

Child Soldiers

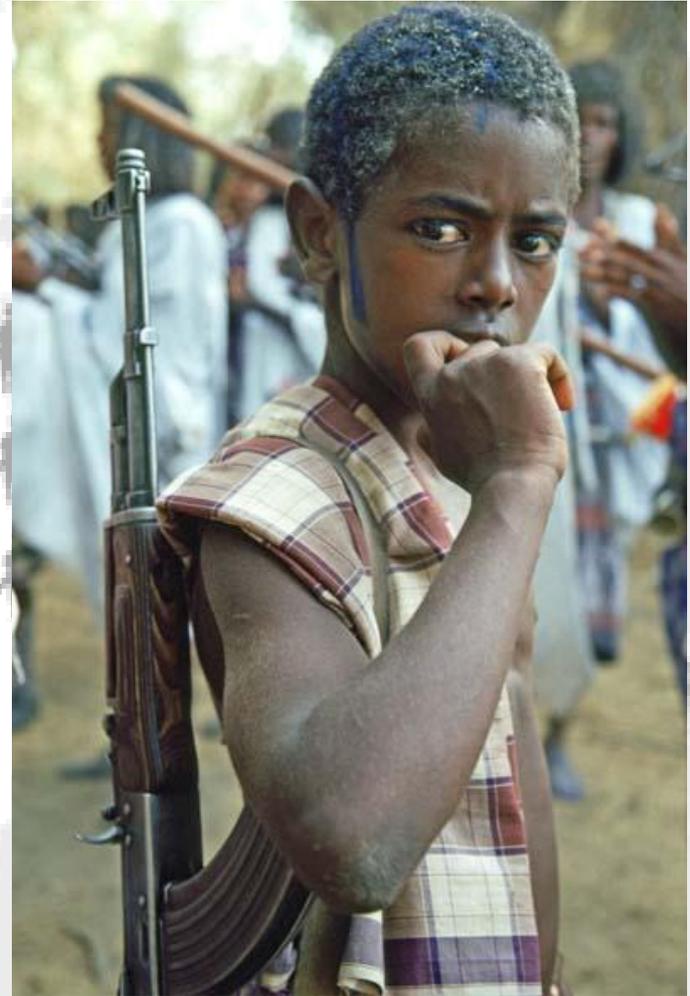
"The question of children and armed conflict is an integral part of the United Nations' core responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, for the advancement of human rights and for sustainable human development." Secretary-General Kofi Annan in a speech to the Security Council, 26 July 2000



Patrick Mullin
Temple of Understanding
July 31, 2010

What is a Child Soldier?

- "A 'child soldier' is defined as any child - boy or girl - under 18 years of age, who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including, but not limited to: cooks, porters, messengers, and anyone accompanying such groups other than family members. It includes girls and boys recruited for sexual purposes and/or forced marriage. The definition, therefore, does not only refer to a child who is carrying, or has carried weapons"
 - UNICEF



In the Past

- Early Accounts
 - In the Bible (David and Saul)
 - Romans
 - Medieval Europe
 - Early Modern Warfare
 - Waterloo e.g.
 - Civil War
 - Spanish-American War
- World War II
 - Hitler Youth
 - Jewish Children
 - Soviet Children



Some Facts

- 300,000 children are currently participating in armed conflicts, some are as young as 8 years old
- Over 160,000 in Africa
- 2 million children dead; 6 million disabled or maimed in conflicts
- Not just rebel groups, but governments as well
- It is estimated that 90% of the LRA is abducted children
- Between 8,000 and 10,000 children are killed or maimed by landmines every year.



