

COALITION TO STOP THE USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

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Steering Committee Members: Amnesty International, Defence for Children International, Human Rights Watch, Jesuit Refugee Service, Quaker United Nations Office - Geneva, Rädda Barnen for the International Save the Children Alliance, International Federation Terre des Hommes and World Vision International and several regional NGOs from Latin America, Africa and Asia.

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Launch of first ever, global report on child soldiers

Children are still fighting in conflicts in 41 countries around the world, according to a new global survey.

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers will launch its 450-page report "Global Report on Child Soldiers 2001" on 12 June. The first-ever survey of its type documents military recruitment by government armed forces, paramilitaries and non-state armed groups in 180 countries.

The Global Report will be launched from two sites:

Johannesburg

Place: Hilton Hotel Sandton
138 Rivonia Road, Sandton, Johannesburg
Tel: +27 11 322 1888

Time: 1100 hrs (0900 GMT) Tuesday 12 June.

Speakers: Robinson Odokonyero is a 22-year-old Ugandan youth who was abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army when he 15. Robinson will speak of his first hand suffering as a child soldier.

Dr. Frank Festus Olyet Ayo is the Vice-Chairperson of the Concerned Parents Association in Uganda. One of his children was abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in 1996 and is still in Sudan.

Judit Arenas, from the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers will present the Global Report's key findings.

Contact: Judit Arenas, + 44 7932 035 980

New York

Place: UN Press Briefing Room,
United Nations, New York

Time: 1230 hrs (1630 GMT) following the noon briefing.

Speakers: Ishmael Beah was 14 when he was recruited by the Sierra Leone army. He will speak of his first-hand experience as a child soldier for nearly 3 years. He is now 19 and going to college in Ohio

Jo Becker, Chair of the Steering Committee, and Rory Mungoven, Co-ordinator, will present the Global Report's key findings.

Contact: Jo Becker, + 1 212 216 1236 or + 1 914 263 9643

Note to editors:

A preview version of the report can be accessed at: <http://www.child-soldiers.org/embargo/donotpublish/globalreport.html>. PLEASE NOTE IT IS EMBARGOED FOR TRANSMISSION UNTIL 1400 HRS GMT 12 JUNE 2001. A press kit is available from our website: www.child-soldiers.org.

For more information about events in different cities, or to arrange an interview, please contact Judit Arenas, Media Officer, on + 44 7932 035 980 or + 44 20 7226 0606.