

WELCOME LETTER

By Dr. Shelly Whitman and LGen Roméo Dallaire (ret'd)

The phenomenon of children used as soldiers is not isolated to one country or continent. Despite international conventions, children continue to fill the ranks of seven state armies and fifty non-state armed groups.

News stories involving child soldiers have dominated the media in the last year and now the Chibok girls of Nigeria and the “cubs of the caliphate” have become part of dinner conversations in households across Canada.

Year after year we learn of hundreds, sometimes thousands, of children being released from armed groups in countries like South Sudan, Myanmar and Colombia, yet the cycle of recruitment is perpetual and we simply sit back and wait for the next batch of kids to be released. There's an old saying that goes “if it ain't broke, don't fix it”...well we would argue that this system is broken.

It is time for new and innovative solutions that push us beyond our comfort zones and cause us to address the root causes from new perspectives.

We at the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative believe that in order to progressively eliminate the thought of the use of child soldiers we must focus on prevention. It is the Dallaire Initiative's response to affecting attitude and behaviour change that may be defined as our organizational differential: seeking to demonstrate that our training and teaching has significant, long lasting impacts, well beyond the administration of our immediate training interventions. As a pioneer in this regard, we have the capacity to build an identity as a subject leader in long-term impact assessment of preventative training, which is defined through lessons learned and best practices worldwide.

In our 2014 annual report you will read success stories from our training program graduates, partners and staff that illustrate how our unique approach is being applied effectively in different contexts and countries around the world. Inspiring individuals like Captain Musa Gbow, a graduate of our Train the Trainer course in Sierra Leone, who has been seconded as the first-ever Child Protection Advisor in an African Union peacekeeping mission. Captain Gbow is poised to directly impact the lives of children while working in Somalia to equip peacekeepers with the necessary knowledge and tools to protect children.

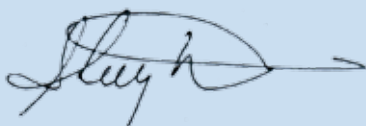
We also share news of our flagship work in Sierra Leone. A unique project that blends our security sector training program with a grassroots education platform. This project is positioning Sierra Leone to become a global leader, establishing a national model of ending the use of child soldiers. While the horrific Ebola epidemic has temporarily interrupted the expansion of our training program there, our trainees continue to give us hope and illustrate the immediate and multi-faceted impact of our work.

Finally, in the coming year we are expanding our work with Canadian police and the Canadian Forces to share our valuable research lessons learned across the country. The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative has been clearly recognized around the globe by the United Nations, the African Union, and NATO as a world leader through our unique approach of protecting children but also protecting the security sector actors who are placed in complex situations involving children.

As the demand for our unique approach increases exponentially we look to you for support, as we strive for a world where the use of child soldiers is “unthinkable.”

Peux ce que veux. Allons-y.

Thank you,



Dr. Shelly Whitman
Executive Director of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative



LGen, the Hon. Roméo Dallaire (ret'd),
Founder of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

CASE STUDY

Sierra Leone

Letter from Captain Musa Gbow, AMISOM Child Protection Advisor and Dallaire Initiative Training Graduate on the prevention of the use of child soldiers



Hailing from Sierra Leone, I experienced one of the most gruesome civil wars in Africa. During an 11 year conflict, many children were forced, coerced or “volunteered” to become soldiers.

The experiences of Sierra Leone during the civil war have demand that we become leaders in eliminating the recruitment and use of child soldiers within Africa. Sierra Leone is undertaking initiatives to incorporate child protection in its security sector training. This is made possible through the involvement of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative working with members of Sierra Leone’s security forces.

As one of the first officers to be trained by the Dallaire Initiative, I came to realize their unique approach is critical in helping the security sector become part of the international solution to end the use of child soldiers. Through its training program, the Dallaire Initiative not only educated me on the issue of child soldiers but also equipped me with the tools and tactics needed to support me in my role as a peacekeeper in preventing their recruitment and use.

