Kingdom/Jordan

Thematic papers

- *Adolescent Understandings of Political Violence*
Lynne Jones, Cambridge University, United Kingdom
- *Diamonds, Children and the Political Economy of Conflict: The Experience of Sierra Leone*
Ian Smillie and Lansana Gberie, Partnership Africa Canada, Canada
- *Perspectives on the Problems and Challenges of ECOWAS Regional Security Paradigm: The Role of the Military in the Protection of War-Affected Children in West Africa*

Col. F.B. Aboagye, Armed Forces, Ghana

- *Delivery of Education Programs in Humanitarian Crises*
Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, United States
- *Girls in Militaries, Paramilitaries, and Armed Opposition Groups*
Susan McKay, University of Wyoming, and Dyan Mazurana, University of Montana, United States
- *Mobilising Media Access for Civil Society Intervention in Africa*
Kwasi Gyan-Apenteng, Centre for Media and Civil Society Initiatives, United Kingdom
- *Assessing and Addressing the Needs of Children Born of Forced Maternity*
R. Charli Carpenter, University of Oregon, United States
- *Healing and Reconciliation for War-Affected Children and Communities: Learning from the Butterfly Garden of Sri Lanka's Eastern Province*
Rob Chase, University of Manitoba, Canada
- *The East Timor Crisis: Trauma, Healing, and Psychosocial Assistance*
Michael Wessels, Christian Children's Fund and Randolph-Macon College, United States

1.5 The role of non-governmental organizations

NGOs played an important role in conference planning, and participated actively in the conference itself. The NGO community was crucial for building momentum around the issues addressed by the conference. The NGOs—some 126 in all—made the largest single contribution to the Experts' Meeting through the publication and distribution of their NGO plan of action, *Peace is Every Child's Right*. In addition, they provided photo displays, stories, books, videos, research, their own commitments and pledges, and specific issues to be considered by the international community.

NGOs held an NGO caucus on September 12, for which the conference organizers provided logistical and financial support. NGOs and conference organizers agreed that it was important for NGOs to have time as a group for independent consideration of their contribution to the conference. They were able to finalize the NGO action plan, which they then carried forward to the Experts' Meeting.

On a policy level, the NGO plan of action was a key conference input, with many NGO policy recommendations finding their way into the final document of the Experts' Meeting, *Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children*. In the weeks preceding the conference, they also provided substantial input into the development of the *Agenda for War-Affected Children*.

NGOs had a strong presence at the conference. At the Experts' Meeting alone, there were 137 NGO participants from 43 countries, representing 115 NGOs and 11 universities, and including 34 Canadian NGOs and eight universities. NGOs participated in the Experts' Meeting as speakers in plenaries and workshops, as rapporteurs, and as full members of the experts' declaration drafting team. Approximately 25 NGOs participated as full delegates at the Ministerial-Level Meeting, while others were invited as observers. The NGOs also played a role within the Ministerial-Level Meeting by observing the workshops, by speaking with delegations from the different countries, and by addressing the plenary sessions.

NGOs also set up and coordinated Graça Machel House, a public outreach NGO fair set up in Winnipeg near the Experts' Meeting at the Fort Garry Hotel. Twenty displays staffed by dozens of volunteers were set up for four days. Displays were provided by organizations such as the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Mines Action Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, and the Youth Mine Action Ambassador Program. During the conference, delegates were invited to visit Graça Machel House and see the different displays by some of the key NGOs working on issues related to war-affected children.

NGOs participated in or led other conference-related events, such as theatre, community outreach, curriculum materials development, video production, and a rock concert organized by War Child Canada, which 80,000 people attended. The NGOs were critical in the mobilization of media attention and public interest in the conference and its outcomes.

2. Youth Meeting and youth participation

2.1 Summary

Preparation for the conference

Because the youth contributed to policy and programming discussions and made recommendations, rather than simply observing or giving their testimonies at the conference, a great deal of emphasis was placed on process and preparation for the youth delegates. The selection criteria sought young people who were intellectually and emotionally well-prepared for the conference. The chosen youth were actively involved in peacebuilding work (and already associated with an NGO or other organization), and were able to move beyond personal experience to a more global analysis. Several youths also had previous experience in public speaking. Many youth groups nominated their own representatives.

Between May and August 2000, the Children as Peacebuilders project (funded by CIDA) and the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development convened a series of Canadian and international youth workshops and round tables. The objectives were to assist youth, both in deepening their understanding and analysis of how war affects children, and in proposing measures to address these problems. A number of international and Canadian youth delegates participated in these workshops in their own communities prior to meeting in Winnipeg.

In order to incorporate as much youth input as possible before the conference, a team of youth advisors (consisting of youth and NGOs working with youth) was consulted in developing the overall youth program.

Prior to the formal Youth Meeting, the young people spent three days at a preparatory meeting discussing their individual and shared experiences with war, expressing themselves through various creative techniques, and developing a list of common priorities. This time was also important for the youth to begin to work together, to acclimatize to Canadian culture (and weather), and to build their confidence to participate in the conference.

The Youth Meeting

Opened by Canada's Minister for International Cooperation, Maria Minna, and Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, the Youth Meeting generated a great deal of media, public, and government interest. The 50 young people who comprised the youth delegates were from both rural and urban areas, and represented a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The 26 international youth represented 16 different countries facing the problems of armed conflict. The young people were aged between 15 and 23, with the majority aged between 16 and 18. The group included 30

young women and 20 young men, who participated in discussions and made presentations to the conference as a whole.

The three-day meeting was reserved as a “youth-only” time for the young delegates to be able to discuss the issues and focus their priorities and recommendations without adult observers. The Youth Meeting also allowed the young delegates to determine the most appropriate and effective manner of expressing their messages at the Experts’ and Ministerial-Level Meetings.

During the Youth Meeting, the young men and women examined the themes that were to be discussed at the Experts’ and Ministerial-Level Meetings in a variety of creative and interactive ways. In three days full of meetings, media interviews, visits by dignitaries, and evening social activities, the youth prepared their contributions to the conference. These included the Youth Statement, a youth video, media briefings, a dramatic performance, keynote and closing addresses, and speeches for the workshops. They met with several dignitaries who were especially interested in their advice and their role in the conference. The young delegates were delighted that Canada’s Minister for International Cooperation, Maria Minna, UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, and Graça Machel requested special meetings to speak at length with them.

Youth participation at the Experts’ and Ministerial-Level Meetings

At the end of the three days, the youth delegates moved into the Experts’ and Ministerial-Level Meetings as full conference delegates. Although the Youth Meeting was essential for preparing the young people to participate in the other meetings, their integration into the remainder of the conference was a crucial component of meaningful youth participation at the conference. The interaction of the youth delegates with their adult colleagues on substantive issues was seen as a key goal. The youth delegates made an impression on many of the adult delegates, with their insights, clear communication, depth of analysis, and optimistic energy. Many adult delegates were supportive of the youth delegates’ content, and were impressed by their intelligent contribution. Many adult delegates supported the idea of including in conference discussions those most directly affected by the decisions made at such conferences.

The youth had a number of speaking roles, as well as full status on the drafting team for the Experts’ Meeting declaration, *Caught in the Crossfire No More*, and observer status along with NGOs at the negotiations for *The Agenda for War-Affected Children* endorsed at the Ministerial-Level Meeting. Youth representatives spoke at the opening and closing of the Experts’ Meeting, as presenters in six workshops at the Experts’ Meeting, at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Ministerial-Level Meeting, and in two ministerial-level workshops. In addition, at the Ministerial-Level Meeting, they presented the short video that they had prepared during the Youth Meeting.

2.2 Outcomes

The Youth Meeting in Winnipeg achieved many things, including an innovative model of involving youth in international conferences. The conference inspired enthusiastic support and concrete commitments from high-level officials and other delegates for meaningful youth participation at international conferences and in other activities, such as international development initiatives. The youth insisted that they be a part of the solution, so they could stop being victims. They agreed to be part of a youth network to undertake information exchange on projects in their communities and advocacy work. This idea will be supported by Canada, UNICEF, and the Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Most importantly, the conference was a catalyst in forming a core group of young leaders to continue working and involving other young people in the issue.

3. Experts' Meeting

3.1 Summary

The structure of the Experts' Meeting allowed delegates to network and discuss a number of different situations and issues. Following an opening session, six country case studies were presented in plenary. Delegates were then invited to choose one case study for in-depth, smaller-group discussion. The second day of the meeting was devoted entirely to nine interdisciplinary, thematic workshops, with topics such as the role of youth in peacebuilding and the protection of children in conflict situations. Delegates were asked to critically examine past approaches and achievements, as well as to look forward and identify future actions, strategies, or areas of intervention. Finally, on the last day, delegates were able to focus on more specific issues where NGO coalitions existed in some cases, such as child soldiers and land mines, and to make specific recommendations in these areas.

The speakers at the opening plenary challenged delegates at the meeting to go beyond “business as usual.” Canada’s Minister for International Cooperation, Maria Minna, began her remarks with a powerful video depicting the horrors suffered by children in war, as well as their hopes for peace and justice. She called upon delegates to “think outside the box...to be bold and innovative” to meet their commitments to children. The Executive Director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, told delegates that, “when it comes to the suffering of children in conflict areas, there are no innocent bystanders. All of us are responsible.” She urged delegates to ensure that they addressed their recommendations to all sectors of society: governments, rebel groups, the private sector, civil society, and UN and regional organizations. The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, called on all those present to launch an “era of application” of the norms that protect children.

In his presentation of *The Machel Review*, Stephen Lewis summarized the key recommendations put forward in the review, including those on HIV/AIDS, women and peacebuilding, and refugees and internally displaced children. He heralded the fact that “the ground has shifted, that patience with inertia has run out, that everything is somehow to be taken more seriously, and that political will can finally be summoned in the service of children.” He challenged delegates to take urgent action on behalf of children, particularly in situations where children are being abducted, held against their will, and violated. In particular, Lewis drew attention to the situation of children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda, and called upon delegates to put an end to the gross violations of children’s rights in this situation.

Two youth delegates, Dwayne and Secret, presented the priorities for action that the youth themselves had developed during the Youth Meeting. These priorities included education, internally displaced children, small arms, and children’s rights.

In her remarks on behalf of NGOs, Kathy Vandergrift of the NGO Working Group on Children Affected by Armed Conflict highlighted the NGO action plan, *Peace is Every Child's Right*. She too called on all delegates to live up to their commitments to children, to mobilize the political will to take immediate action, and to put an end to the impunity enjoyed by those who violate children's rights, mentioning specifically the LRA in Uganda.

In the almost two dozen workshops and small-group discussions of the Experts' Meeting, many issues were raised and many themes were identified. Of these, the most prominent themes were:

- the need for the **implementation of existing commitments and immediate action to protect children**;
- the **resilience of young people and the importance of their participation** in decisions that affect them;
- the urgent need to put **an end to impunity and increase accountability** for violations of children's rights;
- the absolutely fundamental role of **education** for all children, but especially war-affected children in all stages of conflict;
- the need not just to protect children from the ravages of conflict, but also to **prevent conflict** and the conditions that often lead to conflict, such as injustice and poverty; and
- the links between **HIV/AIDS**, children, and conflict.

In her closing remarks to the Experts' Meeting, Graça Machel, the honorary chair of the conference, spoke of the "personal odyssey" that had brought her to Winnipeg. She directed the first part of her remarks to the youth delegates, waving to them and receiving cheers and applause in return. She thanked them for sharing their lives, their concerns, and their resilience with the other delegates at the conference. "We are very proud of you," she told them, "and it makes me ashamed that many times, despite our promises [to you], we are found wanting to meet those promises." Turning to the adult delegates, Machel urged them to fulfil their commitments to children. "I hope that those of us who have heard these children will have, finally, a sense of knocking at our conscience to understand how we have been failing our young generations." She concluded by appealing to delegates to redouble their efforts to make a difference for war-affected children at the country level.

Geographic case studies

The geographic case study discussion groups provided an opportunity for delegates to engage with each other around specific country situations, and to ground ideas and concepts in reality. Each of the groups had a mixed composition consisting of government representatives, NGO and UN field staff, and youth delegates—all from the countries being discussed. Together, delegates grappled with the reality of these situations, and explored in detail the specific issues related to the different situations. The regions/countries covered by the geographic case study discussions included northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Kosovo, and the Middle East.

Introduction to thematic workshops

To set the stage for the thematic workshops, two introductory presentations were made in the plenary session during the second day of the conference.

The Strategic Context: Situating War-Affected Children Within the Broader Peace and Security Challenges – Mark Malan, Institute of Strategic Studies

Following the end of the Cold War, the peace research community's understanding of security expanded to include issues such as the proliferation of illicit light weapons; the deliberate targeting of civilians in armed conflict; environmental degradation; poverty, debt, and inequality; and disease (especially the HIV/AIDS pandemic). Underpinning the new and expanding security agenda is a shift away from the familiar realm of state security to a more multidimensional and complex construct known as "human security." However, the erosion of state power and sovereignty in many of the world's conflict zones means that the issue of state security or "national security" cannot be regarded as a given, or as a matter of peripheral importance on the new security agenda. Indeed, fuelled by the process of globalization, the erosion of state power and sovereignty facilitates a more interventionist approach to dealing with peace and security challenges.

The latter has found expression in an earnest search to resolve the tension between the (state-centric) rules of world order as prescribed in the UN Charter and the rights of individuals as prescribed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and an increasing number of other international legal instruments. The urgency with which a resolution to this dilemma is being sought creates a new opportunity to place the cause of war-affected children as the most pressing contemporary human rights challenge, at the centre of new thinking on peace and security.

Challenging Assumptions about War-Affected Children – Jo Boyden, Oxford University

Over the years, the international child-protection community has made some serious mistakes in policy and practice regarding war-affected children. While shortcomings in practice are frequently the result of overwhelming operational obstacles during emergencies, often they are due to erroneous conceptualization of problems and their solutions, interventions planned on the basis of inadequate empirical evidence, and unquestioned assumptions about boys' and girls' development and their relative capacities and vulnerabilities. Recent research in the social sciences and experience in assisting war-affected children is providing new insights that challenge much conventional wisdom about how to assist war-affected children.

The international community must be wary of making assumptions about how children respond to war. Certainly children's suffering during conflict must be acknowledged. However, many children do have the capacity to act on their own situation, and children's strategies can have a positive influence on the outcome of adversity. Children have political and economic lives. Ignoring children's active contributions to family and society and their competencies as social actors—including the skills (such as teamwork and leadership) that they learn during combat—

undermines their sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem. This makes healing, reintegration, and reconciliation far more difficult.

The ability to overcome adversity and remain resilient in the short and long term is highly influenced by the following:

- children's age and individual attributes (e.g., personality, spirituality, cognitive capacity);
- children's social power (e.g., gender, ethnicity, generation);
- the support and mentoring of caring adults and peers;
- social and cultural resources;
- training in the management of adversity;
- a sense of self-efficacy, which is linked to participating in society in meaningful ways; and
- the re-establishment of routine and the rebuilding of structures and a sense of trust.

Policy needs to incorporate these components if it is to enhance resilience and coping in children. This means less centralized planning and greater responsiveness to local conditions and complexities than presently exist.

Thematic workshops

Following the introductory presentations, nine thematic workshops were offered to delegates to allow them to explore a particular issue in some depth. The workshops were designed to encourage cross-sectoral discussions, allowing delegates a chance to hear new views and perspectives. It was hoped that such an interdisciplinary approach would give rise to more innovative thinking and the establishment of new connections between people and issues. The workshops were on the following themes:

- The participation of youth in peacebuilding
- Using international humanitarian law and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as tools for prevention and protection
- Local and global accountability for war-affected children
- Protection for children in the midst of conflict
- Effective peacebuilding strategies
- The challenge of conflict prevention
- In the line of fire: The media and children in conflict
- Research, reporting, and follow-up to children's rights violations
- The military, armed groups, and children's rights

Issue-specific caucuses

To provide delegates with an opportunity to examine more specific issues, the Experts' Meeting also included eight caucuses around issues such as child soldiers and HIV/AIDS. The objective of the caucuses was to further dialogue around specific dimensions of the issue of war-affected children. It was a chance for delegates working on particular subjects to pursue a more detailed, even technical discussion. In some cases, the starting point for discussion of a topic was a certain NGO coalition (e.g., small arms) or specific legal instrument (e.g., child soldiers, land mines). The caucus topics were the following:

- Small arms
- Child soldiers
- Land mines
- Adolescents
- Gender and conflict
- Refugee and internally displaced children
- HIV/AIDS and conflict
- Trauma and healing

Taken together, the recommendations from the geographic case study discussions, the broader thematic workshops, and the more issue-specific caucuses constitute a comprehensive set of action-oriented ideas from different perspectives, covering the wide range of complex issues that must be addressed to protect and support war-affected children.

3.2 Outcomes

The final declaration of the Experts' Meeting, *Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children*, is a prioritized list of key actions that need to be undertaken with urgency by different actors in the international community. It brings together many of the key recommendations from the meeting, in addition to ideas from the NGO action plan and *The Machel Review*. It reflects the boldness and diversity of the meeting—with input from governments, NGOs, academics, youth, the private sector, international organizations, and the UN system.

The Experts' Meeting also saw the full integration of the youth delegates as speakers, chairs, and participants in plenaries and workshops. The meeting succeeded in conducting a critical re-examination of past approaches to better define recommendations for future action. The diversity and sheer number of delegates from all over the world led to network- and alliance-building across sectors, spheres, and continents. Perhaps the greatest indicator of success was the strong commitment expressed by all actors to follow up on the action recommendations, and to make a reality out of the ideas discussed and debated at such length at this meeting.

4. Ministerial-Level Meeting

4.1 Summary

The objective of the Ministerial-Level Meeting was to build on the preceding Youth and Experts' Meetings and bring foreign and development ministers together with young people, civil society, and representatives of regional organizations and the UN system to agree on a common agenda for war-affected children. The goal was also to hold a dedicated international meeting of governments on war-affected children that could help to inform the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2001.

Plenaries were chaired by Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, and Canada's Minister for International Cooperation, Maria Minna, and featured keynote addresses from:

- the honorary conference chair, Graça Machel;
- the co-chair of the Ministerial-Level Meeting, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu;
- the Executive Director of UNICEF and co-chair of the Experts' Meeting, Carol Bellamy; and
- young people, including those from war-affected countries.

National statements were made in plenary throughout the meeting and, running concurrently in smaller breakout sessions, a series of four workshops were held, which were geared toward an in-depth examination of how to better protect children from armed conflict. The meeting also featured a moderated panel discussion on emerging issues affecting children in situations of conflict.

The Ministerial-Level Meeting was structured to afford maximum time for the 45 ministers who came to Winnipeg to engage in substantive discussion on war-affected children, including protection of children during conflict and effective rehabilitation and reintegration of children in the post-conflict phase.

Following opening remarks by Minister Axworthy and Minister Minna, Graça Machel delivered a keynote address. In her speech, she accused all present of having failed war-affected children, and challenged ministers in the room to deliver on their promises to children. She reminded her audience that war-affected children are the common responsibility of everyone, and that we must think of them as our own children. She called upon ministers not to "turn a blind eye" to the suffering of children in conflict situations, but rather to take immediate action on behalf of these children.

In her remarks, Machel summarized the following 10 crosscutting priorities for action:

- ending impunity for crimes against children—ending tolerance for war;
- ensuring children's centrality in the peace and security agenda;
- improving the monitoring and reporting of children's rights violations during conflict;
- studying the gender dimensions of conflict and peacebuilding;
- supporting adolescents—the greatest resource;
- protecting children under siege from HIV/AIDS;
- improving information, data collection, and analysis on children in conflict;
- encouraging training and sensitization on children's rights and gender;
- supporting civil society to protect children; and
- mobilizing resources for war-affected children and overcoming disparities in resource allocations.

