



## Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

International Secretariat

2-12 Pentonville Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, London N1 9HF

Tel: +44 207 713 2761 Fax: +44 207 713 2794

Email: [info@child-soldiers.org](mailto:info@child-soldiers.org) Web: [www.child-soldiers.org](http://www.child-soldiers.org)

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### **Submission to the UN Study on Violence against Children, with specific reference to children in military schools and to children in peacetime government forces**

#### **Introduction**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes that children enjoy the right to an education, including "the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential," "the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own," and "the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendships among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin."<sup>1</sup>

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP), which was adopted in May 2000 and came into force on 12 February 2002, prohibits the forcible recruitment of under-18s into any government army as well as their participation in armed conflict. It also prohibits the recruitment and use of any person under 18 years of age by armed opposition groups.

It requires states to raise in years the standard for voluntary recruitment by government forces beyond the age of 15 (article 3[1]) and establishes a number of safeguards (article 3[3]) to ensure that any voluntary recruitment is genuinely voluntary.<sup>2</sup> Under article 3(5)<sup>3</sup> of the OP, schools operated by or under the control of the armed forces of the states party to the OP are not required to raise in years the age for admission into these schools, but such schools are required to operate in accordance with articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Some of the arguments used against the "straight-18" standard for voluntary recruitment and the exemption made for military schools were that in many countries the function of the military is not limited to defence and that it gives young people an

<sup>1</sup> Art. 29, Convention on the Rights of the Child, <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/treaties/crc.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Art. 3, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/treaties/opac.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, op. cit.

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers unites national, regional and international organisations and Coalitions in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Its founding organisations are Amnesty International, Defence for Children International, Human Rights Watch, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Save the Children Alliance, Jesuit Refugee Service, the Quaker United Nations Office-Geneva and World Vision International.



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opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills and provides access to education that may be useful to them in the future.<sup>4</sup>

### **Key issues, concerns and recommendations**

#### 1. Military Schools:

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers does not have a position on the existence of military schools per se. It opposes the existence of military schools in which pupils under 18 years are members of the armed forces or could be used or targeted in hostilities. It has concerns about the treatment of children in military schools, about the appropriateness of the military environment and militarized education in relation to its compatibility with aims of education as stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and whether it removes or reduces the ability of children to make a genuine voluntary choice about joining the armed forces on reaching the age of 18 years.

The key issues of concern in relation to children in military schools are:

- degree of violence and abuse to which they are subjected.
- their status: whether or not they are members of the armed forces.
- their ability to decide on reaching 18 years whether or not to join the armed forces.
- whether they receive military/weapons training.
- whether they are subject to military discipline and punishment.
- the nature of the education and whether it is compatible with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol.
- the degree of supervision of both the quality and nature of the education and of the ambience and discipline of the school by civilian authorities.
- the ability of children to complain about ill-treatment or bullying, and to leave if they wish.

#### *Recommendations*

At a minimum, the Study should ensure that the existence of military schools is referred to in the section of the Study dealing with violence against children in the school, and that any proposals for supervision, types of discipline which are permissible or prohibited, external complaints mechanisms, etc, for civilian schools are explicitly extended to military schools as well.

#### 2. Violence against children in peacetime government armed forces:

The Coalition is convinced that the armed forces are no place for any child under the age of 18 years under any circumstances.

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<sup>4</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers and UNICEF, *Guide to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict*, page 16, note 25, [http://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_19025.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_19025.html)



### *Key issues*

- children under 18 continue to be recruited into government armed forces both legally as volunteers, and sometimes illegally and by force or deception.
- the armed forces are a state institution and as such have a duty of care for under-18s in their care.
- there is considerable evidence of bullying, rape, sexual violence (against both girls and boys), harassment to the point of self-harm and/or suicide, depression and mental illness, and so on.

### *Recommendations*

At a minimum, the Study should ensure that the existence of violence against children in regular peacetime armed forces is explicitly referred to in the Study, and that recommendations concerned with children in controlled state institutions, in particular those with a hierarchical structure, and where the children are resident, also cover the armed forces – including, for example, the need for effective external supervision such as an independent ombudsman, adequate screening procedures for incoming recruits, access to effective complaints system not linked to the military hierarchy and that criminal records checks are run on all those having access to under-18s.