Earlier this year, my personal goal to contribute to the elimination of child soldiering was made possible with the assistance of the Dallaire Initiative, Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces and UNICEF when I was deployed as the first ever Child Protection Advisor in an African Union lead Peacekeeping mission. In my Child Protection Advisor Role in Somalia, I provide mentoring and training to many peacekeepers with the aim of preparing them for their interactions with children. My work here is creating a greater sense of awareness among AMISOM peacekeepers to uphold and respect the rights of children.

I want to commend retired Lieutenant General Dallaire and all the staff of the Dallaire Initiative for the great sacrifice they are making to ensure that the recruitment and use of child soldiers becomes a thing of the past. I am proud to be a part of their mission and will continue to ensure that what has befallen many children who are used as soldiers in the world will not happen to future generations.

Captain Musa Gbow

Mogadishu, Somalia

OUR UNIQUE APPROACH: SIERRA LEONE

NATIONAL MODEL

Through a blended model that couples our security sector training and education programs, our flagship Sierra Leone project represents an approach to the issue of child soldiers that can be replicated in other nations.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our education program focuses on educating Sierra Leonean children about their basic legal rights, educates students and parents about how and why children are recruited to become soldiers and how to mitigate the risk of recruitment.

TRAINING PROGRAM

Embedded within the national security structure of Sierra Leone, our training is building the capacity of security sector personnel to understand and implement strategies for preventing the use and recruitment of child soldiers at home and abroad.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

We undertake rigorous impact assessment of our training through the use of pre/post evaluations and six month follow ups with our participants. With the support from a Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant we continue to enhance this process.



SIERRA LEONE IN FOCUS 2014/2015

In May 2014, while the Ebola virus was beginning to spread within the country, the Dallaire Initiative conducted its first ever Training of Trainers course. This focused on equipping local training graduates with the knowledge and skills to conduct our comprehensive, prevention-oriented training for security sector actors.

The development of our Sierra Leone training roster is critical to sustaining our work and ensuring that Sierra Leone is a global leader in the prevention of the use of child soldiers and an exporter of peace in missions where they deploy. After every course, participants are encouraged to keep in touch with each other so they can share their experiences and how they have applied their training. This creates a global network of collaboration.

This approach proved pivotal in the midst of the Ebola crisis. Our graduates created a "What's App" group so they could easily communicate via their mobile phones and share critical information with their colleagues on the evolving crisis. Through this app, our graduates were able to adapt their recent training to better protect children made vulnerable by the Ebola crisis and link their efforts with those of humanitarian aid workers. This illustrates an incredibly positive and unexpected impact that our work has had.



In January 2015, Captain Musa Gbow became the first ever child protection advisor in an African Union peacekeeping mission. Based in Somalia, Captain Gbow is sharing lessons learned through the Dallaire Initiative's training with AU peacekeeping forces as he continues to monitor and evaluate the interactions of security sector forces with children. Part of a groundbreaking agreement between UNICEF, the Dallaire Initiative and the African Union, this partnership along with the knowledge it produces will offer vital lessons for all partners moving forward to address the issue of child soldiers through prevention.

IN FOCUS AFRICAN UNION MISSION TO SOMALIA (AMISOM) AND CHILD PROTECTION ADVISOR

FUNDERS:

We would like to recognize Unifor's leadership support for our work in Sierra Leone.

THE ROMÉO
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"Now we are exporting peace to other nations and it is a testament to how far we have come as a nation."

Sierra Leone Participant in the Dallaire Initiative's Security Sector Training Program on Child Soldiers



CASE STUDY

Community Engagement

Letter from Viviana Montoya, Dallaire Scholar Alumni and Co-Facilitator for the Colombian Comic Book program

Growing up in Colombia, the internal conflict that has entangled my country for years was of special concern for me. Like so many contemporary conflicts around the globe, the fighting that engulfed Colombia prominently featured child soldiers.