Five youth delegates presented the Youth Statement developed during the Youth Meeting. They noted their unique position to develop solutions and focus on priorities based on their first-hand experience. The young men and women highlighted key areas of concern and outlined a number of suggestions. Access to education that helps children develop their leadership skills, capacities, and understanding of others was emphasized as key to preventing conflict and rebuilding after conflict has occurred. The Youth Statement also stressed the need for long-term support to help communities heal, overcome poverty, and learn to work together. Young people noted that they wanted to be a part of this process by contributing to decisions made and actions taken.

The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and co-chair of the Ministerial-Level Meeting, Olara Otunnu, also delivered a call to action, listing similar priorities to those set out by Machel. Otunnu highlighted the importance of listening to youth voices and the need for youth networks.

UNICEF Executive Director and co-chair of the Experts' Meeting, Carol Bellamy, asked ministers to provide the political leadership necessary to ensure that the commitments agreed on at the conference become deeds, and that these deeds make a difference in the lives of children. She urged ministers to develop a new international consensus that would not be the "lowest common denominator," but would instead emphasize leadership, accountability, and action.

There were two presentations on the Experts' Meeting made to the Ministerial-Level Meeting. Thomas Hammarberg of Sweden reported on the major outcomes and recommendations from the Experts' Meeting. Among other issues, he emphasized the general feeling expressed by the Experts' Meeting that the absence of action to protect children from war was no longer tolerable. He urged ministers to take immediate action on behalf of war-affected children.

In her comments on behalf of the NGOs at the Experts' Meeting, Angelina Atyam, from the Concerned Parents Association of Uganda, highlighted sections of the NGO action plan and experts' declaration. She added a personal note of urgency by telling the story of the abduction over 10 years ago of her daughter by the LRA. She expressed her impatience and frustration with the lack of

response to her daughter's abduction, and the profound impact the abduction has had on her, her family, and her community. She made an emotional plea to delegates, and especially to ministers, to put an end to the ruthless abduction of children and to free those children held in captivity in conflict situations.

Workshops

The Ministerial-Level Meeting featured four workshop sessions on the protection of children in pre-, mid-, and post-conflict situations. In each of these sessions, ministers filled roles as chairs and speakers to introduce the workshop themes and to spark substantive discussion on recommendations for action. Several of the recommendations—such as the key role of education in child protection, the implementation of existing norms, an end to impunity, an attack on the roots of conflict, and the need for strengthened training of military personnel—cut across all four themes of the workshops. The workshop topics were the following:

- Economic and political agendas in civil wars
- Safeguarding children in the midst of conflict
- Engaging youth in peace processes
- Preventing the recurrence of harm to war-affected children

Panel discussion

On the morning of September 17, a panel discussion, moderated by Senator Landon Pearson of Canada, focused on emerging themes, such as the impact of HIV/AIDS on war-affected children, and crosscutting issues, such as the role of women in child protection. Panellists included the Director of the Eminent Persons Group on Small Arms, the Hon. Albrecht Muth, the Count Albi; Amos Sawyer, former president of Liberia; Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM; Stephen Lewis, former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations and former deputy executive director of UNICEF; and Soren Jessen-Petersen, Assistant High Commissioner, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Small Arms and Light Weapons – Hon. Albrecht Muth, the Count Albi

The Count Albi's remarks were directed toward "pushing the envelope on small arms" for the UN Special Session on Small Arms in 2001. In particular, he expressed concern at the excessive proliferation and accumulation of small arms and light weapons. He criticized the international community, including those present at Winnipeg, for not doing more to solve a "problem in which support is a mile wide and an inch deep." He called upon all those present to increase their efforts on this issue and, in doing so, to make a real impact on the use of small arms by children.

Governance and War-Affected Children – Amos Sawyer

Sawyer's presentation drew a direct linkage between failures in governance and war-affected children. Poor governance marginalizes children, and governance failures cause conflicts that in turn endanger the lives and well-being of children. The solution, he noted, is to construct governance frameworks that protect children. These frameworks must involve partnerships between the international community, regional actors, civil society, and government. These governance frameworks apply to child protection in peace agreements, peace settlements, and post-conflict peacebuilding. "We need to put the interests of civil society—not warlords—at the centre of negotiations," he said. When warlords are at the negotiating table, the interests and needs of civil society will not be served, and peacebuilding will suffer as a result.

"At this conference, we've been inspired by the enthusiasm of young people," he said. He noted that the youth who participated in Winnipeg would be sent back to their communities to network. However, he questioned how these youth could network effectively without structures of participation at the grass roots.

Sawyer concluded by stating that governance issues are children's issues. Children must become stakeholders, not petitioners. For this to happen, those working on governance must mainstream children's issues into their work, and vice versa.

Women and Peacebuilding – Noeleen Heyzer

Noeleen Heyzer began her statement by referring to what she called a fundamental truth from *The Machel Review*—that the lives of children are jeopardized when the lives of women are not protected. She described the impact of armed conflict on women and girls; rape and other forms of sexual violence are systematically used as weapons of war, and too often women and girls are forced into sex in exchange for safe passage, food, and other protection. The arrival of peacekeeping personnel has been associated with an increase in child prostitution. Girls abducted by armed groups are forced into sexual slavery, and many become infected with HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. She referred to the absence of legal frameworks to guarantee women's rights to land, inheritance, and custody in many countries.

Heyzer highlighted five fundamental points for action:

- understanding the differential impact of armed conflict on girls and women to ensure their protection and to design gender-responsive policies and programs;
- improving protection assistance for women and girls to address the specific ways in which they are affected and displaced by conflict;
- supporting grass-roots peacebuilding with women and girls;
- making the case for women's participation in peace processes and agreements; and
- supporting gender justice in post-conflict reconstruction so that women and girls have a fair chance at development.

HIV/AIDS – Stephen Lewis

Stephen Lewis began by drawing attention to the fact that HIV/AIDS has changed the landscape of conflict more than any other factor in the past five years. “[HIV/AIDS] is being treated as an issue equivalent to war,” he said. He challenged the audience to imagine the “witch’s brew” when war, HIV/AIDS, and children intersect.

AIDS is a gender-based disease, and the oppression of women lies at the heart of the spread of the pandemic. Lewis drew attention to the spread of the pandemic during conflict, as a result of sexual violence and the rape of women and girls. Child soldiers are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and to peer pressure. Infections among military and police personnel soar during conflict.

To combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, he suggested the following recommendations:

- training and codes of behaviour for personnel involved in peace-support operations and for humanitarian workers should be undertaken without delay;
- reproductive health services must begin at the time of emergency humanitarian responses;
- as an anchor for children, the school must be the centerpiece of support and prevention;
- volunteer testing and counselling should be provided to let women know their status and allow them to make choices about infant feeding;
- drugs must be made available to reduce mother-to-child transmission and to treat the disease; and
- international actors should be supporting community responses to the HIV orphan phenomenon.

Refugees and Internally Displaced Children – Soren Jessen-Petersen

Jessen-Petersen’s statement focused on the 22 million refugees and displaced people in the world today, close to 10 million of whom are children and adolescents. While the needs of younger refugee children are self-evident (food, health care, adult support, and supervision), the needs of adolescents are often less visible, although they are most at risk of sexual exploitation and military recruitment. Jessen-Petersen addressed three main gaps: the internally displaced persons (IDP) gap, the resource gap, and the security gap.

The IDP gap refers to the millions of war-affected children who are still within the borders of their own country, but do not have the systematic protection of the international community. The resource gap refers to the further funds required by UNHCR to implement education, sports, and trauma-alleviation programs for children. The security gap is the increasing danger faced by civilians in situations of armed conflict, including humanitarian workers. He concluded by calling for concrete measures to be taken by the UN Security Council for the protection of civilians, and particularly the protection of children.

4.2 Outcomes

Adopted by 132 governments in Winnipeg, *The Agenda on War-Affected Children* represents an agreed-upon framework for action, dealing with a wide range of issues that have a direct impact on children in situations of conflict and post-conflict. In the lead-up to the Ministerial-Level Meeting, and during the lengthy negotiating sessions at the meeting itself, governments, NGOs, young people, and UN representatives were consulted on the draft agenda. Their comments contributed to the significant revisions in the last two drafts of the document.

The Chairs' Statement from the Ministerial-Level Meeting contains pledges by 27 countries, the European Union, UNICEF, and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The pledges to action involve implementing the commitments made in Winnipeg through programming and adherence to new and existing standards on increased child protection.

5. Maintaining the momentum: Follow-up and next steps

Winnipeg steering committee

At the Ministerial-Level Meeting, Canada, Ghana, UNICEF, and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict agreed to form a steering committee to ensure follow-up to the commitments made by the international community. The mandate is outlined in the chairs' statement from that meeting. It tasks the steering committee with developing "a strategy and specific actions that the international community can take up, identifying how these initiatives are to be supported and implemented," and including time lines for their completion. To involve all contributors to the outcomes of the conference, the steering committee has been expanded to include representatives of NGOs and youth who participated in Winnipeg. In time for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in September 2001, the steering committee will report back on its first year's activities and on progress made by the international community in implementing commitments since the Winnipeg conference.

UN General Assembly Special Session on Children

Many of the recommendations from the conference called on governments to take forward the Winnipeg outcomes to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in September 2001. The Special Session on Children will be an important opportunity to advance the agenda for war-affected children and to integrate into the UN system the framework developed by the international community at the Winnipeg conference. The primary outcome documents of the Winnipeg conference have been circulated as official documents of the Special Session on Children and of the UN General Assembly, including *The Agenda for War-Affected Children*, *The Machel Review*, and *Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children*. The Winnipeg steering committee is working through the preparatory process to ensure that a distinct focus on war-affected children is part of the review of progress since the 1990 World Summit for Children and the discussion of future priorities for children and young people.

NGO follow-up

The NGO action plan, *Peace is Every Child's Right*, will be used as a working document to facilitate further collaboration. A revised version will be distributed for use in preparations for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, for advocacy related to the Security Council Resolutions on Children and Armed Conflict, and for other international events.

The NGOs present in Winnipeg committed to working together through regional and international networks, expanding on linkages that already exist. Information will be shared through the Child Rights Information Network. Joint advocacy initiatives will be undertaken by groups with a

common interest, such as education during conflict and the Friends of the War-Affected Children of Northern Uganda.

Effective monitoring was identified as a priority area of mutual benefit; it will be one focus for further development. Support by the Government of Canada for NGO participation in monitoring and policy formation, as well as in program delivery, will help to maintain international momentum for long-term improvements in the respect and protection of the rights of children in the context of conflict.

Youth network

As part of their follow-up, the youth at Winnipeg decided to form an international youth network to exchange information about work they are undertaking in their own communities and to exchange ideas among themselves. The idea of a youth network was supported by a number of actors at the conference, including Canada, UNICEF, and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Various mechanisms will be employed to implement the youth network.

Communications

The award-winning Web site for the International Conference on War-Affected Children was in the spotlight of Canadian and international audiences and media. The Web site will continue to be maintained by the Government of Canada until the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in September 2001.

Appendix 1: Meeting programs

Youth Meeting, September 10 to 12, 2000

Day One: Sunday, September 10

1. Welcome and context for the conference
2. Teambuilding exercise
3. Overview of next three days
4. Small-group review of separate international and Canadian discussions from pre-conference meetings
5. Plenary: Pulling together the work of different groups, creating a basis for the Youth Statement
6. Official welcome
 - The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs
 - The Honourable Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation
 - Nancy Wildgoose, Secretary-General of the International Conference on War-Affected Children
7. Discussion between youth and ministers
8. Walkaround activity on four of the conference themes:
 - Role of youth in conflict and peacebuilding
 - Legal tools for prevention and protection
 - Accountability
 - Protection for children during conflict
9. Small-group discussions and recommendations on the conference themes
10. Plenary: Feedback from thematic groups and discussions
11. Break into production teams to integrate ideas on the themes into the conference inputs
12. Feedback/evaluation of the day

Dinner and bowling

Day Two: Monday, September 11

1. Review of Monday's agenda
2. Warm-up activity

3. Walkaround activity on the remaining five conference themes:
 - Peacebuilding strategies
 - Conflict prevention
 - Role of the media in protecting children
 - Reporting violations to children's rights
 - Children's rights and the military
4. Small-group discussion of and recommendations on conference themes
5. Plenary: Feedback from thematic groups and discussions
6. Work in production teams to integrate the ideas from the morning session into the conference inputs
7. Participation as a right – discussion of adult guidelines for working with youth, preparation for participation in the remainder of the conference
8. Feedback/evaluation of the day

Dinner and drama presentation and discussion by the Project Peacemakers/Cause Canada youth drama project

Day Three: Tuesday, September 12

1. Review of agenda and warm-up activity
2. Walkaround activity on the eight conference caucus issues:
 - Small arms
 - Child soldiers
 - Land mines
 - Adolescents
 - Gender and conflict
 - Refugee and internally displaced children
 - HIV/AIDS and conflict
 - Trauma and healing
3. Small-group discussions on caucus issues
4. Plenary on caucus issues, reports from small groups
5. Work in production teams to integrate the ideas from the morning session into the conference inputs
6. VIPP exercise (using sticky papers) to identify concerns related to working with the media during the conference; preparation for the September 13 youth press conference
7. Concluding remarks

Dinner and paddleboat tour

Experts' Meeting, September 13 to 15, 2000

Day One: Wednesday, September 13

09:00 Session 1 – Introduction and Context

Plenary

Ministerial presentation: Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation

Chairs: Nancy Wildgoose, Secretary-General of the International Conference on War-Affected Children

Carol Bellamy, Executive Director, UNICEF

Opening address: Carol Bellamy, Executive Director, UNICEF

Opening address: Olara Otunnu, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Address: Stephen Lewis, Special Adviser to the Graça Machel Review
The Graça Machel Review Document 2000: The impact of armed conflict on children

Speakers: Dwayne and Secret
Taking Stock and Priorities for the Future

Speaker: Kathy Vandergrift, World Vision Canada and Chair of the NGO Working Group on Children Affected by Armed Conflict
Taking Stock and Priorities for the Future

11:45 Presentation of Conference Framework and Structure

Plenary

Speaker: Nancy Wildgoose, Secretary-General of the Conference

Presentation of the Structure of the Conference: Case Studies, Discussion Questions, Workshops, Caucuses

12:15 - 13:45 Lunch

14:15 Session 2 – Presentation of Case Studies

Plenary

Chair: Carol Bellamy, Executive Director, UNICEF

Speakers:

Case Study: Northern Uganda

Stavros Stavrou, Institute of Strategic Studies, and

Akech Okullu Betty, GUSCO

Speaker:

Case Study: Sierra Leone
Dennis Bright, Institut Régional de Coopération-Développement (IRCOD)

Speaker:

Case Study: Colombia
Ann Hall, Colombia Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Speaker:

Case Study: Sri Lanka
Kenneth Bush, Dalhousie University

Speaker:

Case Study: Kosovo
Amir Haxhikadrija, Kosova Youth Council

Speaker:

Case Study: Middle East
Randa Farah, Oxford University

16:15 - 18:00 **Session 3 – Six Concurrent Workshops on Case Studies**

1. Northern Uganda

Chairs: Kathy Vandergrift, World Vision Canada, and
Theo Sowa, Machel Review Team

2. Sierra Leone

Chair: Jean-Claude Legrand, UNICEF

3. Colombia

Chair: John Beggs, CIDA

4. Sri Lanka

Chair: Nigel Fisher, UNICEF

5. Kosovo

Chair: Kimberley Gamble-Payne, UNICEF

6. Middle East

Chair: Rick McTaggart, CIDA

Day Two: Thursday, September 14

8:30 **Session 4 – Setting the Context**

Chair: Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation

Speaker: Mark Malan, Institute of Strategic Studies

The Strategic Context: Situating War-Affected Children Within the
Broader Peace and Security Challenges

Speaker: Jo Boyden, Oxford University
Challenging Assumptions About War-Affected Children

10:00 **Session 5 – Nine Concurrent Thematic Workshops**
Taking Stock: What Has Worked in the Past and What Has Not Worked?

1. The participation of youth in peacebuilding
2. Using international humanitarian law and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as tools for prevention and protection
3. Local and global accountability for war-affected children
4. Protection for children in the midst of conflict
5. Effective peacebuilding strategies
6. The challenge of conflict prevention
7. In the line of fire: The media and children in conflict
8. Research, reporting and follow-up to children’s rights violations
9. The military, armed groups and children’s rights

1. *The participation of youth in peacebuilding*

Chairs: Youth delegate Secret and Kenneth Bush

Rapporteur: Karen Austin, CIDA

Speaker: Senator Landon Pearson, Senate of Canada and
Canadian Prime Minister’s Personal Representative to the UN General Assembly
Special Session on Children

How Do We Engage Youth in Policy Dialogue and Decision-Making?

Speaker: Hencer, youth delegate from Niños por la Paz (Colombia)

Youth Working Together to Build a Movement for Peace

Speaker: Judith Thompson, Global Youth Connect

Rebuilding the Self-Esteem and Leadership Abilities of War-Affected Youth

2. *Using international humanitarian law and the Convention on the Rights of the Child as tools for prevention and protection*

Chair: Judge Andrée Ruffo, International Bureau for Children’s Rights

Rapporteur: Kathy Vandergrift, World Vision Canada and
Chair of Canadian NGO Working Group on Children Affected by Armed Conflict

Speaker: Funmi Olanisaki, Office of the UN Special Representative of the
Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict

How Can We Launch an “Era of Application”?

Speaker: Thomas Hammarberg, Swedish Prime Minister’s Personal Representative
to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children

The Convention on the Rights of the Child: From Mobilization to Implementation

Speaker: Rachel Brett, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Children’s Rights and Human Rights Law

3. Local and global accountability for war-affected children

Chair: Gordon Smith, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria, Canada

Rapporteur: Michelle Morris, Save the Children, United Kingdom

Speaker: Conmany Wesseh, Centre for Democratic Empowerment, Liberia
Building Accountability at the Local Level: Governance, Capacity Development and Local Values

Speaker: Chris Pinney, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy
Challenging the Private Sector to Be Accountable

Speaker: Lansana Gberie, University of Toronto
Diamonds, Children, and the Political Economy of Conflict: The Experience of Sierra Leone

Speaker: Bill Pace, NGO Coalition on the International Criminal Court
What Can the International Criminal Court and International Criminal Tribunals Do to Protect Children?

4. Protection for children in the midst of conflict

Chair: John Sullivan, Canadian Red Cross

Rapporteur: Hillary Homes, Amnesty International

Speaker: Lt.-Gen. (retired) Romeo Dallaire, Canada
Child Protection During the Rwanda Crisis

Speaker: Youth delegates Jeta and Saoirsé

Speaker: Elizabeth Jareg, Redd Barna, Norway
Lessons from Development Programming for Children in Conflict Situations

Speaker: Bituin Gonzales, Senior Child Protection Adviser, UN Mission in Sierra Leone

Reflections on the Role of Child Protection Advisors

5. Effective peacebuilding strategies

Chair: Amos Sawyer, Liberia

Rapporteur: Christine Hodge, CIDA

Speaker: Nigel Fisher, UNICEF
Education as a Tool for Healing and Conflict Prevention for War-Affected Girls and Boys

Speaker: Sam Doe, West African Network on Peacebuilding
Community-Based Strategies for Peacebuilding

Speaker: Ilene Cohn, Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
The Protection of Children in Peace Processes: Child Protection Advisors

6. The challenge of conflict prevention

Chair: Ovid Jackson, Member of Parliament, Canada

Rapporteur: Lawrence Peck, CIDA

Speaker: John Holmes, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade,

Canada

Progress at the Political Level: Recent International and Regional Initiatives

Speaker: Lloyd Feinberg, Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, USAID

Good Development as a Means of Conflict Prevention

Speaker: George Wachira, Nairobi Peace Initiative

Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

7. *In the line of fire: The media and children in conflict (two panels)*

Chair: Edouard Girardet, Media Action International

Rapporteur: Jean-Pierre Ouellet, CIDA

Speaker: Kwasi Gyan-Apenteng, African Topics Magazine and
Centre for Media and Civil Society Initiatives

Speaker: Gordana Knezevic, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression

Speaker: Shelley Saywell, Bishari Film Productions Inc.