Children in peacetime armed forces and children attending military schools or training in countries where they are considered members of the armed forces, are at risk of becoming lawful objects of attack by opposing forces in the case of an armed conflict.

The Coalition believes that the best child protection policy is not to allow the recruitment of any under-18s into the armed forces or to any other military institutions which effectively makes children members of the armed forces.

Section 1 provides three examples to illustrate the problems of institutionalised violence, bullying and neglect of children in peacetime government forces. There are numerous reports of ill-treatment of under-18s in Paraguayan military installations, some resulting in death, and of orphans and street children 'adopted' into Russian military units exposing them to harsh living conditions and to the risks of bullying, other abuse and the hazards of military training. In March 2005, the British armed forces were criticised by the UK Commons Defence Select Committee for failing to provide due care for under-18s joining their ranks, after the death of four young recruits at the Deepcut Barracks between 1995 and 2002.

Section 2 provides background information (arising from the Child Soldiers Global Report 2004) to indicate the scope of the existence of the little-studied issue of military schools.



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## Section I

### Violence against Children in peacetime government forces

The cases of Paraguay, Russia and the United Kingdom are examined here as examples of how violence against children in peacetime government forces has become institutionalised, leading in many cases to grave abuses of human rights, including torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and deaths.

#### Paraguay

Over 100 young conscripts have died since 1989 while on compulsory military service and many others have been victims of serious accidents, including some as young as 12.<sup>5</sup> The deaths and injuries were believed to be the result of excessive punishment by officers and the lack of safety measures for dangerous activities such as handling weapons. Some conscripts suffered permanent psychiatric damage after systematic ill-treatment. One study, by *the Movimiento de Objeción de Conciencia* (Conscientious Objection Movement), a Paraguayan non-governmental organization (NGO), found that both the military and the police routinely ill-treated conscripts physically and psychologically, including by excessive and forced physical exercise to the point of exhaustion. This treatment was used as a means of maintaining discipline and as punishment for disobedience and failure to comply with orders.<sup>6</sup>

Children as young as 12 continue to be forcibly recruited into the armed forces. Many youngsters without papers have been conscripted and in some cases, birth certificates have been forged by civilian and military authorities to justify their presence in the armed forces. Existing measures to verify the age of conscripts and to safeguard their physical and psychological integrity are failing to stop serious human rights violations from taking place.<sup>7</sup>

Authorities have argued that many children are admitted into the armed forces 'voluntarily', because their parents or carers cannot provide food, clothing or education for them and have asked commanders at military units to take them in. Many others are not able to avoid forcible recruitment because of their disadvantaged position within society. Indigenous families in the Chaco region are subjected to exploitation and ill-treatment by members of the army and many of their youngsters forcibly recruited into the armed forces, where they face discrimination and ill-treatment on a regular basis.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, children from deprived backgrounds or who are in conflict with the law have been sent to military barracks for drug "rehabilitation," a practice which was common during the military dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989) and clearly contravenes the new national legislation such as the Law on Childhood and

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<sup>5</sup> *Amnesty International Report 2004*, Amnesty International (AI), *Paraguay: No child's play – Under-age recruitment in the armed forces must stop*, 5 April 2001, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/engindex>.

<sup>6</sup> Fernando Rojas, *El servicio militar obligatorio en Paraguay: Entre la contestación social y la inercia de las instituciones del Estado autoritario*, Research and Education in Defense and Security Studies Conference, Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, Washington DC, 22-25 May 2001 (REDES 2001), <http://www.ndu.edu/chds/REDES2001> (Programa, Bloque IV, Panel 2).

<sup>7</sup> Noguera, Maria, "Paraguay: Institutional violence against children in the armed forces," *Child Soldiers Newsletter* 12, Autumn 2004, <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/newletters>

<sup>8</sup> Noguera, Maria, "Paraguay: Institutional violence against children in the armed forces," op. cit.



Adolescence. Many underprivileged children are used for domestic work in military institutions, but their legal status in such places is unclear. When these children are the victims of human rights violations as a result of their employment, relatives have little recourse to civilian or military law.

