



3. Recommendations: guidelines

The morning workshop resulted in a number of findings and identification of some major guidelines for government action concerning children.

1. There is a paradox concerning consultation. Many organizations have had their budgets substantially reduced, although they are required to express opinions on various topics. They do so regardless, but they insist that the government be made aware of the situation.
2. The participants stressed the need for a major concerted effort. The Government and the various players in civil society must unite their efforts and adopt a clearer action plan.
3. Three themes for concerted action have been identified: (1) child poverty (2) violence and abuse directed at children (3) exploitation of child labour.
4. Canada must assume a leadership position. It must set an example by adequately ensuring that the rights of Canadian children are protected.
5. Canada's actions must be consistent. It must not concentrate exclusively on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but must consider the entire spectrum of problems and areas for intervention. A cross-sectional analysis of the rights of the child is required in all fora; for example, in peacekeeping operations and in relation to trade agreements.
6. Information sharing is a priority. Access to information must be speedy and simple. Wider distribution of reports would be an initial specific action.
7. Civil society must also involve the business community in the issue of protecting children's rights.
8. An effective cooperation process must be established, through the use of existing resources and networking. An authority should be established to coordinate projects and follow up on activities. The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development could be the source of a new cooperation mechanism.
9. In addition to existing cooperation among federal and provincial officials on human and youth rights, there should be participation by NGOs and other agencies that promote children's rights.

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Workshop 2

Child Labour, Principles and Actions for Canada

Today, child labour is still an undeniable international reality. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that about 250 million children between the ages of 10 and 14 (120 million full time) are part of the labour market. No continent is free of this phenomenon, although it is mainly concentrated in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Although exploitation of child labour is almost universally condemned as an affront to human dignity, it still continues to raise a number of practical issues. Some developing countries claim that complete elimination of child labour would deprive local industries of a workforce essential to their economic growth. Others, in order to defend their employment practices, will