Speaker: Robert Ménard, Reporters sans Frontières

Speaker: Hilary Mackenzie, Southam News

Speaker: Mohamed Bangura, Sierra Leone Canada Watch

Speaker: Phillip Hemlich, Search for Common Ground

8. *Research, reporting and follow-up to children's rights violations*

Chair: Marta Santos Pais, UNICEF

Rapporteur: Pamela Teitelbaum, International Bureau for Children's Rights

Speaker: Youth delegates Kali and Lanny

Speaker: Vivien Stewart, Office of the UN Special Representative of the
Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Elements of a Research Agenda on War-Affected Children

Speaker: Jo Becker, Human Rights Watch

A Rights-Based Approach to Humanitarian Assistance

9. *The military, armed groups and children's rights*

Chair: Dominic McAlea, Department of National Defence, Canada

Rapporteur: Chantal Goupil, Department of National Defence, Canada

Speaker: David Petrsek, International Council on Human Rights Policy
How Can We Influence the Behaviour of Armed Groups?

Speaker: Chetan Kumar, Office of the UN Special Representative of the
Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Compliance with Commitments by Parties to Armed Conflict

Speaker: Roger Laloupo, ECOWAS

Training the Military in Children's Rights

12:00 - 13:30

Lunch

14:00 - 18:00 **Session 6 – Nine Concurrent Thematic Workshops**

**What Are the Key Actions That Are Needed to Move This Agenda Forward?
Who Should Be Responsible for These Actions?**

1. The participation of youth in peacebuilding
2. Using international humanitarian law and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as tools for prevention and protection
3. Local and global accountability for war-affected children
4. Protection for children in the midst of conflict
5. Effective peacebuilding strategies
6. The challenge of conflict prevention
7. In the line of fire: The media and children in conflict
8. Research, reporting and follow-up to children's rights violations
9. The military, armed groups and children's rights

18:30 **Reception hosted by Mayor of Winnipeg**

21:00 - 23:00 **Briefing Session on Draft Agenda for War-Affected Children**

John Holmes

Day Three: Friday September 15

08:30 **Session 7 – Eight concurrent caucuses**

1. Small arms

Chair: Count Albrecht Muth Albi, Executive Director, UN Eminent Persons Group on Small Arms

Speaker: Rachel Stohl, Centre for Defense Information
The Links Between Small Arms/Light Weapons and Child Soldiers

Speaker: Ivor Richard Fung, Director, UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

The West African Experience with the ECOWAS Moratorium

Speaker: Eugenia Piza-Lopez, International Alert (on behalf of IANSA)

2. Child soldiers

Chair: Mikael Barfod, European Community Humanitarian Office

Speaker: Rory Mungoven, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers
After the Optional Protocol: What Next?

Speaker: Dyan Mazurana and Susan McKay, University of Wyoming
Girls in Militaries, Para-militaries and Armed Groups

Speaker: Carlinda Monteiro, Christian Children's Fund, Angola
The Angolan Experience with Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

3. Land mines

Chair: Olivier Nicoloff, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada

Speaker: Celina Tuttle, Mine Action Canada and the International Coalition to Ban Landmines

Lessons in Mobilization and Looking Forward to Implementation of the Ottawa Convention

Speaker: Natasa Jovicic, Croatian Mine Action Centre (NONA)
Mine Awareness with Children

Speaker: Chalermluck Thanapanich McCracken, Cambodia/Thailand
The Impact of Land Mines on Refugee Children on the Cambodia/Thailand Border

4. Adolescents

Chair: Hunter McGill, CIDA

Speaker: Jane Lowicki, Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children
Specific Risks and Responses for Adolescents Affected by Conflict

Speaker: Harendra De Silva, Child Protection Authority, Sri Lanka
Children's Rights in a "Frozen" Conflict

Speaker: Youth delegate Faten

5. Gender and conflict

Chair: Mary Diaz, Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children

Speaker: Suraya Dalil, UNICEF Afghanistan
The Impact of the Conflict in Afghanistan on Girls and Boys

Speaker: Maggie Paterson, CIDA
Operational Tools for Gender, Conflict and Peacebuilding

6. Refugee and internally displaced children

Chair: Christine Linner, UNHCR, Geneva

Speaker: Neil Boothby, Save the Children USA
Gaps in Meeting in the Needs of Refugee and Internally Displaced Children

Speaker: Youth delegates Halit, Heidi, and Winnie

7. HIV/AIDS and conflict

Chair: Theo Sowa, Machel+5 Review

Speaker: Ulf Kristoffersson, UNAIDS

Speaker: Lola Gostelow, Save the Children UK

Speaker: Youth delegates Jimda and Lilly

8. Trauma and healing

Chair: Michael Wessells, Christian Children's Fund

Speaker: Rob Chase, University of Manitoba
Health and Well-Being as Critical Interventions in Peacebuilding

Speaker: Marie de la Soudière, International Rescue Committee
Honouring the Indigenous Healing Process

12:00 - 14:30 **Lunch**

Ministerial presentation: Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs

15:00 - 15:45 ***Discussion of Draft Agenda for War-Affected Children***
John Holmes

15:45 - 17:00 **Session 8 – Closing Plenary**

Presentation of Chairs' summary

Nancy Wildgoose, Secretary-General

Carol Bellamy, UNICEF Executive Director

Summations

Youth delegate

NGO delegate

Concluding remarks

Graça Machel, Honorary Chair of the Conference

Olara Otunnu, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for
Children and Armed Conflict

Ministerial remarks

Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation

Ministerial-Level Meeting, September 16 to 17, 2000

Day One: Saturday, September 16

Opening ceremony

Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation

Youth delegates

Graça Machel

Welcome lunch

Plenary: Global Initiatives and Actions for War-Affected Children

Chairs: Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Minister Maria Minna

Speaker: Olara Otunnu (UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for
Children and Armed Conflict, United Nations)

Initiatives on Behalf of War-Affected Children

Speaker: Carol Bellamy (Executive Director, UNICEF)

Leaders and War-Affected Children: Accountability and Commitment

Plenary: Experts and Youth Report on Their Findings

Speaker: Youth delegate – Youth video (Report from Youth Meeting)

Speaker: Stephen Lewis (Rapporteur's report from Experts' Meeting)

Closing: Minister Maria Minna

National statements and concurrent workshops

1. Economic and political agendas in civil wars
2. Safeguarding children in the midst of conflict
3. Engaging youth in peace processes
4. Preventing the recurrence of harm to war-affected children

Reception

Day Two: Sunday, September 17

Plenary: Rapporteurs Report Back from Workshops

National statements continue

Closing

- Minister Lloyd Axworthy
- Minister Maria Minna
- NGO statement
- Youth
- Graça Machel
- Video presentation
- Adoption of the *Agenda for War-Affected Children*
- Final press conference

Appendix 2: Key outcome documents

Youth Statement

The International Conference on War-Affected Children

Good afternoon, Merhaba, hosh galden, baherben, salut, taato, mire dita, somkorup, fellow delegates.

We would like to welcome you and thank you for this opportunity to participate in this conference. Although some of us now live in peace in Canada, among us we represent war-affected children worldwide.

We speak to you as young people with the experience of war. We have lost our homes and our schools. We have been abused, tortured, and raped. We have witnessed brutal murders and have been abducted and separated from our families. Some of us have fought in wars against our own kin.

We also speak to you as young people who want to be involved in building peace in our communities. We have many concerns but also many ideas that we would like to share with you.

Based on what we have seen and are seeing, what we have felt and are feeling, as well as what we have shared with one another, we have come to a consensus that children are the people most affected by war.

During this conference, we have heard a lot of rhetoric about how young people are the leaders of the future. While not dismissing the truth of this statement, we say that we have a crucial role to play in our societies now. Our recommendations to improve our future must be respected, and we need to be involved in the planning and implementation in all levels.

From this conference, we want to see practical solutions that benefit war-affected children emerge. We wish to see the mere discussions of these issues cease and encourage action to see more and better quality support for war-affected children. Many of the solutions are already there (for example the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*), but so far we have not seen any strong and effective actions regarding what has been written.

We would like to share with you what we strongly believe to be the main priorities that have been highlighted by us, the young experts in this conference.

Education

Around the world, there are tens of thousands of children who, because of wars, are denied their right to education. Education is the key to preventing conflicts and to rebuilding our lives after conflict. We demand quality education be provided to all children affected by war. In addition to courses offered in national curriculum, education needs to emphasize awareness through teaching the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Self-understanding and development must be motivated through capacity-building, leadership training, and the exploration of issues such as women's rights and democracy. This education must be provided both during and after war.

Adults also need access to education, especially education that makes them aware of children's rights.

All children need to be encouraged to accept diversity and tolerance. Education is an essential component of peacebuilding. Empowerment must begin at the community level. Long-term conflict prevention begins with social education.

Building peace

War destroys everything—our schools, our homes, our families, our communities, our jobs, our health, and our souls. War destroys our childhood. We need to rebuild all of these things to create healthy communities. On our journey to peace, we need long-term support and assistance.

Beyond simple survival, we need individual, family, and community healing. This means promoting cultural and social activities that teach our communities to work together. As over half of the population of our countries, we are needed to build peace today and to make it last for tomorrow. We are an important part of our communities, and want to play a role in making decisions and taking action. We ask government officials, friends, parents, teachers, and other sympathetic adults to help us to learn about and become involved in all political processes—from our neighbourhoods to the United Nations.

To build peace and prevent war, we need long-term commitments that help us to defeat poverty. We want local people to lead the development, but we need access to skills, knowledge, and tools to improve the economies of our communities. When people can make a good living and respect all people regardless of their gender, age, or ethnicity, it is less likely that they will go to war. People need to have enough money so that they are not forced to partake in conflicts.

Refugees and internally displaced people

During war, many people, including women and children, are denied their right to safety. Without refuge, children are likely to be hurt, maimed, killed, or manipulated into joining rebel factions and other groups that destroy their innocence. It is crucial that sanctuary be made available, regardless of expense. Because of war, many children and their families are unable to return to their communities. We demand that the international community take actions to allow all refugees and internally displaced people to safely return home.

For those who feel trapped within refugee camps, it is necessary that they be provided equal and essential basic needs, including satisfactory food rations and sanitary living conditions. All child refugees must be offered free education, as a child's learning process must not be interrupted by displacement.

Refugees need more flexible and efficient assistance in receiving the proper documentation to allow access to aid while they are in the camps, and reintegration within their own communities following the conflict.

Leadership roles within the camp should be equally distributed among all, including adolescents. We must be involved in making the decisions and helping to plan programs inside refugee camps.

Tools for destruction

Preventative measures are needed to protect the rights of children worldwide. In order to protect our children, we must prohibit the production and trading of weapons, including small arms and land mines. The quantity of small arms that a country can export, import, or stockpile is currently unregulated. An independent international organization should be put in place to monitor and facilitate all arms trade, as well as assist countries in establishing internal small-arms control. Such an organization should facilitate the ban on arms sale to governments that do not operate within human-rights standards. Also, in post-war situations, disarmament processes must be encouraged where small arms can be recovered and destroyed. Destruction of these arms means ensuring that they will never be reused. All companies and nations involved in the production and use of land mines must be put to shame.

Violations against children's rights

During war, we are more vulnerable to the abuse of our rights. War makes our societies more violent, and children suffer the results of this violence. Children are orphaned without any support, abducted to serve in armies, sexually abused by armed groups, and may be forced into prostitution because there are no alternatives when family members are killed. In some cases, children are dehumanized through drugs and propaganda. In other cases, child soldiers choose to become soldiers in order to protect themselves and their families, or to gain food, shelter, and in some cases, a sense of family. In either case, rehabilitation programs are needed to deal with all aspects of

war-related trauma among youth, both during and after conflict. In order to recover, we need counselling and we need to know our rights—the right not to be abused, raped, especially in times of war when we are vulnerable to abuse.

In the case of child soldiers, we demand that no young person under the age of 18 be recruited by either force or choice into the armed forces. Those who refuse to abide by this fundamental human right should be punished and shamed among the nations.

How we will help to work on these issues

Through examination of our priorities and recognition of the vital importance of action, we have come to the conclusion that as youth, it is ultimately our responsibility to put our own words into action and urge the adult participants of this conference to follow suit.

Caught in the Crossfire No More: A Framework for Commitment to War-Affected Children

Summary by the Chairs of the Experts' Meeting, September 15, 2000

Introduction

We, the participants at the Experts' Meeting of the International Conference on War-Affected Children, held in Winnipeg, Canada, September 13 to 15, 2000, declare that conflicts throughout the world have caused unacceptable suffering to children. The plight of war-affected children both as victims and combatants is one of the most disturbing issues facing the global community. Despite numerous regional and international commitments, there are too many unfulfilled promises and too few mechanisms to ensure accountability for our shortcomings.

War subjects children to physical, psychological, sexual, and social violence. No child is unaffected by war. War-affected children are at a greater risk to grow into a generation of adults more committed to violence than to peace. Commitments to war-affected children today will strengthen prospects for peace, human rights, and global security in the future.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said that “we must do much more to move from words to deeds, from the elaboration of norms to ‘an era of application’.” The time has come for governments, the corporate sector, NGOs, UN agencies, youth, and others to act to achieve the “era of application” by ensuring that our commitments become deeds that make a difference in the lives of children. The youth delegates at the Winnipeg conference have called for practical solutions and for their speedy implementation.

We have advanced our knowledge of the issue of war-affected children since the release of Graça Machel's groundbreaking report, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, in 1996. The young people, experts, and government officials who have attended this conference have all contributed new knowledge and insight on the issue. We have been inspired and informed in particular by Graça Machel's Review 2000 of her original study circulated by the Canadian government, the *Report of the Secretary General to the Security Council on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict* of July 2000, the NGO Action Plan, *Peace is Every Child's Right*, the deliberations of the Winnipeg Youth Meeting, and proposals from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Together, we have reviewed what we know, identified what needs to be explored further, and outlined some key priorities and practical commitments that we will honour.

We commit ourselves to further develop in the year ahead the undertakings and recommendations set out here, so that the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children, taking place in September 2001, can review and endorse our specific commitments to the rights and well-being of children affected by armed conflict.

If these commitments are to be respected—if we are to truly enter into the era of application—all elements of society must contribute.

We wish to highlight as our **major and immediate** commitments:

1. Ensure the entry into force of the International Criminal Court Statute and the universal ratification of the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* by the time of the UN Special Session on Children in September 2001.
2. Secure significant, new investment in quality education for war-affected children by national authorities, supported by donors, NGOs, and the UN system. Education must be a priority within humanitarian assistance.
3. Create a place at the table for young people, to enable them to present their agenda for the future to the Special Session on Children in 2001, and to help prepare them for this role by supporting youth networks and other youth initiatives.
4. Develop an effective international monitoring network to ensure systematic reporting on child rights abuses in all conflict-affected and conflict-prone countries, and make sure that follow-up actions are taken urgently and responsibly.

5. Conduct a study on the impact of small arms on children by the time of the International Conference on Small Arms in 2001, and follow up with concerted action.
6. Use all the levers at our disposal to effect the release of all abducted children, in particular those abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda.
7. Allocate a greater proportion of HIV/AIDS funding for both care and protection programs for children affected by conflict.

The following points emerged as **fundamental priorities** from the various workshops and plenary discussions that took place during the three days of the Experts' Meeting at the Winnipeg conference. Strong and immediate action is required in these areas in order to launch the "era of application." Business as usual is not enough.

Children as a zone of peace

There is no situation in which violence against children, or the exploitation, recruitment, or targeting of youth, is justifiable. Schools, health centres, or other places where children gather should never be attacked. Any targeting of children or violation of their rights must be immediately, repeatedly, and visibly condemned. Geographical "zones of peace" and "days of tranquillity" must be insisted upon and respected to ensure the delivery of assistance to children. The rights of children must be a central element of any peace agreement. There can be no impunity for those who violate children's rights or support those who do, be they governments, corporate actors, or others; they must be identified and condemned. Unaccompanied children, or those separated from their parents, require special measures to ensure their protection, care, and reunification with family.

Commitment and action

A sustained improvement in the situation of children in conflict cannot take place without strong and committed action from governments, non-state actors, UN agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and youth themselves. Safeguarding the security and rights of the child demands the courage to shape a new consensus that accords children the highest priority in all actions before, during, and after conflict. Leaders at all levels and in every sector of society—government, the private sector, civil society, international and regional organizations—must rise to the challenge of fulfilling their responsibilities to protect children. Universal standards for the assurance of child rights must finally be recognized as taking precedence over any specific political agenda; they must no longer be subject to the vagaries of political self-interest.

Accountability and impunity

Accountability demands commitments to legal standards through the universal ratification and implementation of international and regional instruments, as well as national monitoring and reporting systems which are supported by international mechanisms. The failure of the international community to take action against those who violate children's rights is the principal cause allowing the continuation of the intolerable situation of millions of war-affected children in the world today. Those who violate children's rights must be named, shamed, held accountable, and rendered powerless by all means necessary. Impunity must never be allowed to prevail. Accountability means much more than simply bringing war criminals to trial. It signifies the creation of a political and social climate in which those who violate children's rights or who collude in their violation—be they governments, insurgent groups, private-sector forces, or other actors—are made to feel the repugnance of civilized individuals and societies. Establishing innovative mechanisms to hold non-state actors accountable is a particular priority which has to be addressed by the international community.

Education

Education is central to humanitarian action. Good-quality education which enables children to think critically, solve problems, collaborate with others, and respect diversity is the key to a future free of armed conflict. Schools provide learning opportunities which empower children by giving them hope and skills for the future. They also create an atmosphere of stability for children whose lives have been affected by turmoil, displacement, and the breakdown of family structures. Education is also an essential alternative to recruitment. Schools should be central to the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness and peace education. Sustained national and international financial commitments are critical to the continuation and expansion of good-quality educational services in post-conflict societies. Particular priority must be given to the education of girls.

Youth participation

Young people can be both victims and perpetrators of violence during conflict. As such, they should not suffer in silence; their voices must be heard. The youth participation in the Winnipeg conference has shown that when given the opportunity to express their views, young people demonstrate insight, commitment, and the desire to build a better world by improving the plight of those affected by conflict. We will no longer plan and implement humanitarian programs or negotiate political settlements on behalf of war-affected youth without their participation.

Corporate-sector responsibility

The corporate sector must establish its own codes of conduct and greater transparency regarding activities in conflict zones. Independent monitoring bodies must be supported to highlight corporate activities which directly or indirectly contribute to or benefit from the targeting, exploitation, and abuse of children in zones of conflict.

HIV/AIDS

With HIV/AIDS so prevalent today, the rape and sexual abuse of children is a traumatic violation of their most fundamental rights, and a physical and psychological threat to their survival. Conflict and HIV/AIDS collide in destructive ways. Conflict conditions can destroy family structures, cause displacement, and increase the likelihood of the sexual abuse of children—especially girls—thus heightening their exposure to HIV/AIDS. War also destroys systems for health, the screening of blood transfusions, and AIDS awareness education programs that help prevent the spread of the disease during times of peace. Care and support must be made available to children affected by HIV/AIDS in zones of conflict, and schools and educational programs must be the focal points for HIV/AIDS awareness and care.

International solidarity

Systematic action to address the above issues and the recommendations which follow cannot take place without sustained international solidarity in the form of the universal ratification of all relevant international human rights standards, the development of concrete mechanisms for monitoring child rights abuses, and the commitment of the resources necessary to ensure protection, care, and rehabilitation of all children threatened by or exposed to violence.