During my Masters of Arts degree studies at Dalhousie University, I decided to look more closely at this conflict, particularly the girls who participated in the fighting. While the conflict has raged on for many years, the lives of girl child soldiers were poorly analyzed and understood. Such an interest gave me the opportunity to become a Dallaire Scholar. The support of the Dallaire Initiative's team undoubtedly enriched my research, and facilitated the fieldwork I did in Medellín with an amazing group of former girl soldiers who were keen to successfully reintegrate into society.

My research makes it clear that girls are not passive individuals, but agents of their own development. They want to participate in the healing of their past, as well as in the transformation of their present and future.

The development of the Dallaire Initiative's comic book in Colombia offered me an opportunity to put my research findings into action. Having children at the centre of developing the comic book has allowed them to be an active voice in their story. It is a tool that can be used to warn others of the realities they will face as a child soldier. It also will be used to address the stigma former child soldiers face when they try to re-integrate into their community.

Viviana Montoya

Medellín, Colombia



HOW WE MADE A COMIC

FOCUS GROUPS

The Dallaire Initiative worked with a group of former child soldiers, local illustrators and partner organizations in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Colombia. The local focus group research process ensured that perceptions, attitudes and experiences of the former child soldiers were understood before an outline and content of the comic book was formally developed.

WORKING WITH LOCAL ILLUSTRATORS

For each comic book, the Dallaire Initiative enlisted the help of local illustrators, Seraphin Kajibwami in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nomás in Colombia. Their unique illustration techniques reflect the respective cultures of the countries they call home. Both of these illustrators worked closely with the Dallaire Initiative and former child soldiers during the planning, development and dissemination stages of the project.

DEVELOPMENT OF FINAL PRODUCT

From the texture of the paper, to the use of colour for the illustrations and the comic's distribution, the former child soldiers and local partners connected with each project were instrumental in the creation of the final product. Their input will ensure that these comic books are read widely and reach our intended audience, children at risk of recruitment, current child soldiers and the armed groups they operate within.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN 2014/2015

THE COMIC BOOK PROJECT

Tapping into the popularity of comic books as a form of storytelling and allegory especially with youth, the Dallaire Initiative launched its comic book project with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in October of 2014 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The Dallaire Initiative worked with local illustrator, Seraphin Kajibwami as well as former child soldiers and local partners. Through a series of workshops, together we created *Yoali na Mambo – Utoto ulionyanganywa* – a comic book that explores the life of child soldiers in the DRC.

In January 2015, the Dallaire Initiative traveled to Colombia. Here, with researcher and Dallaire Scholar Viviana Montoya, local illustrator Nomás, former child soldiers and our Colombian partner organization Ciudad Don Bosco the Dallaire Initiative produced *Nosotros – the story of a boy and a girl caught up in the life of an armed group*.

Each comic book reflects the unique recruitment tactics of armed groups and tackles some taboo subjects to start raising awareness on the challenges faced by children and youth in armed conflict. Former child soldiers were involved in all stages of the development process, by sharing their lived experiences we created stories with the hope that they will help other children better understand life in an armed group and avoid the same fate.

Today, these former child soldiers are working with our local partners to implement a dissemination plan for both countries – these comic books will be distributed in hard to reach areas of Colombia and DRC where children are most at risk. By sharing their experiences, these young people have become ambassadors for peace and the Dallaire Initiative is eternally grateful for their willingness to share their stories.



FUNDERS:
The Federal Republic of Germany.



“The workshop was an opportunity to remember what we lived in our past [as child soldiers] and at the same time, to see that outside the armed group we can be better people and strive to reach our goals”

Colombian comic book focus group participant



CASE STUDY

Shaping the Dialogue

Letter From Dr. Shelly Whitman, Executive Director of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

In 2001, I was working as Head of Research on the Inter-Congolese Dialogue with the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire. At that time, I had my first encounters with child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Two of the child soldiers I encountered were working for the national army and were part of my security detail. They were not aggressive, angry or high on drugs; they had uniforms, were well behaved and professional in their demeanour. Yet they were vulnerable, hungry, and undoubtedly children. This experience, along with the many others that would follow have greatly impacted my understanding of war and those who endure it, particularly children.

