

same time, assisting the community to absorb demobilized child soldiers;

- (iv) Interventions must be sustainable and provide for a child's basic human needs. Temporary mechanisms (such as psycho-social healing 'gardens') may not be as sustainable as schools (with teachers who are trained to deal with trauma), employment and safety for the child's family;
- (v) Understanding the root causes for the voluntarily or involuntarily involvement of children in armed conflict will assist in finding preventive solutions and possibly incentives for demobilization.
- (vi) Much of the core problem with child soldiers stems from non-state actors who target children primarily to reinforce their depleting numbers and because children are said to be less constrained by fear than adults. It is critical, therefore, to dialogue with non-state actors. Although the Canadian government is not in a position to conduct that dialogue, it can deal with others who are; namely, SRSO Otunnu, state leaders, retired eminent leaders, and NGOs.

5. International Instruments

In order to legitimize the sanctity of children in armed conflict, Canada is continuing to uphold and push for further protection of children through the following international instruments:

The following international instruments (and draft instruments) and norms should be used as a basis for our activities in the area of the protection of children in armed conflict.

- * The Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 38(2)(3) which provides that "States Parties Shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen do not take direct part in hostilities" and that "States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces" which sets the standards for rights of children to be protected from armed conflict;
- * Protocol Additional I to the Geneva Conventions, article 77 provides that "states parties shall take all feasible measures in order that children who have not attained the age of fifteen do not take part in hostilities and, in particular, they shall refrain from recruiting them into their armed forces";
- * The Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention which aims at raising the age of participation in hostilities and the age of recruitment in armed forces and in paramilitary groups;
- * The Draft Statute of an International Criminal Court where Canada supports the inclusion of a crime dealing with the recruitment of children under fifteen to participate in armed conflict;