The following commitments are essential for the protection of the rights of children in conflict:

Governments

Ensuring accountability and ending impunity:

- Sign and ratify all conventions and agreements related to the protection of children in armed conflict, with special emphasis placed on the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*, the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, and the *Ottawa Convention* on land mines. Deposit upon ratification of the *Optional Protocol* binding declarations indicating a minimum age of 18 for voluntary recruitment into national armed forces. For the ratification of the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* the target is: 10 ratifications by the end of the year 2000, 100 signatures by May 25, 2001, and 50 ratifications by the Special Session for Children in September 2001; with the majority of signatories setting a ban on the recruitment or participation of those less than 18 years old in armed forces.

- Incorporate into national legislations mechanisms for enforcing all relevant international and regional human rights and humanitarian law treaties, including penal sanctions for violators.
- Ensure that those responsible for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other crimes perpetrated against children are prosecuted for these crimes and excluded from any amnesty provisions contemplated during peace negotiations.
- Apply pressure on warring parties which violate children's rights by cutting off or limiting their sources of support. This can be done by imposing sanctions on the trading of natural resources which come from conflict areas, cutting off economic support from diaspora communities, restricting the travel or foreign financial holdings of violators, and denying recognition to individuals and groups who have committed crimes against children if they subsequently ascend to power.
- Make the signature, ratification, and implementation of the *Optional Protocol* to the CRC a precondition for defense cooperation, military training, joint military exercises, or arms sales and exchanges.
- Hold corporations within their jurisdiction accountable for their direct activities in conflict-affected countries, as well as for their indirect support to countries which violate the rights of children in conflict situations. Governments should utilize executive and legislative measures to prevent corporate actors within their jurisdiction from engaging in commercial activities with parties to armed conflict who violate international standards for the protection of children.
- Governments to prosecute rape against girls and women during armed conflict as a war crime.
- Arms embargo violations should be criminalized and prosecuted.
- Condition any aid (be it military, economic, or political) or diplomatic recognition of a warring party on respect for child rights, especially the non-recruitment and non-deployment of children as soldiers.

Prevention:

- Ensure universal implementation of birth registration by 2015, with particular attention to children who are refugees, internally displaced, or belonging to minority groups.

- Support the development of child-protection networks before conflict breaks out. These should include safe places for children to go, programs for adolescents which include vocational training and economic alternatives, and community centres for peacebuilding.
- Establish systematic recruitment procedures which ensure that no child under the age of 18 is recruited into armed forces.
- Train military forces in child rights, placing emphasis on the specific needs of women and girls. This training should be conducted by military officers conscious of these issues, in a simplified manner which reflects the language, culture, socialization, and knowledge base of the trainee group. These programs should also involve organizations with specific knowledge on children's rights and conflict situations, especially NGOs, and be implemented on a long-term basis and updated regularly. Such training should also be extended to civilian police forces and other international personnel.
- Provide new guidelines and standards for nations to train their peacekeeping troops or civilian police forces in a way which effectively addresses the complex issues of 21st century human-security operations, particularly those focused on the protection of children.
- Bilateral military assistance should include training on international human rights and humanitarian law, with an emphasis on children's rights.
- Governments with embassies or consulates in war-affected countries should monitor the situation of children there, prioritizing the issue of child-rights abuses and adopting appropriate policies to address the situation as part of their bilateral agenda.
- Reduce the flow of small arms by the following means:
 - adopt binding codes of conduct at the national, regional, and international levels;
 - ensure transparency in arms transfers by making government reports on all transactions available in public registries;
 - create a reliable system for marking arms and ammunition at the time of manufacture;
 - conduct preventive disarmament through programs for the collection and destruction of weapons;
 - improve the system of stockpile management and security.
- States to destroy old or surplus weapons stocks rather than selling them or giving them away.

- Ensure that the 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects acts to:
 - reduce the legal trade of small arms and eliminate arms sales to regions of conflict;
 - strengthen mechanisms for prevention and control of the illicit trade and stockpiling of small arms;
 - monitor and enforce arms embargoes;
 - withhold military aid to countries or groups which use child soldiers.
- Work to transform cultures of violence and militarism into more peaceful societies by implementing measures to end all violence against children, including the use of corporal punishment.

Protection and security:

- Establish effective national institutions and mechanisms, such as a national Commission for Children or office of a national Ombudsperson for Children, to ensure that the concerns of children are placed high on the national agenda, especially in countries affected by conflict.
- Establish and accord priority programs for disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating child soldiers both within and outside of peacekeeping environments. These should include specific measures to ensure children's protection from exploitation and re-recruitment, and address the special needs of girls and children with disabilities.
- Governments and regional organizations should declare child soldier-free zones.
- Adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement with a view toward preventing forced displacement and providing protection and assistance during displacement. Ensure that refugee and IDP camps are not institutionalized as permanent settlements. All necessary means should be used to prevent camps from becoming sanctuaries and recruiting grounds for militias and other elements that threaten children's security.
- Commit to training military forces in child-protection issues, and contribute to appropriate training for humanitarian agencies in security and risk assessment.
- Impose, monitor, and enforce arms embargoes in situations where civilians are targeted or where widespread and systematic violations of humanitarian and human-rights laws are committed and where children are recruited as soldiers.

- Establish more land-mine awareness programs, specifically directed at children in affected areas.

Peacebuilding:

- Incorporate into all peace agreements clear provisions for disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating soldiers, including child combatants. Establish institutional frameworks and provide funding support for disarmament and the safe and timely disposal of small arms and ammunitions.
- Ensure the protection of child soldiers from retribution, summary execution, arbitrary detention, torture, and other punitive measures, in accordance with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and international juvenile-justice standards. Governments should ensure that any judicial proceedings involving child soldiers must be within a framework of restorative justice that guarantees the physical, psychological, and social rehabilitation of the child. They must also work to ensure that the justice process is as local and culturally sensitive as possible, and that it supports healing and reconciliation.
- Ensure that protection provisions for children as victims and witnesses are included in the work of *ad hoc* war crime tribunals and in the rules of evidence and procedures of the International Criminal Court and Truth and Reconciliation Commissions.
- Establish channels which enable children to safely bring their perspectives and ideas directly to national leaders, governments, and other adults in all walks of life. Young people suffer directly in conflict, and their experiences and views must inform adult decision-making.
- Create spaces for both established and emerging youth organizations to meet, share experiences, network, and support each other in their work of monitoring and advocating around issues related to war-affected children.

Assistance:

- Invest in children before, during, and after conflict, ensuring their rights to education, health care, and other basic services.
- Ensure safe and continuous access to children for the delivery of humanitarian services in conflict zones, particularly to humanitarian NGOs, regardless of the location, nationality, religion, gender, or ethnicity of the children. Encourage the appropriate use of truces and cease-fires where applicable, while recognizing that cease-fires may prolong conflict by facilitating the rearming and regrouping of combatants and freezing the lines of conflict.

- Ensure that access to education is rapidly restored, supported, and strengthened during and after conflict, in keeping with commitments made at the Dakar 2000 Conference on Education for All. Education must be funded with the same sense of urgency as lifesaving emergency assistance, and must be made a central pillar of humanitarian assistance. This includes non-formal education, vocational and skills training, and special attention to the educational needs of girls.
- Core education curriculums should include conflict-resolution skills, life-skills training, land-mine awareness, HIV/AIDS prevention, human rights, peace education, and psychosocial support. Education should not fuel ethnic prejudice. Specialized, accelerated learning programs for adolescents should form a key part of the emergency education response. Children and their parents, especially refugee and displaced children, should have the option of an education that respects their language, culture, and identity. Adequate training of teachers and adequate pay and salary conditions are essential to ensuring the continuation of good-quality education services.
- Support the preparation and prepositioning of national-language education kits that can be deployed quickly during and after armed conflict to ensure continued learning opportunities for children, even when national school systems are facing serious disruption.
- Ensure that schools and educational systems are the focal points for HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and care during emergencies, and that they offer expanded life-skills curriculums which include nutritional support, hygiene, and other domestic survival skills.
- Devote more resources to adolescents, as they are often forced to become heads of households in conflict situations, and are particularly vulnerable to recruitment and sexual exploitation.
- Perform social and developmental impact assessments (preferably conducted by a diverse group of actors who know the culture) before implementing aid programs to ensure that they will improve and not worsen a situation.

Donor governments:

- Allocate or increase resources for children directly affected by armed conflict, and provide overseas development assistance and local development funds with an emphasis on conflict prevention.

- Allocate funding in accordance with the needs and priorities of local communities, and prioritize programs for prevention and long-term post-conflict peacebuilding. Support from outside experts in child protection during conflict should ensure that such expertise reinforces and rebuilds local capacity and enhances local knowledge, instead of replacing it. Special emphasis should be placed on respecting local culture and local child protection institutions.
- Provide technical cooperation and financial assistance to help prevent the recruitment of children as combatants, and to implement effective strategies for their demobilization, rehabilitation, and social reintegration.
- The OECD/DAC, in consultation with the UN and NGOs, are urged to establish criteria and guidelines to reduce disparities in resources allocated to war-affected women and children in different conflict situations. They should also reduce the institutional and budgetary barriers between relief assistance, reconstruction, and development cooperation. These issues should be given priority consideration at the high-level consultation in 2001 on Financing for Development.
- Increase technical support and resources so that improved treatment, care, and support are available for children affected by HIV/AIDS in conflict situations and in neighbouring communities.
- Donor governments to allocate an extra \$10 billion as per the request of UNAIDS for AIDS prevention and care.
- Donor countries, international agencies, and other relevant organizations should ensure the allocation of adequate resources for data collection and analytical research, as well as for monitoring and reporting on children's rights violations.
- Provide resources to support training and capacity-building of local NGOs to enable them to more effectively monitor and report on child-rights violations and advocate for the rights of children in armed conflict.
- Ensure that the commitments of resources for war-affected children announced at the Winnipeg conference are new resources and not taken from other development assistance programs which are also important for children, their families, and their communities.

Non-state entities (NSEs)

- Adopt the child-protection standards embodied in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its *Optional Protocol* and those described in international humanitarian laws regarding the rights and protection of children in armed conflict. Develop and make public their own codes of conduct relating to war-affected children.

- Carry out training programs based on such codes of conduct for their armed units and civilian officials.
- Agree to be held accountable and accept monitoring of their commitments to international or internal standards by the UN or other institutions, and to punish violators of children's rights within their own ranks, cooperating with the International Criminal Court.
- Agree to respect and expand current safety zones for children in which access to health care and emergency aid are possible, or to establish them where they do not currently exist.
- Ensure safe and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and guarantee the protection of humanitarian personnel.
- Commit to international standards on the protection of children's rights and develop a public reporting mechanism on the measures adopted.

Corporate actors

- Individual companies or industrial sectors should develop corporate responsibility or "best practices" codes of conduct with a view to protecting children's rights in conflict situations. Emphasis should be placed on regulating trade in armaments and natural resources, ensuring equitable labour standards, and addressing other issues as defined by the UN Secretary General's *Global Compact on Business*. Corporate actors should commit to using these codes as guidelines for industry oversight and monitoring.
- Comply fully with national and international legislative measures which prevent corporations from engaging in commercial activities with parties to armed conflict who violate international standards for protecting children's rights. Private sector firms which directly or indirectly benefit from activities which harm children should be prosecuted.
- Encourage increased transparency in company's holdings, business dealings, and human rights records to ensure that none of their practices violate children's rights in conflict situations.
- Participate in collaborative meetings with governments to develop effective strategies and investment plans to support war-affected children.

- Provide resources for programs to assist children affected by armed conflict.

United Nations Security Council

- Request the Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (in consultation with relevant NGOs and organizations) compile a watch list of countries where there is a pattern of violations against children, and receive regular reports on the condition of children in these countries. Where serious violations of children's rights have been identified, the Security Council should send missions to the countries concerned.
- Include in all relevant country situation reports submitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General an update on the situation of the protection of children's rights.
- Establish a quick and efficient process for receiving reports on child rights abuses from UN agencies, NGOs, and other relevant sources to remedy potentially explosive situations before they escalate into armed conflict. This process should be strengthened as a key measure in conflict prevention.
- Sanctions must be selectively and thoughtfully targeted to avoid damaging vulnerable populations, especially women and children. No sanctions regime should be implemented unless the Security Council is persuaded by a rigorous assessment that such a regime will not have a negative impact on children. Sanctions assessment and monitoring mechanisms should include channels for the submission of evidence from youth and NGOs working in affected communities.
- The Security Council should continue to address the economic agendas of the various actors in conflict situations with a view to restricting those economic activities which prolong conflict and the suffering of children.
- The Office of the High Commission for Human Rights should be invited to regularly participate in Security Council meetings and submit country and thematic reports on the situation of children's rights.
- The Security Council should empower peacekeepers to use all necessary force to protect children and ensure their security.

United Nations/Regional organizations

- The UN and other regional organizations should urge member states and non-state entities to make the signing and ratification of all conventions relevant to children in armed conflict (especially the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its *Optional Protocol*) a central priority before and during the UN Special Session on Children in 2001.
- Develop a mechanism for non-state entities to unilaterally declare their respect for international standards and their willingness to comply with existing conventions, including time-bound commitments. Create an international registry of these commitments and an independent monitoring and public reporting system to keep track of compliance.
- Establish a high-level panel of internationally respected individuals to conduct verification missions to ensure commitment compliance by non-state entities with respect to children's rights, including commitments made to the SRSO.
- Define and develop a new doctrine of humanitarian peacekeeping which prioritizes human security. This includes multidisciplinary and joint approaches by political, humanitarian, and military actors. Mobilize the political will to ensure its appropriate use.
- Continue to implement the policy of 18 years old as the minimum age for participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and continue to encourage member states to use this policy as an example for police and military forces worldwide.
- Establish a multisectoral task force to conduct gender audits of all peacekeeping missions.
- Ensure that child protection functions and training are systematically integrated into all peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding operations so as to better respond to the complexity of modern conflict situations. These components should be adequately resourced and staffed to handle child rights and gender-based violations. The UN should deploy child rights monitors and child protection advisors before, during, and after conflicts and strengthen mechanisms to ensure that their reports are followed up on.
- Increase training activities on children's rights and gender for both military and non- military personnel. Include these training programs in the curricula of national, regional, and international peacekeeping training centres. Peacekeeping and military personnel should ensure that the situation of children in armed conflict is constantly monitored, and that their

rights are respected and the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* is implemented.

- UN agencies and NGOs to give high priority to education and peacebuilding in their consolidated appeals for war-affected countries.
- Expand, reinforce, and actively promote the Secretary-General's *Global Compact on Business* initiative, by working with companies to develop specific guidelines for doing business in countries in conflict.
- Urge member states to take concrete steps to investigate, prosecute, and sanction individuals and corporate enterprises involved in the illegal trafficking of currency, arms, natural resources, or other elements which exacerbate armed conflict and the abuse and brutalization of children.
- Regional organizations should establish child protection units within their secretariats to devise policies and programs to ensure the protection of children during conflict in their regions.
- Youth participation at the UN Special Session for the World Summit for Children should be a priority for the agenda. In addition, there should be support for youth to come together through ongoing consultation mechanisms.
- SRSR/CAC should participate actively in the process leading up to the UN Special Session on Children in 2001 to ensure that war-affected children are on its agenda in a meaningful way.
- Strengthen the capacity of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to investigate and monitor the situation of children in conflict areas in addition to its regular five-year reporting cycle.
- UN and regional groups to work together more closely towards prompt and appropriate responses, early intervention, and the deployment of the peacekeeping forces necessary to best protect children.
- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be strengthened to carry out the monitoring and reporting of child rights violations in all conflict areas, and should prepare a consolidated annual report on the situation of children's rights, extracted from Country and Thematic Reports and from relevant treaty bodies.
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child should develop additional guidelines on reporting and monitoring the implementation of the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*.

- Engage regional organizations to put a stop to human rights abuses by countries in their area, and encourage the more frequent use of regional mechanisms for enforcing accountability.
- UN agencies should present specific proposals to the UN Special Session in 2001 to strengthen co-ordination among them for the protection of children and the provision of assistance in conflict situations.
- UNAIDS should lead the development of a co-ordinated UN strategy on HIV/AIDS, children, and conflict.
- The Committee of Co-Sponsoring Organisations of UNAIDS should meet to discuss HIV, children, and conflict as a matter of urgency; the findings of the meeting should feed into the Special Session on Children 2001.
- The UN should carry out a major action-oriented review/study to identify the impact of small arms on children in time for the 2001 Special Session on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms.
- Ensure effective early-warning systems for conflict-prone situations that:
 - report on the threats to the security and rights of children;
 - track the price and availability of small arms;
 - pay specific attention to the situation of girls;
 - report on the scope and methods of the recruitment of children;
 - report on other factors which target youth.

Civil society/NGOs

- Establish an international NGO network on war-affected children to enhance communication and collaboration between individual NGOs and existing networks, create task forces to work on specific country situations, and build an international database to help monitor child rights in situations of armed conflict.
- Actively monitor and report on violations of children's rights in conflict areas, bringing information to the attention of key political actors. Work to build an international monitoring

system that links local child protection networks with international monitoring and advocacy organizations.

- Media organizations and NGOs to bring to the public's attention the culpability of perpetrators of children's rights and those who aid and abet them, politically, economically, or militarily.
- Continue to lobby for the ratification of all international and regional instruments relevant to the protection of children in conflict, especially the OP/CRC, the Ottawa Convention on land mines, the Rome Statute of the ICC and for the handing over of suspected children's rights violators to existing international tribunals.
- Incorporate the active participation of children and youth into the planning and implementation of pre- and post-conflict programs to ensure that such programs effectively meet the actual needs of young people.
- Advocate against amnesties being granted to those guilty of egregious violations of children's rights.
- NGOs should urge shareholders of companies that violate codes of conduct to put pressure on their boards to change their corporate behaviour.
- Begin the disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation of children while conflict is ongoing.
- Focus programs to support war-affected children on their resilience, positive functioning, and well-being. Healing and helping children should be done with the children themselves, their families, schools, communities, and teachers.
- Implement training programs to increase the capacity of local NGOs to monitor and report on child rights violations in conflict-affected and conflict-prone countries.
- Ensure that girls are accorded specialized attention before, during, and after conflict. This includes equal access to education, property rights, vocational training, and reproductive health services. Ensure that all humanitarian responses in conflict situations emphasize the special reproductive health needs of women and girls, and include systematic reporting on sexual violence. There must also be strengthened policy guidance on gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.

Youth

- Where possible, youth organizations will boycott and/or use pressure tactics against companies that make ammunition and arms.
- Youth to take the initiative to come together to share experiences, network, and support each other in their work in monitoring and advocating around issues related to war-affected children.
- Youth to come together through innovative means (e.g., soccer games between youth who would not normally have met due to propaganda and instilled hate).
- Use the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, including youth and child-friendly versions, to pressure their governments to account for their actions.
- Youth delegates to the International Conference on War-Affected Children commit to following up with their governments on commitments made at the Conference.
- Use new technologies such as the Internet to facilitate communication and build solidarity between young people in war-affected countries and countries at peace.
- Youth organizations should run awareness-raising programs with adults on the rights of children.
- Youth and youth-serving organizations should take into consideration the social and economic conditions which cause youth to participate in conflict. These organizations should focus on economic alternatives for young people.
- Youth need to work together with other actors to clarify what youth participation means.
- Youth participation is often token and real discussions need to be had on what it means to have meaningful participation.
- Youth monitoring teams should evaluate projects to ensure that recipient governments spend money appropriately.

Media

- Media and journalists should give children and youth access to electronic, print, radio, and television media to ensure that children are portrayed accurately.

