



German Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Demands of the German Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

- 1. "Straight 18":** No child under the age of 18 may be deployed or trained for use in armies, armed groups or other military organizations - irrespective of for which function (including unarmed functions!) and irrespective of whether this is on a "voluntary" or non-voluntary basis. No person under the age of 18 may be recruited to an army or armed group, and no promotion for recruitment may be directed to minors. All children under the age of 18 must be released from military service or from serving in an armed group and should receive respective assistance upon their return to civilian life.
- 2. Punishment of the responsible parties:** All persons, states and armed groups that recruit children must be publicly named and appropriately punished. These persons must be charged before the International Criminal Court or national courts. The respective states and armed groups must be publicly convicted (e.g. by the UN Security Council) and subjected to sanctions (economic consequences, travel bans, frozen accounts).
- 3. Protection, assistance and political asylum:** Former child soldiers need to be provided with medical and psychological assistance, protection from being re-recruited, school education and vocational training - especially when they are refugees in an industrialized country. Former child soldiers must be granted protection and political asylum in all countries to which they flee.
- 4. More funds for child soldiers aid programs:** State and international funding for prevention and child soldier reintegration programs must be considerably increased. In a lot of countries where child soldiers are deployed, there are no funds available for supporting such programs.
- 5. Ban on arms exports:** It is no longer allowed to export weapons (especially small arms), weapon components and ammunition to crisis regions where child soldiers are being deployed. Illegal routes through which weapons reach crisis-hit countries must also be closed down: There must be a ban on the granting of arms production licenses as well as a ban on exporting weapons to third countries that proceed to pass these weapons on to other crisis regions.
- 6. Promote peace education:** Peace education and non-violent conflict resolution should be an obligatory part of the school curriculum and teacher-training.

The German Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has 11 members: Aktion Weißes Friedensband, Kindernothilfe, Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft, Lutheran World Federation, missio, Network Africa Germany, Pax Christi, the Quaker Help Foundation, terre des hommes, UNICEF Germany, World Vision Germany.

More information & Contact:

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