

CONFERENCE ON WAR-AFFECTED CHILDREN IN WEST AFRICA PLAN OF ACTION

At the invitation of the Government of Ghana in collaboration with the Government of Canada, with the active participation of the United Nations Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, we, ECOWAS Member States, meeting in Accra from 27-28 April, 2000, adopted a Declaration on War-Affected Children. Pursuant to this Declaration, we, ECOWAS Member States agree to cooperate with representatives of civil society organizations, international organizations, and donor agencies, to carry out the following actions,

A. PROTECTION

(i) Implementing Norms and Standards

CALL FOR the immediate release by armed groups in the sub-region of all children abducted and held against their will,

RESOLVE to ratify and fully implement the provisions of international instruments on the rights of the child,

CALL UPON ECOWAS Member States to take all necessary steps to fully implement and respect the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1261 (1999) and 1265 (1999), the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Labour Organization Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the draft Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and further call upon all parties to sign and ratify the protocol once it is open for signature,

- a. Host training sessions on the application and implementation of the international instruments on the rights of the child, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the draft Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict;
- b. Following adoption of the Plan of Action, designate a national body responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of International Instruments on the rights of the child, and provide the name and address of this body to the Legal Division at the ECOWAS Secretariat;