There are no simple narratives that can accurately explain the complexities of how to address the phenomenon of children used as soldiers. However, there is a critical need to push the boundaries of how to effectively address the use of children as soldiers. This involves shaping the dialogue within public discourse, including the media, amongst academics, policy makers, and the security sector. Moving people to think differently about this issue is the first step in creating momentum towards tangible solutions.

Shaping the dialogue requires new ways of understanding the realities of how children are recruited, why they are used and how to be innovative in our solutions. It is imperative that children are no longer relegated to the bottom of the priority list for those who are engaged in peace and security efforts. We must address major issues such as mass atrocity prevention and security sector reform from new lenses – ones that see how the prevention of the use of children as soldiers can provide entry points for new approaches and innovation. We need to see the connections to the overall goal of peace and security as intricately linked to the success of peacekeeping and peace making.

Dr. Shelly Whitman

Halifax, Nova Scotia



KEY MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

THE DALLAIRE INITIATIVE ADDRESSES NATO

On September 11th 2014, Dr. Shelly Whitman addressed NATO. This presentation was part of NATO's ongoing efforts to mainstream child protection and adjust their military guidelines to ensure troops are sufficiently prepared to cope with the issue of child soldiers whenever and wherever it arises.

PRESENTATIONS WITH CANADIAN NAVY ON THE USE OF CHILDREN IN MARITIME PIRACY

On September 8th 2014, the Dallaire Initiative addressed the assembled representatives for the Multilateral Naval Wargames, held in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Dallaire Initiative continues to be global thought leaders on the issue of children used in maritime piracy.

MEETING OF PARIS PRINCIPLES STEERING GROUP

From October 14th to 15th 2014 the Dallaire Initiative participated in the meeting of the Paris Principles Steering Group in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At this meeting, founder LGen Roméo Dallaire (ret'd) chaired the panel titled *Child Soldiers and Use by Extremist Groups*. Our ongoing inclusion in these meetings ensures that the unique perspective of the security sector on the issue of child soldiers is included within these discussions.



ENDING THE USE OF CHILDREN AS WEAPONS OF WAR: GENERAL DALLAIRE'S ULTIMATE MISSION

Speaking about his ultimate mission to end the use of child soldiers, LGen Roméo Dallaire (ret'd) addressed an assembled crowd of 500 in Halifax on March 10th, 2015. During the course of the lecture, LGen Dallaire explored the unique approach of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative and how this is integrated into the larger international response to the issue.

In recognition of Dr. Shelly Whitman's leadership of the Dallaire Initiative she was recognized with a Progress Women of Excellence Award on November 19th, 2014 in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

IN FOCUS
PROGRESS WOMEN
OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

IN FOCUS KEY PUBLICATIONS AND OP-EDS

OP-EDS

Don't lose sight of future threats as Canada remembers the past

November 11, 2014, the Globe and Mail, by LGen Roméo Dallaire and Dr. Shelly Whitman

Canada should be a leader in the fight against Ebola

September 24, 2014, the Globe and Mail, by LGen Roméo Dallaire, James Orbinski, Frank Chalk

Nigeria's children won't be saved with hashtags alone

May 12, 2014, the Globe and Mail, by LGen Roméo Dallaire and Dr. Shelly Whitman

**I watched the Rwandan genocide unfold.
We're making the same mistakes in Iraq.**

August 18, 2014, the Washington Post, by LGen Roméo Dallaire

To End the Use of Child Soldiers Look to the Security Sector

November 8, 2014, Global Brief, by LGen Roméo Dallaire and Dr. Shelly Whitman

A world without child soldiers

February 12, 2015, the National Post, by LGen Roméo Dallaire and Dr. Shelly Whitman

Child Soldiers and Security Sector Reform: A Sierra Leonean Case Study

June 25, 2014, Security Sector Reform Resource Centre, by Carl Conradi and Dr. Shelly Whitman

RESEARCH PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative: E-Learning (English/French)

Piracy Report: Our Work in 2013

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative: Core Comps (Spanish/French)

Reporting on effective strategies and programs for violence prevention to help children and youth in disasters and complex emergencies.