Around the World

Countries/situations where children were recruited or used in hostilities - April 2004 to October 2007

Africa

Burundi
Central African Republic
Chad
Cote d'Ivoire

Democratic Republic of the Congo
Somalia
Sudan
Uganda

Americas and the Caribbean

Colombia

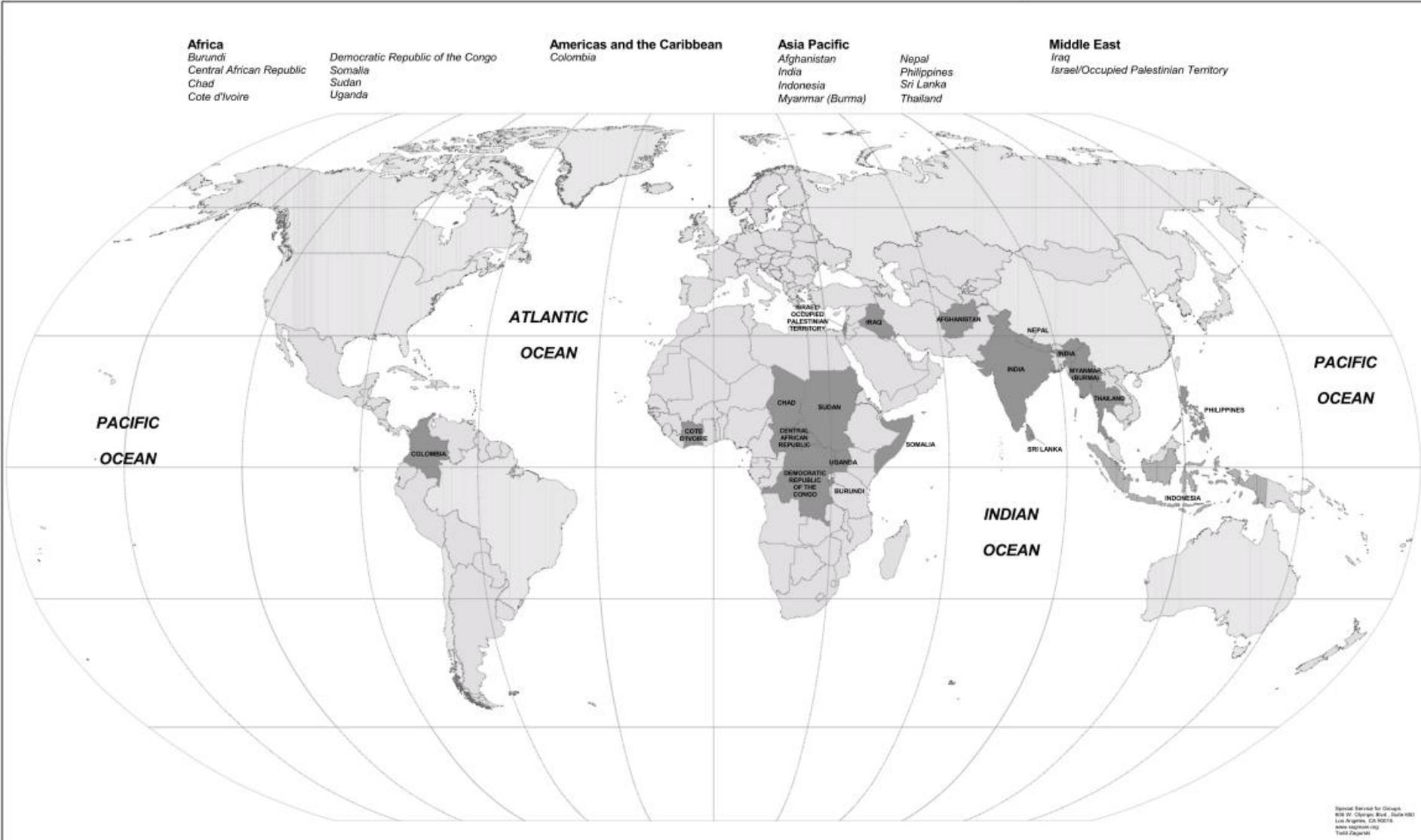
Asia Pacific

Afghanistan
India
Indonesia
Myanmar (Burma)

Nepal
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Thailand

Middle East

Iraq
Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory



Around the World (cont.)

