

*Advocate:*

- \* AS AN ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS, YOU HAVE A CRITICAL ROLE TO PLAY ON THE GROUND AS A NEGOTIATOR WITH GOVERNMENTS AND NON-STATE ACTORS TO PROTECT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND TO CREATE POLITICAL SPACE FOR HUMANITARIAN NGOs AND UN AGENCIES TO ASSIST CHILDREN AFFECTED BY CONFLICT.

*Mechanisms:*

- \* AT THE UNITED NATIONS, YOU CAN ALSO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE AS AN ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT WITHIN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND OTHER POLITICAL ORGANS. WE WELCOME AND SUPPORT YOUR EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH MECHANISMS WHICH WOULD ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY ENSURE ATTENTION TO CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES IN DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON CONFLICT, ON PEACEKEEPING, ON THE ROLE OF CIVILIAN POLICE AND IN PEACE AGREEMENTS. IN THIS REGARD, WE APPLAUD YOUR CURRENT INITIATIVES WITH PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.

*Child Soldiers:*

- \* CANADA DEFINES CHILD SOLDIERS IN A BROAD SENSE, AS OUTLINED BY THE MACHEL STUDY. WE ARE NOT JUST SPEAKING OF CHILD FIGHTERS WITH WEAPONS, BUT ALSO OF THE MANY GIRLS AND BOYS WHO SERVE IN ARMIES AND REBEL GROUPS AS COOKS, PORTERS, MESSENGERS, SPIES, LABOURERS AND AS SEXUAL SLAVES. CANADA SEES THE PLIGHT OF GIRL SOLDIERS WHO ARE USED AS SEX SLAVES AS A CRITICAL PEACEBUILDING ISSUE.

*Optional Protocol:*

- \* CANADA HAS PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN NEGOTIATING A DRAFT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, WHICH AIMS AT RAISING THE AGE OF PARTICIPATION IN HOSTILITIES AND THE AGE OF RECRUITMENT IN ARMED FORCES AND MILITARY GROUPS. WE'VE TAKEN A STRONG POSITION IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 PARTICIPATING IN HOSTILITIES.

**12h00            Cocktails: New Zealand Room, Parliamentary Restaurant**

You will meet the SRSB delegation in the New Zealand Room, where your lunch guests will have gathered for cocktails. You will have 10 minutes to mingle before proceeding to a sit down lunch.