

conflict. Canada participated in the African, Latin American, European, and Asian conferences on the use of child soldiers, which were organized by the international Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. Within Canada, the government collaborates with a range of concerned citizens through the NGO-Governmental Committee on War-Affected Children, which is chaired by Canada's special adviser on children's rights.

The International Conference on War-Affected Children to be held in Winnipeg in September 2000 will be co-hosted by Canada's Foreign Minister and the Minister for International Cooperation. Foreign and other ministers, non-governmental organizations, business leaders, UN officials, and young people will attend.

The conference will assess the situation and prepare for the UN Special Session on Children in September 2001. Participants at the session will examine the many ways in which children have been affected — as refugees, internally displaced persons, victims of trauma and sexual exploitation, and as child soldiers. The gender impacts of conflict will also be reviewed.

### **Strengthening peacekeeping**

Peacekeeping is facing new challenges. The United Nations must respond not only to more complex mandates and a growing demand for military personnel, but also to the need to deploy military and civilians in tandem in a timely and effective manner. In response to this need for reform, the Secretary-General commissioned a high level panel to review peacekeeping, which reported in late August 2000. Canada has worked closely with this panel and supports its strong recommendations for change.