

Report on The National Forum 2000 and National Forum Youth during and after the Conference on War-Affected Children

YOUTH KEYNOTE ADDRESS

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WAR-AFFECTED CHILDREN



Good morning ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, and fellow youth delegates. This morning, in an effort to demonstrate the sheer diversity of our youth delegation, our speech will consist of both the official languages of the conference and my counterpart, Florian, will be speaking on behalf of the international youth delegates whilst I will speak on behalf of the Canadian. Throughout time, youths have been seen as unequal to their older counterparts, their opinions often ignored or considered inferior. It is unheard of that youth are so respected and their opinions so valued. That is why it is such an honour to be invited to an event of this scale. We, the youth, have played a vital role at this conference, not only through our contributions thus far, but in our presence along side global experts working in the field of child protection. We have set the international stage for other such events to take place and have demonstrated that we are experts in our own right...we know youth because we are youth! Many of the youth delegation comes from war torn countries...we have seen hunger, pain, and suffering. This is not the commercials you see on TV, these are the lives of our delegates, this is what we've had to live with....



Depuis l'age de 11 ans, je vie dans un pays en guerre. Je viens d'avoir maintenant mes 18 ans sans connaitre la paix. Au mois d'octobre, je ne said pas si je vais pleurer ou feter parce pour moi, ca serra ma 7e annee d'instabilite spirituelle, mentale, et physique. Une periode durant la quelle la peur, la solitude, le frustration, le desespero se sont emparees de moi et l'epanuissement m'est difficile du jour au lendemain. J'ai l'impression que je n'est jamais ete heureux de ma vie du moins jusqu'a present, parce que je me souviens vaguement de mes annees anterieures a la guerre qui ont peut entre etaient magnifique, enfin je ne m'en souviens pas. J'ai eu la chance de ne pas perdre mes parents our l'un des mes freres ou souers.

Mais je ne peux pas oublier mes cousins, mes tentes, mes oncles, mes amis, qui ont ete massacres a coup de machette.



THE STUDENT
COMMISSION