- Media organizations to pressure/encourage governments to ratify conventions relevant to war-affected children, and to act as watchdog organizations to ensure compliance by mobilizing public opinion on these issues through “name and shame” campaigns.
- Media should establish their own guidelines to avoid the exploitation of war-affected children. Media should focus on the potential and abilities of war-affected children instead of portraying them simply as victims.
- Support the development, production, and diffusion of radio programs specifically aimed at war-affected children. Youth should be encouraged to play a significant role in the development of these programs.

Families, schools, and communities

- Teachers and other community leaders must be trained in children’s rights and on how to work with children in an empowering way. The value of youth participation should also be promoted among educators.
- Schools should disseminate the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (child-friendly versions) in every country to make children aware of their rights. A culture of rights and peace needs to be spread to all children.
- Communities need to be sensitized about demobilized child soldiers. Demobilized children are often afraid to return to their communities since everyone knows who was involved in the war.
- Seek a balance between local traditions and international standards, and work within communities to bridge the current gap between the two.

Researchers

- Establish a network integrating the efforts of individuals researchers, research institutions, NGOs, UN agencies, and other relevant institutions to better address these neglected areas and focus more research on:
 - local values and traditions that protect children;
 - analysis of the effectiveness (including cost-effectiveness) of what we are doing in conflict prevention;
 - adolescents;
 - genocidal rape and sexual abuse of children in situations of armed conflict;
 - abductions and disappearances of children;

- girl soldiers;
 - internally displaced children.
- Research needs to be more child-centred, addressing distinct areas of concern for children and encouraging the integration of children in the design, development, and implementation of research projects.
 - All relevant actors should gather and analyze data on children affected by armed conflict, disaggregating it by age, gender, and geography, with a focus on the special needs of adolescents and girls.

The Agenda for War-Affected Children

Adopted at the Ministerial-Level Meeting, September 17, 2000

Societies have a moral obligation to put their children first, in times of peace and especially in times of war. Each child has the right to support and protection without distinction.

Conflict has the potential to forever change a child's aspirations and capabilities by subjecting him or her to horrific physical, psychological, sexual, and societal violence. While children have widely differing needs, experiences, and challenges during and post-conflict, no child emerges unscarred and unaffected from situations where killings, indiscriminate bombings, recruitment, torture, rape, sexual exploitation, forced labour, abductions, sickness, and malnutrition are a constant threat, and where education and nurture rarely exist. The international community must address this issue decisively, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the *United Nations Charter*. There is no circumstance in which it is justifiable to deliberately target children in situations of armed conflict.

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and other powerful regional and international legal instruments, including the 1951 *Convention relating to the Status of Refugee and its 1967 Protocol* and the *Geneva Conventions of 1949* and the *Additional Protocols thereto of 1977* have been put in place to protect the rights and welfare of all war-affected children. Notable recent advances include the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*, the *Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography* and *ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour*.

What is needed now are concerted efforts to breathe life into the principles and obligations enshrined in these instruments through widespread ratification, effective implementation, and international cooperation. The results of this Conference should provide building blocks for concrete initiatives for consideration at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2001.

It is time for states, institutions, and individuals around the world to show leadership in word and in deed. The depth of our commitment *today* to immediate action with and on behalf of war-affected girls and boys will determine their *future* commitment to peace.

Our commitment to this Agenda at local, national, regional, and international levels is a commitment to children. Let us make this century a peaceful one, in which the rights of the child are respected, protected, and promoted everywhere.

1. **Call for leadership:** Safeguarding children and protecting their rights in situations of armed conflict requires political, moral, economic, and social leadership. It also demands the courage to shape a new consensus regarding the treatment of war-affected children. Leaders at all levels and in every sector of society—government, the private sector, civil society, international and regional organizations—must rise to the challenge to fulfill their responsibilities to protect children. Leadership must also be fostered directly within girls and boys, their families, and their communities to build their will and capacity to resolve and prevent conflict.
2. **Fulfill obligations:** All states and other parties to armed conflict must respect fully their obligations to children affected by conflict under international human rights and humanitarian law. States are invited to sign, ratify, and subsequently implement the *Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* and *Sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*, and to consider or reconsider becoming parties to conventions and agreements related to the protection of children in armed conflict. Armed groups must also respect the child protection standards within international law regarding the rights and protection of children in armed conflict.
3. **Increase accountability and end impunity:** States should implement their international obligations to end impunity and to hold accountable perpetrators of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. States should ensure that effective accountability mechanisms are in place at the national, regional, and international level. In particular, we recognize the historical significance of the establishment of the International Criminal Court to ending impunity for perpetrators of certain crimes committed against children, as defined in the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court* (art. 8), *inter alia* those involving sexual violence or child soldiers, and thus to the prevention of such crimes, and we encourage states to consider signing and ratifying the Rome Statute.

The international community, through the media and other appropriate mechanisms, must mobilize international opinion and action against the abuses of children's rights during armed conflicts, and, bearing in mind states' primary responsibility, must ensure that those who violate children's rights in situations of armed conflict, or collude in such violations, are identified and brought to justice for their actions. An environment of accountability also demands a commitment to the monitoring, reporting, and prosecution of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children.

4. **End targeting of children:** The international community condemns the killing, maiming, torture, rape, sexual exploitation, abduction, forced labour, and other violations of the rights of the child in pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict situations, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of girls. We also condemn the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law, attacks on protected places that usually have a significant presence of children, such as schools, hospitals, and homes, and the military use of these places. We must strengthen efforts to end all these practices. All peacekeeping missions should receive child-sensitive training and include child protection advisors or units to safeguard the rights of children. Whenever sanctions are imposed in the context of armed conflict, their impact on children should be assessed and monitored and, to the extent that there are humanitarian exemptions, they should be child-focused and formulated with clear guidelines for their application.
5. **Release abducted children:** States, international and regional organizations, NGOs, community leaders, the private sector, families, and youth must pressure parties to armed conflict, and those who fund and support them, to unconditionally release all abducted children into safe custody. We demand and are committed to ensuring that these girls and boys are returned, rehabilitated, (re)integrated, and reunited with their families. We demand that those abducted children who have been involved in armed conflicts are also disarmed and demobilized.
6. **Strengthen humanitarian assistance and guarantee access:** Full, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance in conformity with international humanitarian law to all children affected by armed conflict in all regions must be ensured regardless of sex, race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or political affiliation. Such humanitarian assistance must include the provision of basic social services, in particular, food, nutrition, health and education, during and post-conflict.
7. **Focus on prevention:** States, international and regional organizations, NGOs, community leaders, the private sector, families, and youth must address, in concrete terms, the root causes of conflict, including inequity, poverty, racism, ineffective governance and impunity, which lead to the denial of children's economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights. We commit to practical and comprehensive conflict prevention measures, including conflict

prevention initiatives, mediation, child protection networks, early warning and response systems, alternatives for adolescents at risk, and the promotion of conflict resolution skills and education.

8. **Suffocate the supply of arms:** States commit to addressing the impact of small arms and light weapons on war-affected children. We recognize that the illicit trade in natural resources and illegal drugs, and the illicit production and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, have devastating effects on children. States and the private sector must also ensure that funds and facilities are not used by armed groups which target children for participation in armed conflict.
9. **Promote health and well-being:** Initiatives designed to help war-affected children must be developed to address all the needs of the child—mind, body, and spirit. These initiatives must take into account the widely differing needs, experiences, and challenges faced by girls and boys, adolescents and younger children, refugee and internally displaced children, child soldiers and orphans, children from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, and children with disabilities. All children, particularly girls, must be protected from rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict. The international community must work with families, local communities, governments, civil society, including NGOs, and relevant international organizations to improve access to basic health and psychosocial rehabilitative services for girls and boys during and post-conflict. Health risks to children must also be reduced and eliminated, including malnutrition and preventable diseases.
10. **Protect children from HIV/AIDS:** The international community must pay particular attention to the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on war-affected children and intensify efforts against its spread, including awareness and training.
11. **Educate and equip for peace:** States, international and regional organizations, NGOs, and community leaders must ensure that access to education is rapidly restored, supported, and strengthened during and post-conflict. Specific educational initiatives should be taken in order to empower young people to relate peaceably with one another and end violence in families and communities. Additional opportunities, such as vocational training and recreation, should also be supported to promote children's healing and well-being.

The provisions of human rights and humanitarian law protecting children must be made widely known, in particular, through training programs for military personnel, humanitarian aid workers, peacekeepers, and young people.

12. **Concerted action over the long term:** The physical and psychological effects of war can debilitate the growing minds and bodies of children for many years. The international

community, especially states, must coordinate long-term efforts, for war-affected girls and boys, their families and their communities, to ensure their support and protection during and post-conflict. In particular, the international community should actively support endeavours to address the devastating impact of land mines on children, through de-mining, rehabilitation of mine-affected children and land-mine awareness programs. Development cooperation must be sustained, consistent, and effective to support children's long-term needs for rehabilitation and (re)integration.

13. **Engage youth:** War-affected children, particularly adolescents, should be involved in peace processes and in developing policy and programming for their own rehabilitation, (re)integration, and education, as well as in the development of their communities. We must also support the creation of networks between these war-affected children and other concerned youth.
14. **Promote better research to inform our action:** We commit to improving the quality of our research, monitoring, and evaluation, giving greater emphasis to data disaggregated based on sex, age, ethnicity, and region, and to disseminating the results of this work more widely.

Annex

This Agenda for Action draws on many subregional, regional, and international principles, obligations, resolutions, and other related documents which have bearing on children and their families. They include the following:

- Charter of the United Nations (1945)
- Geneva Conventions (1949)
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)
- Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969)
- Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions (1977)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)
- General Assembly Resolution 46/182 on Humanitarian Assistance (1991)
- Organization of African Unity Resolution on the Plight of African Children in Situations of Armed Conflicts (1996)
- Graça Machel Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996)
- Capetown Principles and Best Practices (1997)
- Red Cross/Red Crescent Plan of Action Concerning Children in Armed Conflict (1997)

- Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (1997)
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998)
- European Parliament Resolution B4-1078 on Child Soldiers (1998)
- General Assembly Resolution 53/25 on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2000-2010) (1998)
- Security Council Resolution 1261 on Children and Armed Conflict (1999)
- Security Council Resolution 1265 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (1999)
- ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)
- Maputo Declaration on the Use of Children as Soldiers (1999)
- Montevideo Declaration on the Use of Children as Soldiers (1999)
- Berlin Declaration on the Use of Children as Soldiers (1999)
- OSCE Istanbul Summit Declaration (1999)
- OSCE Charter for European Security (1999)
- Declaration by Nordic Foreign Ministers Against the Use of Child Soldiers (1999)
- Final Communique of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (1999)
- Moncton Declaration and Action Plan from the 8th Francophonie Summit (1999)
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts (2000)
- Security Council Resolution 1296 on the Protection of Civilians (2000)
- Accra Declaration on War-Affected Children (2000)
- Report on the OSCE Human Dimension Seminar on Children and Armed Conflict (2000)
- OAS Resolution on Children and Armed Conflicts (2000)
- Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Gender Mainstreaming in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (2000)
- Security Council Resolution 1296 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (2000)
- Security Council Resolution 1314 on Children and Armed Conflict (2000)

Appendix 3:

Full set of recommendations from the conference

Youth Meeting

Priority areas and recommendations from the Youth Meeting and statement

- Education during and following conflict: There was a special emphasis placed on the conflict prevention aspects of education and the need for education on children's rights.
- Peacebuilding and long-term assistance: The focus was on empowerment for local communities to rebuild and to work together, the role of youth in decision-making in their societies, and long-term support to fight poverty and prevent conflict.
- Refugees and internally displaced children: Their rights to safe refuge, to essential basic needs and to return home were emphasized: Young people also wanted to be involved in running refugee camps and noted the need for proper documentation and support to reintegrate and rebuild after returning home.
- Arms trade: The youth were concerned by the trade of arms worldwide, and by those who sell arms to countries and others who abuse human rights. They suggested a monitoring mechanism as well as one to recover and destroy weapons and land mines.
- Violations of children's rights: During war, children's rights are abused in many ways. The youth insisted on rights education as well as counselling and protection.

Experts' Meeting

Geographic case studies

Case study: Northern Uganda

Stavros Stavrou, Institute of Strategic Studies, and Akech Okullu Betty, Gulu Support the Child Organization (GUSCO)

Discussion-group recommendations

- It should be made clear that “abduction” is a sanitized term for what is really done to the children targeted by the LRA. If it were to be defined as the atrocity it really is (including forced murder of family, rape, and humiliation), it would be more easily accepted as an international war crime. It is time for political will to be brought to bear against the LRA.
- Donor agencies should forcibly apply pressure on governments to stop the conflict, or at least the recruitment of child soldiers.
- Those who commit war crimes should be held responsible for their actions and punished severely.
- It is necessary to learn from other initiatives that have had success (i.e., the campaign to ban land mines).
- The liberation of child soldiers should be de-linked from the rest of the situation and the political conditions. There should be no conditionality on the release of the abductees.
- It must be realized that the liberation of the children currently in captivity is not enough and is not sustainable, that the root causes of the war must also be addressed.
- International governments should continue to apply pressure on the Ugandan and Sudanese governments, and a monitoring body should be put in place to make the governments accountable.
- A body called “Friends of Abducted Children” should be created to apply more pressure on the governments involved.
- Women should be made responsible for the negotiations around the release and rehabilitation of abducted children, as they are more sensitive to the situation.

Case study: Sierra Leone

Dennis Bright, Institut Régional de Coopération-Développement

Discussion-group recommendations

- Youth should be integrated fully into society so that they can actively participate in peacebuilding and healing.
- Democratization should be strengthened and good governance should be promoted. This includes the preventative measure of providing support for African countries that are not yet destabilized by conflict.
- The criminalization of all crimes against children's rights must be emphasized. This includes any crimes committed by governments, rebel forces, individuals, and groups from neighbouring countries that are accomplices to the crimes.
- The media should be sensitized through training to all aspects of the conflict. Youth should also be given access to the media (and therefore to a voice) in order to share their experiences and ideas with a wider audience.
- There is a need to stop the making and selling of arms to conflict areas. Countries or people involved with this type of activity must be prosecuted.
- The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) must take control of the diamond industry in Sierra Leone in order to cut off financial motivation behind the war.
- Efforts must be concentrated at the local level. This means that community, family, and civil society must be key actors in the rehabilitation of war-affected children.
- Local culture should be emphasized and recognized when creating programs and projects to help war-affected children. This includes an emphasis on increased research on local situations and the use of local NGOs whenever possible, since they have better knowledge of local problems and issues.
- The categorization of children should be avoided (i.e., separating the needs of child soldiers from other victims/survivors). The focus should be on a holistic response to helping all war-affected children. A holistic response includes the psychosocial, emotional, and physical approaches that must occur over the long term. This requires a long-term commitment from donors, since real rehabilitation can only occur over time (without which the cycle of violence will only reoccur).
- The private sector (e.g., large corporations) must be held accountable for their dealings with governments or groups that commit children's rights abuses. These corporations must be prosecuted.
- Capacity-building must become a priority for all involved (youth, soldiers, teachers, families, communities, and so on). In particular, capacity-building and education are essential in equipping youth for the future.
- A voice must be given to youth, through the support of youth networks (financial and other support) or by bringing different youth groups together from around the world to help them share ideas.
- A clear position is needed on juvenile justice. The youth who have committed crimes can be tried for their crimes and then proper forms of rehabilitation can be implemented to these individuals so that communities can feel that justice has been served.

- Former child combatants should be used as key advocates for the prevention of the continued recruitment of child soldiers.
- Governments must place priority on youth issues. They can no longer put youth issues at the bottom of the agenda, but rather youth should be considered in all decisions.
- It is essential that a network or partnership of governments (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea), NGOs, and private organizations be created to work together on these issues.
- There must be some type of post-Winnipeg follow-up in which a mechanism is established to ensure that these recommendations are followed up.

Case study: Colombia

Ann Hall, Colombia Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Discussion-group recommendations

- Programs to address the issue of displaced persons should be integrated in Plan Colombia (municipal infrastructure and assistance programs, and educational and socio- psychological support programs that respect the victim's particular culture should be improved).
- Programs to create alternative economic activities should be developed to reduce urbanization.
- Programs for education and psychosocial rehabilitation should be emphasized; these programs should be sensitive to cultural differences.
- Children's issues should be integrated into peace negotiations.
- More funds should be allocated to conduct investigations into violations of children's rights and to disseminate the results.
- Greater use should be made of the existing legal mechanisms in Latin America to hold states accountable for children's rights violations.
- The coordination of international efforts and monitoring of their progress should be improved.
- The early warning system should be reinforced to prevent human rights violations, including the recruitment of young people into the armed forces.
- Government commitment is critical to achieving the respect for children's rights. Governments must integrate strategies and concrete recommendations related to war-affected children into their policies.

Case study: Sri Lanka

Kenneth Bush, Dalhousie University

Discussion-group recommendations

- The Sri Lanka example should be used for foresight in terms of what can be done in advance to prevent similar situations from flaring up in the region.
- Children need access to the media.
- Knowledge of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) in conflict situations needs to be increased. There should be discussion of children's rights within the conflict area.
- Investment in good quality education is crucial. Education ties into recruitment prevention. Schools must be seen as zones of peace and not places for recruitment.
- Educational curriculums need to reflect the culture and values of the children attending the schools. Children should have input into curriculum development. They need to be able to tell adults what they need to learn.
- There should be some form of counselling support in the schools for when troubles arise, as well as monitoring at the community level to discern what the children are subjected to.
- The push-pull factors of conscription should be studied to prevent it more effectively.
- The children's rights movement needs to look to other organizations with a broader experience. More awareness is needed in terms of the way interventions affect the dynamics of peace or conflict on the ground. For example, some type of tool is needed to measure the impact on children specifically.
- The community must be supported to express itself and set its own agenda.
- Compartmentalization should be avoided in programming. This includes both geographic compartmentalization (i.e., programming undertaken only in the northeast) and programmatic compartmentalization (i.e., programming undertaken in one sector only).
- Donors have a role to play in the field. Beyond the writing of funding proposals, donors need to be involved in the field.
- There is a need for more and better evaluation of projects.
- When commitments are made and standards are set, there has to be a mechanism of accountability and follow-up. Consistency in the monitoring process would be a step forward.
- People should be encouraged to get governments to ratify the International Criminal Court (ICC) statute so that the court can act against some of these atrocities. There is a need to make sure that children are recognized as victims and to seek reparation and rehabilitation for crimes committed against them.
- Some type of ombudsman function should be established. There is a need for a focal point for countries in conflict to follow up violations and to promote children's rights in those countries.

Case study: Kosovo

Amir Haxhikadrija, Kosova Youth Council

Discussion-group recommendations

- There is a need for a peace conference organized by and for Balkan youth.
- Neutral youth projects need support from donors, and should be seen as a legitimate peacebuilding activity.
- It is critically important to guarantee safety during peace discussions or negotiations, particularly for youth.
- Young people should be supported in finding lasting solutions to long-term conflicts.
- There is a need to stop responding to crisis and manage conflicts better, so that protection and support for children can be prioritized before conflict breaks out (i.e., conflict prevention).
- Donors need to recognize that their desire for quick results is often incompatible with the fact that real change requires a substantial length of time. There is a need for bridging programs for immediate needs because children need to survive and grow right now, rather than wait for the impact of future interventions to be felt.