Prepared by: Rudolph, T., Zinck, E.; Co-leads: Whitman, S., and Fairholm, F.

Understanding the Experiences and Challenges of Former Child Soldiers Integrating into Canadian Society.

Whitman, S., and Liebenberg, L.

Youth Resilience and Culture - Commonalities and Complexities.

Theron, L., Liebenberg, L., and Ungar, M. (Eds), New York, NY: Springer.

The Contribution Participatory Action Research Can Make to Knowledge Mobilization in Psychosocial Services for Children and Families. Qualitative social work.

Ungar, M., McGrath, P., Black, D., Sketris, I., Whitman, S., and Liebenberg, L. (in press).

A simulation exercise to problem solve knowledge mobilization strategies for youth services.

Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement. Ungar, M., Whitman, S., Hart, A., & Phipps, D. (in press).

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“In modern wars, children are not only bystanders affected by conflict around them but are forced to become active participants within it. This new reality requires new solutions, doctrine and training.”

Dr. Shelly Whitman

CASE STUDY

Innovating with Technology



Letter from Josh Boyter, Communications Officer, the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

In 2014, technology uniquely intersected with the issue of child soldiers.

From the savannas of Nigeria where Boko Haram operates to the deserts of ISIS's "caliphate" in Syria and Iraq, we were confronted—often in visceral detail—with the use of child soldiers. While seeing images from the frontline of conflict is not new, the immediacy and the calculated use of children in their propaganda represented a disturbing evolution in the use of children as weapons of war.

As new technology has emerged, many groups have harnessed its potential to communicate, to heal, and ultimately build a better world. The Dallaire Initiative is no different. We often look to technology to help expand the reach of our programming and equip the next generation of security sector actors with the tools and knowledge necessary to prevent the use and recruitment of child soldiers.

This year the Dallaire Initiative took major steps in harnessing technology to help us continue to pursue our mission. We took our world leading training for the security sector on the issue of child soldiers and collaborating with our colleges at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), developed an e-learning course that will train the next generation of peacekeepers and troops combating this issue.

Our work with technology did not end with the security sector. This year we created our Dallaire Digital Ambassador program to help youth mobilize their social media for social good. Realizing the issue of child soldiers is complicated to discuss on social media, we developed new tools and campaigns, such as Six Stories and #weaponsofwar: that helps today's youth gain the understanding needed to discuss this issue confidently.

As I look forward to our work in 2015, integrating technology in our mission to end the use of child soldiers will prove critical.

Josh Boyter

Halifax, Nova Scotia

DALLAIRE DIGITAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

LAUNCH OF DDA PROGRAM

On June 18th, the Dallaire Initiative launched its Dallaire Digital Ambassadors program. This program aims to equip youth with the tools and knowledge to support our mission by using their social media for social good.

CAMPAIGN #1 SIX STORIES

Six Stories aims to illustrate the impact that armed conflict has on the child and community at large. By focusing on the parent, the warlord, the humanitarian, the peacekeeper, the religious leader and the child, individuals are exposed to the many ways a community is affected.

CAMPAIGN #2 BOWLES

Bowles is an online student working paper series. It focuses on publishing papers with purpose through commentary on topics related to children, youth and security around the world. Bowles showcases student works, coupled with expert insights from civil society actors and practitioners in the field, making room for spirited discussion on ideas and issues that affect the world today.

CAMPAIGN #3 #weaponsofwar

#weaponsofwar explores the roles not normally associated with children used as weapons of war: the porter; the spy; the cook; the messenger; and the chai boy. Through this campaign individuals learn that not every child soldier carries a gun.



HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO EXTEND OUR REACH: OUR E-LEARNING COURSE

In July 2014, the Dallaire Initiative with its partner, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) began testing its co-developed e-learning course, *E-learning: Child Soldiers and Security Actors*. Focused on equipping the security sector with the tools and knowledge needs to prevent the use and recruitment of child soldiers while on peacekeeping mission, this e-learning course makes the Dallaire Initiative's world leading training even more accessible.

On December 10th, the Dallaire Initiative launched its e-learning course in New York City at the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations. This well attended event included representatives from child protection agencies and the security sector. The launch also included remarks from Leila Zerrougi, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict and Michel Chikwanine, Dallaire Initiative International Advisory Council Member.



FUNDERS:

Federal Republic of Germany (E-Learning)
Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts (CYCC)
Knowledge Mobilization Grant (DDA)

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“You have the tools, you believe the time is right, you see the future up close and you want to shape it. You are not going to merely hope for change. You will make it.”

LGen Roméo Dallaire (ret'd)



FINANCIALS

2014/2015

Extraordinary Collaborators

All financial contributions to the Dallaire Initiative help us conduct the training, research and advocacy needed to help eradicate the use of child soldiers.

Thank you for supporting us in making the use of child soldiers unthinkable.

International Advisory Council Members

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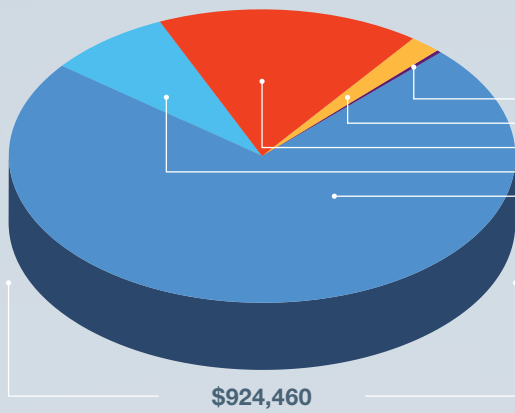
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FINANCIAL REPORT 2014/2015

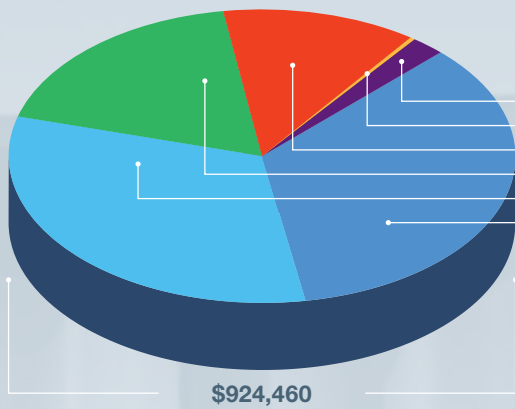
2014/2015 was a successful year for the Dallaire Initiative as we realized record investments in our work while launching three special projects and expanding the reach of our training program into Uganda. Our operating revenues and expenses totaled \$924,460, with 85% of overall expenses directed to program costs.

Our program and special project activities operated under a balanced budget – this is an important measure of our financial success, diligent stewardship, and energetic program management. As we enter a new fiscal year financially well positioned to support our strategic direction, we look forward to getting closer to achieving our critical mission of ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers within a continued framework of effective operational and fiscal management.



HOW WE USE OUR FUNDS

SCHOLARSHIPS	\$3,000
IN-KIND GIFTS	\$20,000
SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$168,655
OPERATING EXPENSES	\$79,490
PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS	\$653,315



WHERE WE GET OUR MONEY FROM

IN KIND GIFTS	\$20,000
SCHOLARSHIPS	\$3,000
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$114,731
GRANTS AND SPECIAL PURPOSE	\$168,655
GENERAL REVENUE	\$296,345
GIFTS AND DONATIONS	\$321,729



PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

THE ROMÉO DALLAIRE



CHILD SOLDIERS INITIATIVE



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“The ultimate focus of the rest of my life is to end the use of child soldiers and to eliminate even the thought of the use of children as an instrument of war. Your ongoing support is critical in helping me achieve this mission.”

LGen Roméo Dallaire (ret'd)