



For Immediate Release

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Statement from LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd) and Dr. Shelly Whitman on Canadian Armed Forces Doctrine on Child Soldiers

Innovation has always been at the core ethos of Canada and our armed forces. From our tactical innovations of the creeping barrage and counter-battery fire at Vimy Ridge some 100 years ago to the creation of the concept of peacekeeping as we know it today, Canada has and continues to innovate when facing the evolving realities of war and attempts to build peace.

Today, Canada, in collaboration with the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, has once again led from the front with the creation of our Canadian Armed Forces Doctrine on Child Soldiers. This first of its kind document is a testament to Canada and our willingness to tackle one of the most pressing paradoxes of our time, the use of children as weapons of war.

The significance of this doctrine cannot be understated. Within its lines, not only is a baseline set for how Canada understands and actively assists to prevent the use of child soldiers, but how we will better prepare the men and women who face this reality in the field. This will ensure that our armed forces can undertake an active role in helping end this reality of war.

The uses of children as weapons of war are not chosen through sheer happenstance. They are a tactical and strategic choice, deployed to achieve a specific aim. Through this doctrine and the coordination of training that will follow across all branches of the Canadian Armed Forces, our men and women in uniform will be able to attrite this tactical and strategic use of children at its root and reduce casualties on all sides.

Today, we are one step closer to protecting those who serve and the children used as weapons of war. We applaud Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces and know that this critical doctrine will provide a leading example to our NATO allies, in peace support operations with the UN, as well as our partners in global missions towards ending the use of child soldiers once and for all.

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For Media Inquires

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About the Organization

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

The Dallaire Initiative, based at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, is recognized as the only organization in the world taking a prevention-oriented, security sector focused approach to the crime against humanity that is child soldiery. Founded by retired lieutenant-general and celebrated humanitarian Roméo Dallaire, The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative is a leader committed to ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers worldwide, through ground-breaking research, advocacy, and security-sector training.