Case study: Middle East

Randa Farah, Oxford University

Discussion-group recommendations

- The peace process and the inclusion of youth around the table should be promoted and supported.
- Education, and particularly peace education, should be restored and supported.
- A rights-based approach should be pursued and gender should be considered in all strategies and recommendations.
- Networks and solidarity among youth should be promoted to help them know that they are not alone in the struggle, and to promote a sense of security and confidence.
- Export companies and governments should be lobbied to end the running of small arms to countries in conflict, thereby having an impact on children.
- The UN should find a way to ensure that countries adhere to all agreements that they have ratified. Palestinians need to feel confident that their rights will be respected.
- The UN Security Council should respect all international covenants.
- Children, local practitioners, policy-makers, and funders should be involved in all stages of discussions.
- It is important to know the history and culture of the community, as it affects the understanding of present conditions.
- Youth should be allowed space and structure to voice opinions and aspirations at all levels.

- Dissemination, follow-up, and evaluation should be incorporated into the intervention plan.
- The relationship should be reversed so that local priorities set the agenda for international organizations and donors.
- It is important to allow for and value qualitative, comparative, and participatory research involving children and youth on issues affecting them.
- It is necessary to pay attention to classifications given to refugee communities to avoid schisms.
- It is important to ensure that the return to normalcy does not encourage oppressive structures within the community.
- All communities experiencing conflict should be treated equally.

Thematic workshops

Thematic Workshop 1 – The participation of youth in peacebuilding

Recommendations

Youth and youth-serving organizations

- A world organization of youth should be created to exert pressure for the implementation of commitments made by national governments.
- Youth organizations will boycott and/or use pressure tactics against companies that make ammunition and arms.
- Space must be created for youth organizations and emerging youth organizations to meet, share experiences, network, and support each other in their work.
- Alternative means can be used to bring youth together (e.g., soccer games between youth who would not normally have met, due to propaganda and instilled hate).
- Youth organizations will use the CRC including youth- and child-friendly versions to pressure their governments to account for their actions.
- Youth delegates to the Winnipeg conference commit to follow up with their governments.
- In countries that receive refugees and immigrants from war-torn countries, mentoring programs between local youth and child newcomers should be implemented.
- Youth organizations should run awareness-raising programs with adults on the rights of children.
- Youth organizations should work in partnership with adults so that they can use channels and processes to which adults have access.
- Adults can also be mentors to children and youth and can teach youth many important things.
- The idea of children as protection monitors should be explored.
- More youth should be involved in youth-serving organizations that have an adult staff.
- Youth and youth-serving organizations should take into consideration the social and economic conditions causing youth to participate in conflict. These organizations should focus on economic alternatives for youth.

- Organizations that claim to be involved in youth participation must be transparent and accountable.

National governments

- National governments must be accountable for their actions. They must turn words into action.
- It is important that national governments and other adults listen to children and value their ideas. Even though they are young, children can impart many lessons.
- Where such a position does not exist, national governments should create a position for a children's ombudsman or commissioner so that children and youth have access to the governmental structure.
- National governments that do not have the means to support youth organizations should at least allow youth participation and voice.

Donor organizations

- Donor organizations need to know about youth's real needs. Participatory research by and with children should be done to establish needs and collect data.
- Donor programs and projects need to be monitored for unintentional discrimination against marginalized populations.
- Donor coordination is crucial to ensure appropriate programming.
- Donors should use methods of poverty programming to identify priority needs among the intended recipients. Youth participation is instrumental in the shaping and implementation of projects.
- Youth monitoring teams should evaluate projects to ensure that recipient governments spend money appropriately.
- Projects with children affected by armed conflict must be sustainable to ensure that they do not fold as soon as project funding stops.

The United Nations and UN processes

- Youth participation at the UN Special Session on Children is a priority for the agenda.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, should be involved in the process leading up to the UN Special Session.
- International organizations, such as UNICEF, should take measures to protect children and youth and to protect their right to participate.
- Individuals responsible for violating children's rights should be brought to justice in an international forum.

The processes of child and youth participation

- A clarification and consensus of what youth participation means is needed (possibly through a conference). Youth participation is often token; therefore real discussion is needed regarding the true sense of meaningful participation.
- There is a need to identify marginalized children and youth and devise methods to ensure their participation. (Examples of broad child participation include the children's elections in Mexico and UNICEF's Voices of Children poll in Latin America and the Caribbean.)
- Children and youth need to have access to the media and journalists (possibly through the International Federation of Journalists) to make sure that accurate portrayals of children are presented in the media.

Rehabilitation, healing, and education of children and youth affected by armed conflict

- Education for Peace should start at a young age (i.e., nursery school and kindergarten). Teachers and other community leaders must be trained in children's rights and on working with children in an empowering way. The values of youth participation should also be promoted among educators.
- The CRC must be disseminated (through child-friendly versions) to schools and throughout all countries, as children are usually not aware that they have any rights. A culture of rights and peace needs to be spread to all children.
- More rehabilitation centres for youth and children, both victims and agents of violence, are needed. Financing for psychosocial rehabilitation must be committed for these centres.
- To ensure sustainability, rehabilitation centres should be located within schools and other educational institutions.
- Education of refugee and displaced children should be culturally sensitive and in their own language. It is important to allow children and youth to maintain their identity.
- There is a need for education for demobilized child soldiers as well as their communities. Demobilized children are often afraid to return to their communities, since everyone knows who was involved in the armed conflict.

Thematic Workshop 2 – Using international humanitarian law and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as tools for prevention and protection

Recommendations

- Any declaration from this conference should have a strong rights framework, such as the CRC.
- Governments, the UN, and NGOs need to flesh out and build on the CRC to deepen its applicability and precision, particularly with regard to prevention.

- The roles of IGOs and INGOs should be clarified to address the tensions that exist between monitoring and compliance and service delivery, with the option to clearly separate the roles.
- All countries ratify the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts* and make 18 years the minimum age for voluntary recruitment, conscription, and deployment.
- The universal implementation of birth registration should be encouraged through devolution, the incorporation of primary health care, and the acceptance of sworn affidavits in the absence of legal documents.
- National governments should implement a national law that reflects the spirit of or is consistent with the CRC. States that ratify the CRC should incorporate it into domestic and municipal law within a set time frame.
- All states are encouraged to accede to the CRC.
- Children and youth should be involved to make the CRC relevant to their own circumstances.
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, and other UN bodies should be tasked with the translation (into local languages) and dissemination of the CRC, Optional Protocol, and so on.
- Children's rights to privacy should be respected in connection with the identification of child soldiers in the media.
- Juvenile justice legislation should be reformed to criminalize the publication in the media of information that may not be in the child's best interest.
- Training should be provided to assist officers, judicial system magistrates, youth workers, and so on in working with the legal instruments, as well as with their application and monitoring.
- Domestic institutions should be established and provided with the resources to research, implement, and monitor, as well as educate populations on ratified legal instruments.
- A mechanism should be found for non-state actors to unilaterally declare respect for international standards.
- It is important to strengthen the role of the family in the child's education, development, and protection. ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999) should be used to pursue and enforce the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.
- There is a need to find a balance between local traditions and international standards, and a need to work with communities to bridge current gaps between the two.
- Existing regional legal mechanisms must be reinforced to effectively support and enforce the legal instruments (i.e., the CRC); the example of the Inter-American Court on the Rights of the Child could be followed.
- In conflict situations, immediate steps must be taken (by regional organizations and the UN) to penalize those who violate the rights of children, in order to prevent sending the "wrong

- message” to parties in conflict, and to prevent further atrocities from being committed.
- In terms of compliance, there is a need to strengthen the Committee on the Rights of the Child, investigate in emergencies, undertake special missions, use the media, add individual complaint mechanisms, increase resources, initiate interim reports with follow-up as an alternative to five-year reporting (which has been found to be too long), and conduct on-site investigations.

Thematic Workshop 3 – Local and global accountability for war-affected children

Recommendations

- Crimes against children must be seen as international crimes. In particular, the recruitment of children must be criminalized, specifically forcible recruitment (i.e., abduction).
- National governments can and should go further in applying laws and enforcement than what the ICC has in place. For example, corporations should be held accountable by the ICC in the same way as individuals are.
- Technical expertise should be provided to states to help them implement the Rome statute into domestic legislation and ensure enforcement.
- It should be ensured that violations against children are included in other ad hoc tribunals (beyond the ICC).
- Crimes against children should be exempt from all amnesty agreements.
- Emphasis should be placed on “forgive” but not on “forget.” It is essential to acknowledge what has happened. In other words, an emphasis on truth and reconciliation is essential. A clear distinction should be made between punishment and justice, since justice is linked with and can lead to reconciliation.
- In order to deter children’s rights abusers, it may be useful to stigmatize them individually through the use of travel restrictions, bans, restrictions to foreign bank accounts, blacklists of children’s rights abusers, and so forth. This is less harmful than blanket sanctions which often are most harmful to the poor.
- Media has to have an ethical responsibility in their coverage of activities that affect children. More specifically, they should be responsible for what they report, how they report, and what they do not report.
- There is a need to make the justice process as local and as culturally sensitive as possible. This would help with issues such as healing and reconciliation.
- As follow-up to commitments made to the Special Representative of the Secretary- General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG/CAC), a verification panel of some kind for commitments that have been made to the Special Representative needs to be established in

order to ensure that rebel groups and governments are living up to their agreed/promised commitments.

- A clearer cycle of reporting and accountability is needed, such as an outside mechanism of reporting comparable to what Amnesty International and Transparency International are doing, which would occur on an annual basis. NGOs must have the ability to comment and critique on these reports. Moreover, an emphasis on youth participation in this reporting must be made.
- There is a need to use precise language when discussing crimes committed against children. This language should include clear distinctions of the different types of war-affected children. However, this does not preclude the need for a holistic approach (i.e., not separating them into categories) in helping children affected by war.
- Corporate actors and the private sector need to be responsible for their actions, in areas such as diamonds, arms, drugs, oil, and gas. There is a need to establish codes of conduct among corporations which are promoted by consumer actions as a way to hold people accountable. These codes of conduct should have a clear link to war-affected children.

Thematic Workshop 4 – Protection for children in the midst of conflict

Recommendations

Donor awareness

- Organizations need to develop flexible responses to both emergency and development needs.
- There is a need to sensitize donors and engage them in dialogue on children's needs, child protection, and children's rights.
- Donors must be more involved in consultations on children's needs and in appropriate stages of the peace process.
- Donors should consider working with international organizations and NGOs to create a reliable and predictable rapid response capability for children's issues. They should draw on regional talent through regional rosters and talent pools.
- Donors should commit to sustainable interventions.
- Greater knowledge of policies and practices regarding conventions pertaining to children is needed.

Displaced children

- Senior women of the household should be consulted because they often know more about the needs of the children.
- Timeliness of interventions is crucial. Governments need to take responsibility faster, and to better coordinate their efforts.

- Children should remain with their families as much as possible and, above all, their safety should be kept in mind. Action must be undertaken quickly (regarding displacement) and, if the children are separated from their families, the search process should be started immediately to locate their parents.
- Basic education is critical in camps (especially for adolescents) for children to acquire skills and knowledge of their rights as refugees.
- There is a need for a structure to organize people so they can regain a sense of their culture and their community.
- Reasonable facilities/resources within the camps (water, wood, and so on) are necessary so that women and children need not travel long distances for these resources, thereby endangering their safety.
- A means of tracing families (involving appropriate technology) should be made more available to long-time displaced people.

Rehabilitation and reintegration

- Educational support must be provided to areas where the children are relocated (for them to acquire skills through vocational training).
- Children should be involved in peacebuilding in their communities.
- Alternative care and support should be provided, and children should not be institutionalized for extended periods.
- Cultural practices (rituals) associated with the re-acceptance of children back into their communities must be considered. However, it is critical to ensure that even though appropriate, these practices do not harm children.

Helping the helpers

- Support is needed from the outside but not so that it displaces the local capacity and creates a vacuum once the outsiders leave.
- Programs should be community-based.
- There is a need for an emergency approach to ensure that partners and families take responsibility for caring for children.
- Interventions must be provided to all areas to ensure that supplies, services, or other humanitarian assistance reach the needy.
- Governments should reprioritize their spending more on education and health, and less on the military.
- Support to local actors should be more timely.

Security

- A re-examination of the whole concept of peacekeeping is needed, and a new doctrinal base for multidisciplinary solutions needs to be created. More dialogue between the groups (humanitarian, military, and political) is also necessary.
- Flexibility is needed because of the changing nature of war and conflict itself; the old solutions are obsolete.

- Camps may be the only solution, but must remain a temporary one. They should not be located outside the country in conflict and must be at least 50 km from international borders.
- Disarmament and demobilization must be started during the conflict. Perpetrators must also be segregated.
- Safe areas and villages must be made secure in the true sense (humanitarian assistance workers have to address this issue with the peacekeepers).
- Constant reassessment of risk is needed, as the nature of the conflict changes.
- The notions of “crime against humanity” and “rescue operations” must be redefined (they are obsolete in their operational and organizational structure).
- The security of aid workers requires formal security assessments.
- The prospect of NGOs withdrawing from the camps must be discussed with the refugees themselves, in order to create a security response plan.
- The interventions should be tailored to the needs of the children.
- Caution should be exercised when truces are used. They can be a double-edged sword—they can be helpful in some situations, but in others they can facilitate ethnic cleansing. Cease-fires are usually negative, i.e., they are excuses for rearming and so on and they do not provide security at all.

Thematic Workshop 5 – Effective peacebuilding strategies

Recommendations

Education in conflict

- Agencies need to foresee the worst-case scenarios coming and prepare contingency plans to ensure the continuation of education when the crisis hits. For example, complete sets of the national school and teacher training curriculums should be collected and safely stored so that they can be used for rebuilding the educational system in conflict and post-conflict phases. The nature of education prior to the crisis should be examined. The curriculum from that era can provide a basis for the new curriculums, but must also be modified to reflect the new reality (i.e., previous hate messages that fostered the crisis should be removed, and efforts should be made to ensure that curriculums reflect the history, especially if the situation is a protracted emergency). Post-conflict curriculums should value diversity and tolerance.
- Education kits that can be deployed quickly should be prepared and pre-positioned.
- In an emergency or immediate post-conflict situation, the government’s tax base may not be sufficient to pay salaries, and donors cannot fulfil this function over the long term. There is a need to examine other mechanisms, for instance from the parents and communities

themselves. The donor community should commit to funding the education system for the 36 months following a conflict.

- Education should be funded with the same sense of urgency as “life saving” emergency assistance. This requires a commitment to sustained and long-term investment in conflict/immediate post-conflict emergencies.
- Coordination between donor agencies (e.g., UNICEF, UNHCR, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – OCHA) on the issue of education in time of conflict. This should be done via the creation of coordination groups at all levels.
- A system should be developed to generate valid data on education in pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict situations.

Strategies for preventing and mitigating conflict

- Conflict prevention starts with the analysis of the factors within a society’s fabric that can tear it apart and that can bind it together. Work should be undertaken to emphasize the latter.
- Schools should be designated as zones of peace; there is a need to prevent attacks on and the invasion of schools. Opportunities for “normalcy” and stability should be provided in a world that is otherwise sliding into chaos. Hostile community groups should be encouraged to unite to provide children with opportunities to learn.
- Ensuring the quality of education is key. In particular, for education to have a peace dividend, it must emphasize critical thinking and learning to ask questions. To achieve this, adequate training of teachers in the pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict era is essential, as are proper pay and salary conditions before and during the emergency.
- Emergency assistance must have a longer term view, as most conflicts last decades. This means that emergency assistance must move from an emergency response to a developmental/rehabilitation mode very quickly.

Peace-agreement negotiations

- The international community, donors, civil society organizations, and NGOs should pressure parties to armed conflict to include children’s issues in peace negotiations and agreements.
- Truth and reconciliation commissions should expose egregious violations of children’s rights in armed conflict, as well as the context in which these violations occurred.
- The UN should draft guidelines on how to craft child-conscious peace agreements for use by UN officials involved in peacemaking processes.
- Parties to conflict and others involved in peacemaking should ensure the active participation of women and children’s rights organizations in the peace process. Child protection advisors should support these efforts.

Peacekeeping operations

- Child protection should figure explicitly in the mandates of UN and regional peacekeeping/peacebuilding operations. Senior child protection advisors should be deployed in each of the missions to ensure implementation of the child protection aspect of the mandate.
- All peacekeeping troops should be adequately trained in children's rights and protection issues, both while in theatre and prior to deployment.
- Codes of conduct for peacekeepers that outline the parameters of the peacekeepers' interaction with the local population, especially children and women, should be elaborated and adopted by troop-contributing nations. A UN ombudsperson should be deployed in each mission to ensure international humanitarian law and the code of conduct are respected. Troop-contributing nations should commit to investigating and prosecuting violations attributed to their troops. The outcome should be made known to the international community and the local community in which the violations occurred.
- Issues pertaining to children should be included in the daily/weekly report of the mission to UN headquarters.

Child protection advisors

- National and local-level child protection advisors should be appointed to ensure that children's rights are a priority in local conflict resolution processes.
- National and local-level child protection advisors could also assume the task of monitoring the behaviour of their own country's troops and of monitoring the behaviour of peacekeeping troops that may be in their country of responsibility.
- A donor-led effort should be mounted (Canada/Norway could perhaps take the lead with UNICEF as implementing agency), in which three situations are selected and donors implement an early warning/peacebuilding experiment to see what can be done, discover successful elements, and draw lessons from it. In this initiative, a team of child protection advisors would be deployed, with a mandate to examine how children could be protected and how violence against them could be mitigated. Also, an interagency task force could be struck to look at ways of mitigating the impact of conflict. Media outreach campaigns could be undertaken to inform populations on the issues of child protection. This should be done within 12 months, with a turnaround reporting time of two to three years.
- Child protection advisors should oversee the demobilization and disarmament of child soldiers.

Accountability/impunity

- There should be no amnesty for those who target or commit crimes against children.
- Comprehensive sanctions harm children; there should be targeted sanctions only so that youth programs are not affected.

- A range of actors need to apply consistent pressure in a coordinated manner on those who abuse children's rights. They also need to monitor compliance with their own commitments.
- There should be no recognition of those who have targeted or committed crimes against children, if they then ascend to power.
- Perpetrators of crimes against children are not to be included or welcomed in international or regional bodies.
- The possibility of profit from targeting or committing crimes against children should be eliminated by promoting private sector codes, publicizing or pressuring private sector beneficiaries of violence against children, prosecuting private sector firms benefiting from activities that target or abet crimes against children.
- There must be consistency between development and foreign policy, and NGOs must denounce any inconsistencies in these policies.

Donor mechanisms

- The international community should fund primary education in the immediate post- conflict period and sustain it in the long term.
- Since aid monies are increasingly tied to national plans, it is imperative that the efforts in the post-conflict period go toward devising these plans.
- By next budget year, donors should end programmatic divides between humanitarian and development monies, perhaps by working with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) to reframe its coding of what governments can include under the category of "humanitarian assistance."
- Place priority on multi-year commitment to education in post-conflict situations.
- Within the next 12 months, UN agencies and NGOs should include education and peacebuilding in their consolidated appeals in war-affected countries.
- Local staff must be protected on the same level as international staff in cases of emergency, as local staff will be there for the longer term.

Thematic Workshop 6 – The challenge of conflict prevention

Recommendations

- Social and development impact assessments should be undertaken before the implementation of development aid so that there is not a worsening of the situation. The assessments should be done by a mixed group of people who know the culture.
- There is a need to have coordinated, appropriate interventions; foster ownership at the local level; build relationships and international cooperation, dialogue, and exchange; and encourage tolerance.

- It is important to remove biases encouraged by the education system. Youth economic and social development should be targeted to address inequities.
- Vertical coordination in the delivery of aid and conflict prevention should be increased.
- Debt should be forgiven for the poorest countries in order to free up money for socio-economic programming and conflict prevention.
- Corporate responsibility and accountability should be increased. It is necessary to encourage the adoption of codes of conduct that are not voluntary.
- It is important to encourage more research and education on hate/vengeance to gain a better understanding of the impact on a global scale.
- Youth should be included as agents of change.
- UN and regional groups should work together more closely to deliver prompt appropriate responses, early intervention, deployment of peacekeeping, and military initiatives. Emphasize the role of regional organizations, and ensure that they have appropriate resources to act.
- The issue of war-affected children should be placed on the agendas of regional bodies.
- The proliferation of small arms and light weapons must be reduced.
- There is a need for more systematic analyses of donor effectiveness (including cost-effectiveness) in the area of conflict prevention.