There are seven schools under the Army Command of Institutes of Military Education (*Comando de Institutos Militares de Enseñanza del Ejército*, CIMEE), including the Reserve Officers' Training Centre for Students' Military Instruction (*Centro de Instrucción Militar para Estudiantes y de Formación de Oficiales de Reserva del Ejército*, CIMEFOR).<sup>9</sup> CIMEFOR training is compulsory by law for secondary school students, who are required to receive military instruction for the whole of January over two consecutive years, and may opt to attend for a further year.<sup>10</sup> Following comprehensive reforms to the educational system, it has been reported that since 2003 students are no longer required to attend CIMEFOR training, although those over 18 may apply to do so.<sup>11</sup> Since 2003 females have been accepted as students at military academies, where they occupy around 20 per cent of available annual vacancies.<sup>12</sup>

There have been several deaths of under-18s in the armed forces and military schools in since 2000. Héctor Adán Maciel, recruited at the age of 16, died on 10 April 2001 from a gunshot wound after being illegally conscripted.<sup>13</sup> His death was not investigated by the civilian courts.

Luis Fernando Bobadilla was a student at the *Escuela Técnica del Arsenal de la Marina*, Navy Arsenal Technical School, when he was shot in the head in November 2002, at the age of 15. He later died from his wounds. Although an investigation has been opened in the courts, the Attorney General's office recently said that there was not enough evidence to proceed with the investigation. The military authorities have consistently denied any responsibility.<sup>14</sup>

Twenty-year-old Miguel Ángel Quintana Sánchez was subjected to repeated ill-treatment while doing his compulsory military service. His injuries were so severe that he had to undergo surgery. In July 2004, he presented an official complaint for torture to the Chamber of Deputies' Human Rights Commission and was declared a conscientious objector by the Commission after he testified that he was afraid for his life: "I was really afraid they would kill me. I heard that many soldiers in my condition had been killed."

Relatives of Domingo Savio Villalba, who suffered psychiatric trauma as a result of ill-treatment and torture while doing his compulsory military service, also took his case to the Chamber of Deputies' Human Rights Commission after the armed forces denied him medical attention. The case is still pending in the Commission.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Latin American Military: Paraguay, [http://www.lamilitary.com/PY\\_EPa.html](http://www.lamilitary.com/PY_EPa.html).

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of National Defence, Cimefor Ejército, 2001, <http://www.defensanacional.cc/images/Cimefor01.doc>.

<sup>11</sup> Communication from Child Soldiers Coalition Latin America, 18 June 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Última Hora, "Mujeres preparan botas", 22 November 2002, <http://www.ultimahora.com>; see also Child Soldiers Coalition Latin America, November 2002, <http://www.cns.org.py/noviembre2002.html>

<sup>13</sup> Amnesty International Report 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos de Paraguay, CODEHUPY, *Derechos Humanos en Paraguay 2002*, Asunción, 2002; Noguera, María, "Paraguay: Institutional violence against children in the armed forces," op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Noguera, María, "Paraguay: Institutional violence against children in the armed forces," op. cit.



Thanks to the efforts of relatives of victims and other civil society organisations, an inter-institutional commission was created to verify the presence of under-18s in military installations. In May 2004, the inter-institutional commission, made up of international and national NGOs, was denied access to the Communications and Engineering Commands of the First Infantry Division. In March 2005, the inter-institutional commission was given access to 30 military barracks and found that three under-18s were stationed at the *Tercera División de Infantería* (Third Infantry Division).<sup>16</sup>

Paraguay has consistently failed to investigate cases of abuse, punish those responsible and provide appropriate compensation and medical attention to recruits who have suffered at the hands of the military. The state has also failed to effectively protect all under-18s from forced recruitment into the army and in particular, those children who are most vulnerable to discrimination and abuse.

