

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

## The Military, Armed Groups and Children's Rights



### What is working

- Nothing because non governmental armed groups don't sign the treaties. We live in an era that has a lot of options for youth rather than military.

### What isn't working?

- Most people are ignorant, innocent and have nothing good to do in their lives, and therefore join the military for certain satisfaction.
- There is no security for children.
- The international law only works in the powerful countries.
- The armed groups have no respect for the children rights and there is no respect for their opinions.
- Justice.
- Education of armed men on humanitarian laws.
- Punishment of violators of children rights.

### Recommendations

- That both armed forces should meet somewhere far from children.
- Children should have the right to speak out about their rights.
- Increased educational standards (nationally and internationally) because most people who engage in armed conflicts are illiterate.
- In Columbia, you have no right to speak about these issues. If you speak too much, you or your family members will immediately be kidnapped, tortured and killed: **security**.
- Educate children so that they are more aware of what their rights are, and what they can do to ensure that they are upheld.
- Military organizations should not be permitted to target youth for enlistment.
- In Sierra Leone civilians have no rights to speak about their resources like gold, diamonds, mining, etc. which had been sold to our countries to enrich themselves.
- Militaries should also be trained in human rights. They shouldn't kill doctors or rob houses, kill children or innocent people.
- Whoever violates these rules should be punished.
- Arms should be sold only to recognized governments for defence purposes. Ammunition should be sold in emergency situations.
- U.N. intervention in areas where child abuse is reported.
- No alcohol should be allowed in military bases so that if anything happens it can't be blamed on alcohol.
- Promote the concept of eminent person groups.



### What actions can youth take?

Form pressure groups.  
Protect the children. Form organizations that promote peace. Open the eyes of youth by inviting them to do activities that they enjoy, rather than enrolling them in the military.