Thematic Workshop 7 – In the line of fire: The media and children in conflict (2 panels)

Recommendations

- Better relationships with local journalists should be fostered when international media go into the field.
- Journalists could take up the challenge of providing a country-by-country definition of the effect of conflict on children in each country.
- The focus should be on the potential of children affected by conflict as opposed to the trauma they experienced.
- More study should be encouraged in differentiating between the various types of media and their end purpose, roles, and responsibilities.
- Standards/guidelines should be developed for humanitarian agencies to deal with the media.
- The local media should be encouraged to go beyond the traditional role of reporting.
- Hate speech should never be tolerated.
- Journalists should be allowed to create their own guidelines for conduct, rather than having such guidelines imposed by those outside the journalism profession.
- Southern journalists should be protected so that they can do their job effectively.
- Journalist foundations could work in collaboration with humanitarian organizations.
- Information should be treated at the same level as food and shelter.

- The media should not divulge stories that endanger people's lives.
- Access to funding should be increased for independent film producers.

Thematic Workshop 8 – Research, reporting and follow-up to children's rights violations

Recommendations

Awareness

- The ability and capacity of local NGOs to monitor and report on violations of children's rights during armed conflict should be strengthened, including through the creation of greater awareness of the existing human rights mechanisms and by ensuring partnerships with international NGOs.

Research

- A network integrating efforts of individuals researchers, research institutions, relevant organizations, NGOs, and UN agencies should be formed to better address the areas of research that, until now, have been insufficiently considered (such as adolescent and genocidal rape, abductions and disappearances of children, and female child soldiers).
- Research needs to be child-centred (addressing distinct areas of concern for children), and there is a need to encourage the participation of children in the design, development, and implementation of research projects.

Data

- Relevant actors at the international, regional, and national levels need to gather and analyze data on children affected by armed conflict, disaggregated by age, gender, and geography. These actors need to address special needs such as those of adolescents, girls, and other vulnerable groups.

Government

- Governments have a responsibility to promote human rights education, with a focus on children's rights, in school curriculums including as a means to prevent the participation of children in armed conflict.
- Governments are urged to ensure the effective implementation of international standards relevant to war-affected children, including the adoption of effective national legislation, by criminalizing the violation of children's rights in the context of conflict.
- Governments in war-affected countries should create a Commission for the Research of Violation of Children's Rights, involving relevant NGOs and other relevant agencies, as an impartial monitoring and reporting body on violations of children's rights.

- Governments with embassies or consulates in war-affected countries should implement a monitoring and reporting process on the situation of children's rights, with a view to influencing decision-making processes that can address their situation, including through foreign policy.
- All states must ratify all human rights treaties, particularly the CRC and its relevant protocols, and apply them effectively at times of armed conflict.

United Nations

(i.e., operational agencies, Security Council, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – OHCHR, the SRSG/CAC)

- The UN Security Council should undertake the following:
 - invite the OHCHR to participate regularly in Security Council meetings and submit country and thematic reports on the situation of children's rights;
 - establish avenues for UN agencies and relevant NGOs to regularly submit information on children's rights to inform its work;
 - systematically address the protection of children's rights in all thematic and country-specific reports submitted to them;
 - initiate and institutionalize an annual debate on children in areas of armed conflict; and
 - where serious violations of children's rights have been identified, the Security Council should send missions to the countries concerned.
- The OHCHR should prepare an annual consolidated annual report on the situation of children's rights, extracted from country and thematic reports and from relevant treaty bodies.
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child should develop additional guidelines on reporting to monitor the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
- The Office of the SRSG/CAC, in consultation with relevant NGOs and other relevant organizations, should compile a watch list of countries where the situation of children's rights is of special concern. This list is to be periodically updated and submitted to the Security Council by the Office of the SRSG/CAC.

Non-state actors participating in hostilities

- Non-state actors should be urged to commit to international standards for the protection of children's rights, to develop a reporting mechanism, and to make such reports public on a periodic basis.
- An independent verification panel should be established to monitor and report on compliance with commitments undertaken by non-state actors. The SRSG/CAC, UN agencies active in the protection of children's rights (such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and the

OHCHR) as well as other organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), should participate in this effort.

Peacekeeping

- Training activities for both military and non-military personnel on children's rights and gender equality should be included in the curriculums of national, regional, and international peacekeeping training centres.
- Peacekeeping personnel, including the military, should ensure the monitoring of the situation of children, the respect of their rights, and the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
- Donor countries, international agencies, and other relevant organizations should ensure the allocation of adequate resources for data collection and analysis research, as well as for monitoring and reporting on children's rights violations.

Thematic Workshop 9 – The military, armed groups and children's rights

Recommendations

- Accepting that the suffering of all war-affected children caused by military or armed groups is serious and is not amenable to characterization as more or less severe, pragmatism dictates that the international community conduct a manner of triage in order to identify those situations in which international intervention or assistance will be most useful.
- Efforts should be directed toward pursuing more concrete measures, rather than more standards or declarations. In terms of dialogue, governments and civil society must shift from rhetoric on international law and human rights to implementation and the targeting of the constituency necessary to enforce these standards.
- Ad hoc tribunals and the ICC should be used to achieve accountability for criminal conduct. The use of forums such as these will satisfy the requirements for justice and help to create an atmosphere of deterrence against future abuses. Armed groups, government forces, and the population should be informed that international humanitarian law applies to armed groups and government forces. They should also be informed that they face criminal prosecution if they do not abide by the laws. International prosecution should be made more systematic.
- In appropriate cases, universal jurisdiction should be asserted for conduct that is committed in other states and that constitutes a crime against humanity or a war crime. Even if these indictments are never prosecuted, this action will effectively limit the international freedom of movement of the indicted persons and create an atmosphere of deterrence against, and accountability for, future criminal conduct.
- Regional organizations should be engaged to undertake the following:
 - enforce respect for international humanitarian standards through peer pressure; and

- intervene to stop grave abuses of human rights that threaten regional peace and security.
- The international banking and business communities should be engaged to undertake the following:
 - interrupt flows of funds and materials to armed groups; and
 - establish industrial boycott of sources of funding for armed groups.

Commitments

- Commitments to respect children's rights can be solicited from armed groups (especially those with aspirations of governance) and states that will ameliorate their conduct. Such commitments can be solicited at various levels. The SRSB/CAC, for example, should continue to solicit commitments, disseminate the substance of these commitments as much as possible or functionally necessary (assuming that they were not made on a confidential basis), and follow up on those commitments with effective monitoring mechanisms.
- Armed groups' aspirations to military legitimacy should be exploited by demanding that they act in a lawful and disciplined fashion.
- In developing approaches to dealing with armed groups, it is important not to overgeneralize or predetermine actions for influencing their conduct. Each situation involving an armed group must be evaluated on its own merits, and the appropriate intervention or engagement must be determined accordingly.

Military forces

- Military forces, civilian police, humanitarian workers, and other mission personnel should receive training with respect to war-affected children and other related issues, including the gender dimension of conflict. The training should incorporate the following characteristics:
 - its imperatives should become fundamental to military operations and career advancement;
 - it should be given by persons with credibility vis-à-vis the trainees;
 - it should be self-perpetuating;
 - it should cultivate the importance of civil-military cooperation in conducting peace support operations;
 - it should be reviewed and updated regularly;
 - the level of detail and intensity should be geared to the rank and responsibilities of the trainees (particularly in the context of pre-deployment training prior to a peace-support operation that will involve war-affected children);
 - military personnel should learn to work with children in the field and be exposed to children's behaviour; and

- it should reflect the language, culture, and literacy levels of the trainees, and be coordinated regionally in order to share insights and lessons learned and to promote consistency.
- All those who have expertise in children's rights training, as well as governments and NGOs, should share this expertise with the armed forces of the states that need it.
- The CRC should be shared with armed forces which may not all have the resources to copy and distribute it in large numbers.
- Donor states should make military aid and training conditional upon compliance with CRC imperatives by recipient states.
- Recipient states should identify the need for training in war-affected children's issues to donor states.
- The ICRC and other organizations should be encouraged to continue disseminating knowledge of the Geneva Conventions to government forces and armed groups.
- Taking into consideration that some armed groups have responded positively to NGOs' interventions based on the report of the International Council on Human Rights Policy on Human Rights Approaches to Armed Groups, the group recommends the dissemination of the Council's report to the NGO community, especially its list of actions that can be taken to influence armed groups' behaviour, and encourages them to use it as a framework for their interventions.
- Put pressure on those that sustain armed groups, in order to better influence these groups' behaviours.
- Encourage countries to elaborate moratoriums, such as the moratorium initiated by Mali on the trade of small arms.
- Children's rights training should be integrated in military cooperation programs that exist between countries.
- Where appropriate, armed groups should be assisted in training in children's rights.

Issue-specific caucuses

1. Small arms

Recommendations

- Governments must work to eradicate the supply and use of small arms, light weapons, grenades, and ammunition in conflict areas where crimes against humanity, obvious in most cases through the abuse of children, are prevalent.
- It is necessary that the vast stocks of small arms and light weapons be controlled by developing a system of transparency in which quantities, types, and locations of weapons are publicly identified (i.e., a registry of sorts in which all exports and stockpiles of small arms could be reported).

- Once the stocks of small arms are determined, states should destroy old or surplus stocks rather than selling them or giving them away.
- Governments should reduce the legal trade in small arms and immediately halt arm sales to regions of conflict. Surplus small arms should not be introduced to vulnerable areas or made available on the open market. An emphasis should be placed on assault rifles and grenades, which kill most non-combatants, including children.
- If governments do not limit their legal trade, then at a minimum they should withhold military aid and trade to countries or groups that use child soldiers.
- Governments and international agencies should strengthen mechanisms to prevent and control the illicit proliferation of small arms. (For example, states should improve the security and management of small arm stockpiles in order to prevent theft and diversion.)
- Arms embargoes, both unilateral and multilateral, should be monitored and enforced. Violations of arms embargoes should not be tolerated. Violators must be named and sanctions imposed against them.
- Countries should establish effective weapons collection and responsible destruction programs to dispose of small arms already in circulation. The destruction of weapons (legally or illegally owned) should be public, visible events witnessed by all in order to help reduce the risk of suspicions or fears that weapons will not be destroyed and will instead be recirculated.
- Collectively, states should develop a viable marking system for ammunition and explosives in order to monitor legal and illicit small arms sales.
- Countries, either individually or collectively, should adopt binding codes of conduct at the national, regional, and international levels regarding responsible arms trade policies.
- Countries should implement comprehensive, strict controls over the activities of national and international arms brokers, including a registration system for arms brokering agents, as well as measures to ensure the prosecution of brokers operating illegally within national borders.
- A major, action-oriented study or review is needed to identify the impact of small arms on children.
- Capacity-building of security forces (i.e., national armies, police, UN peacekeeping forces) must be increased to combat the flow of arms.
- An effort should be made to maintain awareness of the link between small arms, the drug trade, and their impact on children.
- “Weapons for cash” programs should be replaced by strategies that incorporate more effective development strategies.
- All of these actions and debate must take into consideration the cultural importance some societies place on gun ownership.
- There needs to be an ongoing intelligence campaign to monitor sources and locations of small arms.

2. Child soldiers

Recommendations

Links with prevention

- The recruitment of child soldiers can be used as an indicator or early warning system of escalation of the conflict that can trigger preventive action at the local and international levels.
- The UN and NGOs should increase the capacity-building of NGOs at local and national levels to prevent recruitment with special attention to vulnerable groups (e.g., sex workers, internally displaced, street children, and so on), including the creation of community centres with youth programming, emphasizing anti-recruitment strategies.
- Mass media and alternative media should be involved with raising public awareness regarding international humanitarian law, children's rights, and peacebuilding efforts.
- Governments should create national offices for the dissemination of information regarding international humanitarian law and international human rights, with particular attention to children's rights, with widespread distribution to militaries, universities, and schools. Governments should support NGOs in the distribution of these materials.
- The UN, governments, and NGOs should undertake further research and action to counter measures that force children into recruitment, including those related to structural adjustment, poverty, and so on.
- The UN and governments should place priority on developing and monitoring armed opposition groups' commitments to the rights of children.
- The UN and governments should support the creation of a permanent youth network to serve as advocates and spokespersons to deter recruitment and to promote children's and human rights.
- Communities (including children and youth) should be engaged to define their own guiding principles regarding the recruitment of their children, with an emphasis on local ownership of CRC and relevant international human rights standards.

Legal matters, enforcement, monitoring

- Concrete enforcement should be promoted at different levels at the same time: tribunals, truth and reconciliation, ombudsman system through regional groups.
- Funding should be increased to obtain solid documentation to prepare court cases, and accountability should be ensured for the effective healing and reintegration of former child soldiers. The information-gathering for this documentation should be conducted by native language speakers, and contain gender-disaggregated information.
- It is necessary to urge the universal ratification of ILO Convention No.182 and the Optional Protocol to the CRC without reservations, as well as the setting of 18 as a minimum age for all forms of military recruitment.
- The Optional Protocol should be implemented in national legislation that also covers irregular forces and military schools. Recruitment practices should be systematically

reviewed and officials trained and community awareness promoted to ensure compliance. Underage recruitment should be criminalized by both state officials and armed groups.

- Comprehensive birth registration should be provided, including retroactive measures for unregistered children.
- At the international level, an official watch list or blacklist should be developed, including countries that are not adhering to the Optional Protocol and that are systematically engaged in the use of child soldiers. The SRSG/CAC should include such lists in annual reports to the Security Council. The information should also be submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other specialized agencies, such as the ILO and reporting systems of the UN.
- Governments should be urged to make compliance with the Optional Protocol a condition for defence cooperation and assistance.
- Child soldier issues should be included in existing reporting and monitoring under the Commission of Human Rights. More proactive review of complaints by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and other special rapporteurs is needed.
- The ratification of ICC statute and extension of universal jurisdiction, criminalization of child soldiers, and illicit flow of resources should be endorsed.
- Regional organizations should be encouraged to set up by September 2001 their own committees (and other initiatives) on the rights of the child, as well as other monitoring mechanisms. Initial goals should be child soldier free zones, compulsory birth registration methods, and special measures for girls affected by conflict.

Disarmament and demobilization

- The design of demobilization exercises should focus on the needs of children and involve them taking into account that they should be treated as civilians rather than as military. Children should be systematically separated from adults during the demobilization exercise and no process of institutionalization of children should take place.
- Demobilization should take place without any political conditionalities.
- It is necessary to ensure that girl soldiers are included in the demobilization schemes.
- It is necessary to ensure that nationals are involved in the design of demobilization agreements and appropriate sensitization of different groups addressed.
- Ensure a blanket amnesty for children involved in armed conflict. Recognize their role as perpetrators of violence through testimony in truth and reconciliation commissions and at community level but do not criminalize them.
- Demobilization should be regarded as only a first step to reintegration. Other processes such as reintegration with the family should run in parallel with demobilization.

- Training in women's and children's rights should be provided to military and non-military peacekeeping personnel and United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL).

Reintegration of former child soldiers

- Special emphasis needs to be placed on the demobilization and reintegration of girl soldiers.
- There is a need to have consultations with communities on local support mechanisms, local rituals, and traditional values. These strategies should be gender-sensitive.
- Communities should be sensitized and prepared to accept children (boys and girls) who have gone through atrocities.
- Agencies need to avoid being judgmental with regard to children's lives as soldiers, and to build on their positive experiences and capacities.
- Real opportunities should be provided to children, according to age and life experiences.
- The risk of re-recruitment and reprisal is very strong; therefore security should be a major component of reintegration processes (foster families and communities alternatives should be considered).

3. Land mines

Recommendations

- In the context of international development assistance, donors must realize that victims of land mines are also victims of poverty. Local governments must devote more resources toward their people.
- Children should not be sent to the mine fields for de-mining purposes.
- All states that have not done so already should accede to the Ottawa Convention at the earliest possible date.
- All states that are party to the Ottawa Convention should fully and swiftly implement it.
- More mine awareness programs aimed specifically at children should be developed.
- Regional (or non-national) approaches are needed when dealing with mine action directed at children. More grass-roots efforts involving local communities should be encouraged, and it must be recognized that they must be supported financially by the international community.
- The use of land mines is in strict contradiction with the CRC, to which almost all UN member-states are party. On that basis, the international community should apply pressure to states that still use land mines.
- Non-state actors should be engaged on the question of land mines.
- The international community should continue to 'name names' of states that violate the Ottawa Convention and its principles.

4. Adolescents

Recommendations

- Adolescents must be empowered so that they can have a proactive role in what happens to them. They can be empowered as leaders, educators, and decision-makers. Youth should be provided with the opportunity to get together and share ideas.
- A focus must be placed on adolescent-appropriate education, recreation, and training.
- There is a need to focus on local solutions to adolescent issues. In other words, there cannot be a standard template for action—the specific nature of each case must be considered.
- Livelihood training is essential, but this training should be appropriate for the economic, social, and political situation. It is important that youth are involved when deciding what type of livelihood training should be undertaken.
- When programs are being designed to help children and youth, women should also be taken into account, since they have an important and active role in the lives of youth.
- A focus should be on preventative programs that help bring youth together in order to establish networks, friendships, and global peace initiatives that can help to prevent future conflict.
- A focus must be placed on health care directed at adolescents, in particular sexual health issues such as HIV/AIDS education, reproductive health care, preventative methods for pregnancy, and so on. Another important aspect of health care should include dealing with the issue of drug and substance abuse.
- There is a need to focus on the issue of mentoring, particularly youth mentoring. Adolescents can help to teach others (children, youth, and adults) who are directly or indirectly affected by conflict. They are a resource that should be tapped.
- It is essential to remember that the CRC, other human rights conventions, treaties, conferences, the Graça Machel document, and so on are written for all children (up to age 18) and not just younger children. It is important that programming reflect this, since programming often focuses on young children and not all young people. This includes the need to focus particularly on youth at risk.
- Implementation and monitoring is essential for all the conventions, treaties, conferences, and so on. A mechanism of responsibility for this monitoring must be implemented. Youth also have an essential role in the implementation and monitoring of these conventions and treaties through the support of NGOs and other international organizations. It is essential that no one convention take precedent over another—they should be treated with equal importance.
- All activities must be gender-sensitive. Both girls and boys have different needs, and these must be kept in mind during the creation of programming recommendations.
- A re-examination of institutional mandates is necessary to make sure that they are reinforcing the need of the adolescents they intend to help. A concrete example of this is the

need to reduce staff turnover among staff employed to work with youth (from NGOs and international organizations). It is necessary to build a trusting relationship in order for the youth to heal.

- There is an essential need for justice and accountability for crimes against children and adolescents. This includes the need for all governments to ratify the ICC statute and have it become functional as soon as possible.
- All agreements on juvenile justice should be applied and enforced. The special needs of adolescents who have been accused of human rights abuses should be taken into account.
- An increase in the documentation of experiences and knowledge-sharing should be encouraged so that different groups and people working with war-affected adolescents can learn from each other.
- A network of people, groups, and organizations working with war-affected adolescents should be established in order to begin to implement some of the recommendations listed here and to follow up on these discussions.