### **Russian Federation**

There have been reports of forcible conscription and the possibility of under-18s being among the conscripts cannot be ruled out. Voluntary recruits in military training schools are considered to be on active service. In the Chechen Republic, boys have been involved with a number of armed political groups and girls were reportedly used in suicide bombings.<sup>17</sup>

A project for the military to “adopt” or sponsor orphans, homeless children and children from single-parent families was implemented from 1997 and formalized by presidential decree in 2000. The regulation, entitled “On enrolling underage citizens of the Russian Federation as wards of military units and providing them with essential allowances”, permits boys between the ages of 14 and 16 to be voluntarily enrolled and attached to military units.<sup>18</sup>

The government has argued that army sponsorship provides accommodation and education in a country where an estimated three million children are orphaned – the term being used to include fatherless or abandoned children – and where social services face grave financial constraints.<sup>19</sup>

The program has been criticized for inflicting harsh conditions on children and exposing them to the risks of bullying, other abuse and the hazards of military training. Recent figures were unavailable, but the Defence Minister said in 1999 that Russian military institutions were accommodating 35,000 orphans and homeless children, and that 12,000 were receiving “full room and board and [were] enlisted in

<sup>16</sup> “Fuerzas armadas siguen enrolando a niños y adolescentes, denuncia Afavisem”, ABC Color, 16 March 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/global-reports>

<sup>18</sup> Vremya MN, 18 February 2000; see also Elisabeth Sieca-Kozłowski, The ABC of Soviet resurrections and the militarizing of society under Putin, 28 January 2003, Post-Soviet Armies Newsletter, posted at Johnson’s Russia List, No. 7037, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson>.

<sup>19</sup> Igor Frolov, “Orphans find a new family with Russian Military”, The Russia Journal, 30 August 1999, posted at Post-Soviet Armies Newsletter (New roles for the military; Social agent). For an account of child welfare issues, see State Committee of the Russian Federation on Statistics, Child and family welfare in Russia, 2001, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, <http://www.unicef-icdc.org> (Research, Economic and social policy, Monitoring change, Country analytical reports).



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logistics units, military orchestras and cadet schools housed in ... disbanded military academies".<sup>20</sup> This figure appeared to include an estimated 5,000 students enrolled at official military training establishments, not all of whom were orphans.<sup>21</sup>

During the late 1990s another 7,000 reportedly lived permanently on military bases. The remaining 23,000 were non-permanent residents, many of them attached to military units on a part-time basis, to attend summer training camps or to obtain food. Together, these children formed "boys' squads" which were reportedly integrated to varying degrees into regular units of the Russian army.<sup>22</sup>

In February 2003 the Kineshma army base in Central Russia was reported to have recently housed a 12 year old, although the other boys there were at least 14. They spent their days in school but their weekends and time before and after school were devoted to military duties, including learning to use and care for gas masks and firearms.<sup>23</sup>

Under the Law on Military Duty and Military Service, boys aged 16 may obtain vocational training at military educational establishments, where they "acquire the status of military persons, doing military service under the draft", and may voluntarily sign up for service once they reach 18 (Article 35). From the age of 17, they may enrol for military training programs at vocational schools, and members of the Cadet Corps and other such bodies may begin training, so that once the draft begins they may choose a branch of the armed services on the basis of an acquired level of competence (Article 15). There are numerous dedicated military secondary schools for the "military training of minor citizens" (Article 19). They include eight Suvorov schools, which admit orphans and other students from the age of 11, and whose motto is "Give your life to the motherland, but your honour to no-one". Students usually go on to further military education.<sup>24</sup>

An academy opened by the Moscow Tax Police in September 2000 reportedly had an entrance age of ten years old. The Moscow Tax Police Cadet Corps, made up of the 200 students, many of whom were orphans, reportedly lived at the academy, wore military uniforms and followed a strict regime that included drill, weekly weapons handling and intensive military and physical training at a summer camp.<sup>25</sup>

In ordinary secondary schools, the Law on Military Duty and Military Service requires that boys "shall pass training in the military fundamentals", civil defence and knowledge of military duty in their final two years (Articles 12 and 13). The law also makes provision for obligatory military training and "patriotic upbringing" for schoolchildren (Article 14).<sup>26</sup>

A Basic Military Training program, introduced in secondary schools in September 1999, was only partially implemented, and legislation to introduce combat training

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<sup>20</sup> Igor Frolov, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> As estimated by Child Soldiers Coalition.

<sup>22</sup> *Trud*, 10 December 1997

<sup>23</sup> Eve Conant, "They're in the army now: The Russian military is trying out an unusual method of caring for destitute boys. It adopts them", *Newsweek* web exclusive, 25 February 2003, posted at Johnson's Russia List, No. 7078.

