

Canada has been very involved in the drafting and supported the early conclusion of a good optional protocol. Canada supports 18 as the minimum age of involvement in hostilities. On the age of recruitment, Canada is currently examining its domestic legislation to ensure that we are in a position to ratify a strong optional protocol once adopted at the UN.

At the last meeting of the working group, it was impossible to achieve a consensus and it appeared that the text would have to be considerably weakened to accommodate the domestic situation of every countries. An NGO coalition was formed with the objective of getting together a group of countries to support the development of a protocol setting the age of 18 for both participation and recruitment. The next meeting of the working group will take place in early 1999 and it is hoped that the text can be finalized and adopted in the year 2000.