5. Gender and conflict

Recommendations

Accountability

- The Ethiopian military's crimes against women and girls in occupied areas should be court-martialed and punished.
- Italy and other Western countries should return the children that they have fostered or adopted to their proper birth families in Rwanda.
- All armed groups should unconditionally return abducted children to their countries of origin.
- Governments should take more severe measures to punish rape and other offences in times of conflict.
- In times of internal conflict that may not be recognized as war, humanitarian efforts should not be impeded by political influences.
- Sanctions should not be imposed on welfare programs for women and children.
- Government delegations should take measures to make the recommendations from the Winnipeg conference known at each country's national levels (e.g., press conferences, official announcements, and so on).
- The media should be punished for exposing victims of rape and other irresponsible acts.
- It is necessary to call for a multidimensional task force, consisting of the UN and NGOs, to conduct gender audits of all peacekeeping missions.
- This issue should be taken up by the Security Council every year, just as children and armed conflict should continue to be taken up every year.

Peacebuilding

- Gender should be mainstreamed in all peacebuilding processes and activities.
- Women's roles should be transformed to promote a culture of peace and non-violence. Resources are needed to empower them.
- Between now and 2001, a Women's Peace Task Force should be established and provided with the resources so that women can move freely from one conflict area to another to build bridges to peace (e.g., women from northern Uganda should be supported to travel to Sudan and vice versa).
- Gender awareness and gender sensitivity should be critical elements of pre-deployment training for personnel involved in peace-support operations.
- Training in positive ways of transforming masculinity should be provided for men, particularly in security institutions.
- The recommendations from the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations should be unified with this document.

Prevention

- There is an urgent need for more research into the gender dimension of conflict, particularly as it pertains to girls and armed conflict.
- A campaign should be initiated for a new language and a vision for a world without violence and war. Some of this language should be adopted in the Special Session on Children in 2001.
- The production and purchase of arms toys for children should be stopped in order to build a culture of peace (the manufacturers of these toys of destruction should be targeted).
- Donor agencies should launch and support large-scale gender awareness campaigns that emphasize protection against sexual and gender-based violence in three war-affected regions, including Afghanistan, before the Special Session on Children in 2001.

Protection

- The social and legal status of women should be upgraded.

Meeting children's needs/service delivery

- The role of social workers during conflict should be reinforced and recognized.
- Grass-roots representatives should be empowered with the knowledge of the available international mechanisms.
- Leadership training facilities should be established to ensure that women are heard and seen at all levels.
- Facilities, such as skills training and micro-credit, should be extended to women at the grass-roots level to increase their independence.

- Support should be provided to women and girls for the psychosocial problems that they are facing.
- International donor agencies should plan in long-term ways for psychosocial projects, education projects, and projects that seek to rebuild the basic structures in society.
- National machineries should be strengthened to implement these projects and programs.
- Regional organizations' efforts for children and women should be recognized.

6. Refugee and internally displaced children

Recommendations

- All governments should be forced to abide by and implement UN international instruments. However, the use of international sanctions should be “smart” in order to avoid negative consequences on children and civilians.
- An ad hoc group of NGOs and government agencies should be created and have the mandate to monitor the follow-up given to this conference's recommendations. A draft “report card” should be produced prior to the UN Special Session on Children in 2001, and a final report should be presented at this session.
- The root causes of displacements of populations should be addressed. Early warning measures should be taken to reduce the disruption in children's access to education, and early warning mechanisms to protect children should be established.
- The coordination of protection and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons should be redesigned to insure equity in disbursement to countries dealing with internally displaced persons and refugees. Sufficient resources need to be provided, notably to countries burdened by refugees and countries that do not have the capacity to provide assistance.
- A better continuity between humanitarian relief assistance and long-term development return and reinsertion programs needs to be developed.
- Coordination of action between UN agencies and international organizations has to be reinforced in order to avoid duplication of efforts.
- The status of internally displaced persons should be formally and internationally recognized (see *Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons*) and more resources should be allocated to assist this category of persons. An international framework should be established for internally displaced children.
- The issue of children born out of forced maternity or of mothers with internally displaced person or refugee status needs to be addressed specifically. A fact-finding study on the issue, as recommended in the Graça Machel report, should be promoted.
- More resources and efforts should be allocated to the registration of children as refugees and internally displaced persons. A specific registration policy for children should be developed. Registration has to be done rapidly (the International Organization for Migration could play an important role in registration in certain regions).
- Education should become one of the pillars of international response. National governments should, by the next budget cycle, make funds available for education. Spaces used by children such as schools should be declared “zones of peace.” Deliberate targeting of schools

should be condemned. Emphasis should be put on girls' education. Education is a right and a protection tool. Rapid education programs should be initiated in emergency situations (to be tested in selected programs).

- The issue of separated children who cannot or do not wish to return to their country should be addressed, and resources should be granted to the countries receiving them to insure that they are taken in charge. Adoption should not be undertaken (two-year rule, following the emergency phase).
- A code of conduct for UN and NGO personnel involved in assistance programs should be developed to prevent sexual abuse and harassment of children.
- Youth should be involved in the development of assistance and reinsertion programs.

7. HIV/AIDS and conflict

Recommendations

- Because HIV is spread more quickly during conflict, priority must be placed on avoiding or ending conflict. This can happen in the short-term through negotiation, but even more sustainably through poverty reduction.
- There is an urgent need for a real, coordinated strategy for addressing HIV and children in conflict, devised by the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Young people must be key contributors to this strategy.
- The Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations of UNAIDS is urgently mandated to meet to discuss the issue of HIV, children, and conflict. The results of this meeting should feed directly into the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in September 2001.
- When addressing HIV, children, and conflict, a holistic, comprehensive approach must be taken which addresses operational gaps. It is not only a health or security problem.
- There is a need to fund and do more research on specifically how HIV affects children in conflict, and how conflict affects the spread of HIV.
- More funding is urgently needed to support research into a vaccine for HIV.
- Education is fundamental. As early as possible, children and youth must be educated about their bodies, sexuality, reproductive health, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV. Peacekeepers and humanitarian workers must be trained in children's rights and sexual health. Communities need to be sensitized to AIDS awareness and de-stigmatization.
- Appropriate health services (including reproductive health counselling and STD testing) must be made available to all children and youth, whether in refugee camps, armies, or other communities.

- Condoms must be made available to peacekeepers, humanitarian workers, armies, and the population at large.
- A network for sharing best practices must be identified or created. This should facilitate effective donor coordination.
- The group endorses the UNAIDS memo that went out to G7 countries, outlining the higher levels of support needed for AIDS prevention and care, and calls for increased donor contribution to the poorest countries affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Pharmaceutical corporations should be pressured to allow for generic versions of AIDS treatments to be manufactured and distributed.
- Multinational corporations that support conflicts should be held accountable and liable for their actions.
- It is necessary to demand that political leaders acknowledge and focus on the epidemic. This political will is essential.
- HIV must be mainstreamed into all peacekeeping and development interventions.
- All interventions for children in conflict and HIV must use a rights-based approach, with the CRC as the foundation.
- The upcoming UNAIDS missions to 10 HIV-affected countries must place a special focus on youth. Youth must be key contributors to all research.

8. Trauma and healing

Recommendations

- Psychosocial healing is a long-term process, yet most funding and programming is short-term. Both donors and assistance providers need to commit to long-term funding and programming.
- Programs must be locally based, community-oriented, culturally sensitive, sustainable, and based on needs identified by the communities themselves. Projects must include local facilitators and animators. Training for local staff around fund-raising would help ensure the sustainability of programs.
- The participation of children and youth must be an integral part of all healing processes and programs.
- There is a need to link the social and the psychological aspects of working with war-affected children. Healing and helping children should be done with the children themselves, their families, schools, communities, and teachers.
- There is a need to establish an international centre to serve as a clearing house for sharing information on expertise and local cultural resources for healing, as well as for document-sharing and the dissemination of research and best practices. The centre should also be involved in awareness-raising, advocacy, and the development of regional and national capabilities for locally based approaches. A Web site dedicated to networking and the dissemination of research should be part of this centre.
- To develop the field of psychosocial assistance, there needs to be much greater support for research and more research partnerships between donors, practitioners, and academic institutions. Research is particularly needed on the longitudinal effects of exposure to war

and violence on children, child and human resilience, evaluations of what works, and comparative outcome studies.

- Trauma healing must be linked with reconciliation. Programs that promote healing and provide assistance to war-affected children should include elements on tolerance, non-violent conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.
 - Donor organizations, practitioners, counsellors, and facilitators should critically examine their terminology to avoid medicalizing, pathologizing, or stigmatizing war-affected children, families, and communities.
 - Psychosocial assistance should form a key part of child protection and children's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations.
 - Structures that provide support to healers and practitioners need to be put in place.
 - All people working in the field of conflict and post-conflict must be trained in psychosocial impacts, especially in relation to how children experience armed conflict.
 - Debt-reduction programs should be put in place. Funds liberated through debt reduction programs must be used for social programs for children and for healing children and communities who are survivors of conflict situations.
 - A balance must be achieved between programs that assist the most severely affected individuals and community-based programs which are more wide-reaching.
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Ministerial-Level Meeting

Workshop 1 – Economic and political agendas in civil wars

The current economic and political context highlights the interdependence and inter-relatedness between countries in all regions. Measures adopted by states, regional or international organizations have inevitable repercussions in other parts of the world. As an example, arms production and trade create employment opportunities in one country, while their use can fuel conflict in another. Children can be protected from armed conflict only if the international community implements the strong normative framework that exists, but is not universally adhered to.

Recommendations

- There needs to be adherence, implementation, and enforcement of international human rights and humanitarian standards (including ratification of the ICC and the *Optional Protocol on*

the involvement of children in armed conflicts, and the identification and prosecution of perpetrators).

- Conflict prevention needs to be given serious consideration by investing in education and good governance initiatives, promoting multi-ethnic dialogue, and stopping the production, flow, and stockpiling of small arms.
- The allocation of resources for children needs to be guided by the best interests of the child.
- A child impact assessment is required of all projects by international and regional financial institutions to ensure that children's rights have been considered, and to monitor the impact of economic sanctions on children.
- Codes of conduct based on the CRC need to be developed for all relevant actors (including governments, international organizations) and for responsible business practices.
- Young people and women should be promoted as integral to peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Workshop 2 – Safeguarding children in the midst of conflict

Recommendations

- The principle of a zone of peace should be recognized: schools, health centres, and other locations where children congregate should be inviolate zones of peace.
- There has to be an end to impunity. Punitive measures could include universal censure, targeted sanctions, freezing of assets, non-recognition, and exclusion from regional and international forums.
- A universal normative base should be created, i.e., the ratification of existing human rights standards and humanitarian laws.
- Mediation for children should be encouraged; measures must be devised to ensure swift and consistent third party mediation when children's rights are being violated in a conflict situation.
- The responsibilities of external actors, other than direct parties to conflict, must be specified and be more proactive in terms of child protection.
- Training and awareness-raising in children's rights and protection for peacekeepers, humanitarian actors, peace agreement negotiators, or mediators must be encouraged.
- International commitments should be sought to ensure that resources are applied more equitably and consistently wherever the rights of war-affected children are abused.
- In terms of official development assistance, donor countries should consider provisions for debt forgiveness linked to additional resourcing of rehabilitation and development programs for war-affected children.

- With respect to conflict prevention and the underlying causes, a sustained global effort to assure quality basic education for all children can be one effective long-term strategy for addressing poverty and the learning needs of war-affected children.
- It is important to listen to and support young people and their communities.
- Coordination and coherence of international humanitarian action must be increased.
- Political will must be mobilized to protect and support war-affected children.

Workshop 3 – Engaging youth in peace processes

Recommendations

- Listening is not enough; the listener must act on the needs and concerns of youth.
- Youth participation in peace processes has a far-reaching effect on peacebuilding, individual empowerment, community-building, development, and stability. Youth participation at all levels should therefore be encouraged and supported.
- Youth awareness programs about peace processes should be created for young people.
- The CRC must be central to peace negotiations and processes.
- The causes of conflict and its devastating impact on children and young people should be addressed.
- Education, including vocational training, is a top priority and an absolute necessity.

Workshop 4 – Preventing the recurrence of harm to war-affected children

Recommendations

- Children should be removed from harmful environments.
- It is necessary to reintegrate and restore the lives of war-affected children, particularly through education.
- Reconciliation efforts should be supported in order to promote hope. Include women and girls who need special attention.
- It is necessary to tackle the root causes of violent conflict, and recognize poverty as a chief culprit.
- Representative and participatory forms of governance and inclusive, gender-sensitive, social, and economic development should be promoted.
- It is important to focus on responsibilities and rights for sustainable peacebuilding. A focus on individual rights helps to put the welfare of children at the centre of the discourse.

Appendix 4: List of participants

Government delegations

Albania	Algeria	Angola
Argentina	Armenia	Australia
Austria	Azerbaijan	Bahamas
Bangladesh	Belarus	Belgium
Benin	Bolivia	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Botswana	Brazil	Brunei
Bulgaria	Burkina Faso	Burundi
Cambodia	Cameroon	Canada
Central African Republic	Chad	Chile
China	Colombia	Comores
Congo, Dem. Rep.	Costa Rica	Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia	Cuba	Cyprus
Czech Republic	Denmark	Djibouti
Ecuador	Egypt	El Salvador
Eritrea	Ethiopia	F.Y.R. of Macedonia
Finland	France	Gambia
Germany	Ghana	Greece
Guatemala	Guinea	Guinea-Bissau
Haiti	Holy See	Honduras
Hungary	Iceland	India
Indonesia	Iran	Ireland
Israel	Italy	Jamaica
Japan	Kenya	Korea
Kuwait	Kyrgyzstan	Laos
Lebanon	Lesotho	Liberia
Libya	Luxembourg	Madagascar
Malawi	Malaysia	Mali
Mauritania	Mexico	Monaco
Morocco	Mozambique	Namibia
Nepal	Netherlands	New Zealand
Nicaragua	Niger	Nigeria
Norway	Pakistan	Palestinian Authority
Panama	Philippines	Poland

Portugal	Qatar	Romania
Russia Federation	Rwanda	Saudi Arabia
Senegal	Sierra Leone	Slovak Republic
Slovenia	South Africa	Spain
Sri Lanka	Sudan	Sweden
Switzerland	Tanzania	Thailand
Togo	Trinidad and Tobago	Tunisia
Turkey	United States of America	Uganda
Ukraine	United Kingdom	Uruguay
Uzbekistan	Venezuela	Yemen
Zimbabwe		

Organizations

- Action volontaire pour le bien-être de l'enfance, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Afghan Street Children and New Approach, Afghanistan
- Africa Forum on Child Welfare, Kenya
- African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), Kenya
- APRODEBU, Burundi
- Asociacion Probusqueda de Niños, El Salvador
- Asoferwa, Rwanda
- Assembly of First Nations, Canada
- Asociacion Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo, Argentina
- B'Tsalem, Israel
- Cambridge University, United Kingdom
- Campaign for Good Governance, Sierra Leone
- Canadian Auto Workers/CAW Social Justice Fund, Canada
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Canada
- Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, Canada
- Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Canada
- Canadian Landmine Foundation, Canada
- Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Canada
- Canadian Network for an International Criminal Court, Canada
- Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief, Canada
- Canadian Red Cross, Canada
- Canadian Teachers Federation, Canada
- Canadian Unitarian Council Representatives at the United Nations, Canada
- CARE Canada, Canada
- Caritas Makeni, Sierra Leone
- Casa Alianza, Costa Rica
- Catholic Relief Services, United States
- CAUSE Canada, Canada
- Center for Defense Information, United States

- Center for Organization Research and Education (CORE), India
- Centre canadien d'étude et de coopération internationale (CECI), Canada
- Centre for Democratic Empowerment, Liberia
- Centre for Social and Psychological Aid "Ndoba," Georgia
- Child Rights Group, Sri Lanka
- Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), United Kingdom
- Children of War, Inc., United States
- Christian Children's Fund, United States
- Citizens for Peace in Eritrea, Eritrea
- Coalition for an International Criminal Court, United States
- Commission consultative de la jeunesse, Burundi
- Commonwealth Secretariat, United Kingdom
- Community and Family Services International, Philippines
- Community Development Foundation (CDF), Mozambique
- Conavigua - Movimiento de Jovenes Mayas por la Objecion de Conciencia, Guatemala
- Concerned Parents of Uganda, Uganda
- Dalhousie University, Canada
- Disabled Person International
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- Empowering Women of Burma, Myanmar
- European Community
- Family Homes Movement, Sierra Leone
- FOREM (National Foundation for the Promotion of Health and Development of Research), Algeria
- Foster Parents Plan, Canada
- Foundation for International Training, Canada
- Global Coalition for Africa
- Groupe d'action pour la démobilisation et la réhabilitation des enfants soldats (GADERES), Democratic Republic of Congo
- Gulu Support the Child Organization, Uganda
- Hague Appeal for Peace - Peacelinks, Sierra Leone
- Human Development Promotion Center, Albania
- Human Rights Centre Memorial, Russian Federation
- Human Rights Office of the Archbishoprie of Guatemala, Guatemala
- Human Rights Watch, United States
- Humanidad Vigente Corporacion Juridica, Colombia
- INHURED International, Nepal
- Institut régional de coopération-développement (IRCOD), Sierra Leone
- Institute of Security Studies, South Africa
- Inter American Children's Institute
- Interband, Japan
- International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)
- International Alert, United Kingdom

- International Bureau of Children's Rights, Canada
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines
- International Committee of the Red Cross, Switzerland
- International Council of Jewish Women
- International Council on Human Rights Policy, Switzerland
- International Development and Relief Foundation, Canada
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Medical Aid for Children (AMIE), Canada
- International Rescue Committee, United States
- International Save the Children Alliance
- Japan International Volunteer Center, Japan
- JAZAS, Yugoslavia
- Kacoke Madit
- Kosovar Youth Council, Kosovo
- LICADHO, Cambodia
- Mae Tao Clinic, Thailand
- Mali korak (Small Step), Croatia
- McGill University, Canada
- McMaster University, Canada
- Médecins sans frontières, Canada
- Media Action International, Switzerland
- Medica Zenica Women's Association, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Mennonite Central Committee, Canada
- Mine Action Consultants, Thailand
- Mines Action Canada, Canada
- Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI), Kenya
- National Center for Democracy and Human Rights, Armenia
- National Child Protection Authority, Sri Lanka
- National Council for Children Welfare, Sudan
- National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students, Eritrea
- National Youth Advocate Program, United States
- Niños por la Paz, Colombia
- Nova Scotia-Gambia Association, Canada
- Office of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Sri Lanka
- Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict
- Olympic Aid, Canada
- Organization of African Unity
- Oxfam Québec, Canada
- Oxford University, United Kingdom
- Peace Winds Japan, Japan
- Peaceworkers, United States
- Plan International, Sierra Leone

- Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Philippines
- Project PeaceMakers, Canada
- Project Ploughshares, Canada
- Radda Barnen, Sweden
- Redd Barna, Norway
- Salut, le monde, Canada
- Save the Children Canada, Canada
- Save the Children, United Kingdom
- Save the Children, United States
- Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Children (SPARC), Pakistan
- Sudan Women Voice for Peace, Sudan
- Terre sans frontières, Canada
- Terre des hommes, Germany
- The Carter Centre, United States
- The ROE Foundation, United States
- Transcultural Psychosocial Organization, Netherlands
- UNAIDS
- UNICEF Canada, Canada
- Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme (UIDH), Burkina Faso
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)
- United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Togo
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Universidad de las Regions Autonomas de la Costa Nicaraguense (URACCAN), Nicaragua
- Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada
- University of Alberta, Canada
- University of Manitoba, Canada
- University of Montana, United States
- University of New Brunswick, Canada
- University of Oregon, United States
- University of Victoria, Canada
- University of Wyoming, United States
- War Child, Canada
- West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANAP), Ghana
- Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children, United States
- World Council of Churches, Switzerland
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- World Vision Canada, Canada

Youth delegates

- Balkans
- Colombia
- Great Lakes region, Central Africa
- Jordan, West Bank/Gaza
- Northern Ireland
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Uganda
- West Africa