- There are 36 Countries where children under the age of 18 are being used either as government soldiers, police force, or rebel groups

Countries Where Child Soldiers Exist	Children are serving in government militaries	Children are serving in paramilitaries (Police)	Children are serving in opposition forces
Algeria		X	X
Afghanistan	X	X	x
Angola	X		X
Burundi	X		X
Chad	X		
Colombia		X	X
Democratic Republic of the Congo	X		X
East Timor		X	X
Eritrea	X		
Ethiopia	X		
India		X	X
Indonesia		X	X
Iran	X	X	
Iraq	X	X	
Israel and the Occupied Territories	X	X	X
Lebanon			X
Mexico		X	X
Myanmar	X		X
Nepal			X
Pakistan			X
Papau New Guinea			x
Philippines			X
Peru		X	
Rawanda	X	X	
Republic of the Congo	X		X
Russian Federation		X	
Sierra Leone	X	X	X
Solomon Islands			X
Sri Lanka			X
Somalia	X	X	X
Sudan	X	X	X
Tajikistan			X
Turkey		X	
Uganda	X	X	
Uzbekistan			X
Yugoslavia		X	X

The Lords Resistance Army (LRA)

- Over 25,000 children have been abducted by the LRA since the 1990's
- 10,000 children abducted between May 2002 and May 2003 alone
- 24 per cent of LRA child soldiers were girls. Girls as young as 12 were used in combat and for other military purposes
- The number of abductions have decreased



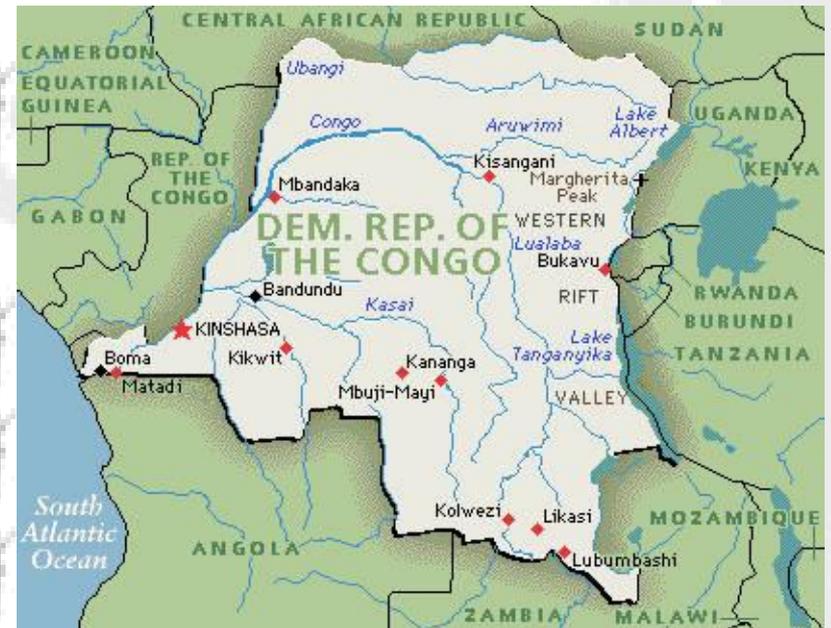
Chad

- The Chadian National Army (ANT) has been recruiting children since mid-2007
- One Senior ANT official stated that “child soldiers are ideal because they don’t complain, they don’t expect to be paid, and if you tell them to kill, they kill”
- A total of 7,000 – 10,000 children soldiers in Chad



Democratic Republic of the Congo

- Nearly 5.5 million people were estimated to have died in the (DRC) since the beginning of the armed conflict in 1998
- At the height of the Second Congo War, there were more than 30,000 children
- A Child Protection Code was passed in 2007 that forbade the recruitment of children
- Still at least 4,000 children in armed groups in the Congo



Afghanistan

- No children in the government armed forces, but many in the terrorist and armed groups
- Many accounts of children, some young as 9, being forced to wear exploding vests
- Exact number of children fighting for the Taliban is unknown



Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)

- DDR is an applied strategy for executing successful peacekeeping operations and is generally the strategy used by all UN Peacekeeping Operations
- In Chad, the UN demobilized over 5,000 children out of the Army
- There are 6 aspects to a successful DDR conversion:
 - Reduction of military expenditure
 - Reorientation of military research and development
 - Conversion of the arms industry
 - Demobilization and reintegration
 - Redevelopment of troops
 - Safe disposal and management of "surplus weapons"



Thanks