<sup>24</sup> TV RTR, "Russia's Suvorov Military Academies Celebrate 60th Anniversary of Founding", 21 August 2003, from BBC Monitoring Service, posted at Post-Soviet Armies Newsletter (Military education).

<sup>25</sup> Amelia Gentleman, "Raising taxes, Moscow style", *The Observer* (London), 20 May 2001.

<sup>26</sup> *Russian Federation Legal Acts on Civil Military Relations*, Collection of Documents, Moscow, 2003.



and military history in schools for 15-year-old boys was reportedly introduced shortly after Vladimir Putin assumed the presidency in December 1999.<sup>27</sup>

In October 2003 the parliament (*Duma*) passed the first reading of an amended education law that would harmonize education and military service laws and establish the legal basis for compulsory military training in schools.<sup>28</sup> It was unclear whether the amendment had passed its third reading by March 2004.

Despite these legal measures, it seemed likely that military training in schools would not be consistently applied throughout the country and would remain voluntary. Media reports occasionally reported school training programs.

In September 2003, 16-year-old Alexander Bochanov reportedly died in the Khanty-Mansiysk region after he was allegedly not allowed to remove his gas mask following a late-night 10 km run. A military instructor was cleared of any criminal offence and the activity was deemed a legitimate element of the school curriculum.<sup>29</sup> In early 2004 schoolboys were observed assembling Kalashnikov rifles.<sup>30</sup>

## United Kingdom

The minimum voluntary recruitment age for the armed forces is 16. Between six and seven thousand under-18s are believed to be serving in the armed forces. On ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict in June 2003, the government said it would no longer deploy under-18s in hostilities although it reserved the right to do so in some circumstances.<sup>31</sup> Army recruits under the age of 18 who enlist for a 22-year term of service could be required to serve for a minimum of almost six years.

There are four junior entry routes into the army, three of which train 16 year olds for the infantry and other branches of the armed forces. The Army Foundation College (Harrogate) trains school leavers aged between 16 and 17 years old as combat soldiers. They receive 42 weeks' training after which they are posted to their units and classed as members of the armed forces.<sup>32</sup>

Two courses for 16 year olds are offered by the Army Training Regiment (Bassingbourn) which provide around 11 weeks' basic training for all branches of the services (except the Parachute Regiment, Royal Artillery and Royal Armoured Corps), followed by more specialized training. Recruits can also attend Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College from 16 years old in order to finish their secondary education whilst participating in "regular military training activities". The curriculum is science and technology-based in order to prepare students for related degrees which then lead them on to careers as officers in the technical branches of the forces.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Elisabeth Sieca-Kozlowski, op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> *Pravda*, "Militarization of Russia is under way", 13 October 2003.

<sup>29</sup> AFP, 11 November 2003; Interfax, 24 March 2003.

<sup>30</sup> Sarah Rainsford, "Russia toys with schoolboy soldiers", BBC News, 13 February 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>.

<sup>31</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Child Soldiers Global Report 2004, <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/global-reports>

<sup>32</sup> *Experience Life as a Soldier: Career opportunities for 16 to 26 year olds*, December 2001; Information from Army Recruitment Sergeant, July 2004.

<sup>33</sup> *Experience Life as a Soldier*, op. cit.; British Army, <http://www.army.mod.uk> (Units, Training, AFC, Joining); *Welbeck: The Defence Sixth Form College*, Prospectus 2005/2006.



The UK Cadet Corps is not part of the armed forces. Boys and girls aged 13 to 18 may join Combined Cadet Force units based in schools and cadet forces for the separate services. The minimum entry age is 12 for the Sea Cadet Corps, and some units have junior sections for ten to twelve year olds.<sup>34</sup>

The deaths by shooting of two 17-year-old soldiers in 2001 and 2002 caused widespread public disquiet. Both were on guard duty alone at Deepcut Barracks, Surrey, UK. An open verdict was returned at the inquest into the 2001 death.<sup>35</sup>

Surrey police and the army were repeatedly criticized by the dead soldiers' families for seriously flawed initial investigations into their deaths and the deaths of two other young soldiers at Deepcut (in 1995), and for excessive secrecy throughout the inquiries.<sup>36</sup>

The families continued to dispute the army's conclusions that their children had committed suicide and repeatedly pressed for an independent inquiry despite the Defence and the Armed Forces ministers ruling out any such inquiry.<sup>37</sup>

The fifth and final police inquiry into Deepcut expressed concern over the incidence of bullying and called for more effective supervision of new recruits. The investigation found that 59 incidents of self-harm by recruits were recorded at Deepcut between 1996 and 2001, and estimated that about the same number were unrecorded. The police recommended a wider inquiry into intimidation and harassment that may have contributed to suicides.<sup>38</sup>

In March 2004 the parliamentary Commons Defence Committee initiated an inquiry into the armed forces' duty of care in all its training establishments.<sup>39</sup> The findings of the Committee were published on 14 March 2005 (Duty of Care - Third Report of Session 2004–05.)<sup>40</sup>

The Commission called on the establishment of an external complaints procedure where an independent complaints commission, with retrospective powers, investigates allegations of bullying and abuse. The commission's decisions should be binding for the military. It also asks the Ministry of Defence to examine the "potential impact" of raising the recruitment age of all three armed services to 18. It calls on the army to act as *in loco parentis* for under 18-year-olds and that in future under-18s should undertake guard duty in pairs and should not be issued with firearms while doing so. Criminal record checks should be done on instructors dealing with recruits under 18 years of age. It calls on the army to clearly define what constitutes bullying and on prevention rather than reacting to complaints. The report also criticises "[the]

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.armycadets.com>, <http://www.air-cadets.org>, <http://www.sea-cadets.org>.

<sup>35</sup> Brian Cathcart, "What really happened at Deepcut Barracks?", *The Independent Review*, 29 July 2004, <http://www.independent.co.uk>.

<sup>36</sup> Brian Cathcart, op. cit.; Amnesty International, *United Kingdom: Army barracks deaths – Families demand justice*, 18 June 2003, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/engindex>.

<sup>37</sup> Brian Cathcart, op. cit.; BBC, "Timeline: Deaths at Deepcut", 20 May 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>.

<sup>38</sup> Surrey Police, *Deepcut Investigation Final Report*, 4 March 2004, <http://www.surreypolice.uk>.

<sup>39</sup> Parliamentary Defence Committee, *Duty of Care Inquiry - Terms of Reference*, 9 March 2004, <http://www.parliament.uk> (Committees, Defence Committee, 2003-2004 press notices).

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmdfence/63/63.pdf>



level of support given to the families of those who die in non-combat circumstances falls well short of what is provided to families of combat casualties”<sup>41</sup>

Following the publication of the Duty of Care report, the International Coalition to stop the use of child soldiers called on the UK government to set 18 as the minimum age for military recruitment into all the UK armed forces as soon as possible.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Kim Sengupta, “Serious failings within Army led to deaths of young and vulnerable”, The Independent (UK), 14 March 2005; Richard Norton-Taylor, “Military needs watchdog, say MPs”, The Guardian (UK), 14 March 2005.

<sup>42</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, “UK Government must raise age of military recruitment to 18,” 14 March 2005, see: <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/press-releases>



## Section 2

### Global summary of Children in military schools

The following country information on military training and military schools arises from the Child Soldiers Global Report 2004, published in November 2004.<sup>43</sup>

Analysis of the available data shows that a large number of countries that have ratified the Optional Protocol allow under-18s to study in military institutions, often receiving weapons and combat training. It remained unclear if many of these countries had enacted domestic legislation that would prevent under-18s in military schools and institutions from being required to participate in armed conflict.

In some countries children at risk are routinely incorporated into military schools and institutions from a very young age, where they perform domestic and military duties alongside adults. Of particular concern is the situation of homeless and orphaned children 'adopted' from the age of ten or eleven by military units in Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. In the absence of functioning social services, tens of thousands of such children attend school, receive military training and in some cases live in army barracks. The practice raises concerns about their exposure to harsh conditions, bullying and other forms of abuse, as well as to hazardous activities such as weapons training, although there have been no reports of such children being deployed in combat.

There is little available information on the actual treatment and care of under-18s in military schools around the world. The following table summarises available data on the status of children in military schools worldwide.

States <b>do not admit</b> under-18s into military schools	Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Cameroon, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Mongolia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Tunisia.
States admit under-18s into military schools but students <b>are not members</b> of the armed forces	Latvia, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden <sup>44</sup> and Turkey.
States admit under-18s into military schools and students <b>are members</b> of the armed forces	Australia, <sup>45</sup> Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, <sup>46</sup> Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China, Eritrea, Cuba, Georgia, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, <sup>47</sup> Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Myanmar, Netherlands, North Korea, The Philippines, Portugal, <sup>48</sup> Romania, Russia, Singapore, United Kingdom, Viet Nam.

<sup>43</sup> Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Child Soldiers Global Report 2004, <http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/global-reports>

<sup>44</sup> Students are not members, but unclear if they can be drafted in emergencies.

<sup>45</sup> Australian cadets are not members of the armed forces.

<sup>46</sup> Students are members but would not be deployed.

<sup>47</sup> Japanese cadets are members of the armed forces, but it is not clear in the legislation if they can be deployed into combat.

<sup>48</sup> Students can only join with parental consent.



States admit under-18s into military schools and students <b>could be members</b> of the armed forces (but it's not clear in legislation or in practice)	Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, <sup>49</sup> Czech Rep, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, <sup>50</sup> Hungary, Iraq, Libya, Malaysia, <sup>51</sup> Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, South Korea, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, Uzbekistan, Venezuela.
States where there was <b>insufficient information on age of admission</b> into military schools	Armenia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro, Timor Leste, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

The Coalition is concerned about countries where under-18s admitted into military schools are members of the armed forces. Furthermore, the Coalition is concerned about a large number of countries where the age of entry into military schools is not specified or it is not clear if students at military schools are members of the armed forces. As well as the harsh conditions often endured in these institutions, children are at risk of being deployed in armed conflict or of becoming lawful targets for armed opposition groups.

## AFRICA

**Eritrea:** In January 2004 UNICEF expressed concern at the requirement that all secondary school students must complete their final year at a school near the main military training camp in Sawa if they wanted to graduate or to attend university.<sup>52</sup> Access to the school was strictly controlled and an official was reported as saying he considered the students to be members of the armed forces.<sup>53</sup> In 2001 over 2,000 students were detained when they demanded reform of a mandatory summer work program. Two students had reportedly died from the harsh conditions on the program. In August 2003 over 200 students on the program were allegedly beaten for possessing bibles, and 57 of them detained in scorching conditions inside metal shipping containers without adequate food or medical care. Six students were reportedly still held in solitary confinement in underground cells in November 2003.<sup>54</sup>

**Ethiopia:** There were at least six known military training camps in Ethiopia, all operational, and officers' and specialized training schools. A defence force engineering college was established in 1996, but information on the minimum age of enrolment was not available.

<sup>49</sup> Students could become members at 16, after training.

<sup>50</sup> In Guatemala it was not clear if students at military institutions are members, although peace accords prohibit children in the military. There are under-18s in military institutions and many receive harsh punishments.

<sup>51</sup> Students are expected to become members after graduation.

<sup>52</sup> US Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2003, 25 February 2004, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/c1470.htm>; Jonah Fisher, "Eritrea rapped for 'military' schooling", BBC News, 11 January 2004.

<sup>53</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Eritrea human rights overview*, January 2004.

<sup>54</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR Position on Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers to Eritrea*, January 2004.



**Niger:** Niger's initial report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child said that Decree No 97- 459/PRN/MDN of 26 December 1997 on the organization and establishment of a military school had established the *Prytanée militaire de Niamey* within the armed forces. Admission was open to boys and young men holding a primary school leaving certificate, and entrants received a general school education as well as military training. The decree did not specify the minimum age of admission, but children normally left primary school between 11 and 13.<sup>55</sup> The government reportedly undertook to review the school prior to ratifying the Optional Protocol.<sup>56</sup> It was not known whether such a review took place.

**Nigeria:** There are several military high schools in Nigeria including the Nigerian Military School, Zaria; the Air Force Military School, Jos; and the Nigerian Navy Secondary Schools in Ojo and Abeokuta.<sup>57</sup> It is not known whether children at the schools are considered to be members of the armed forces. The Nigerian Defence Academy accepts cadets aged 18 and above.<sup>58</sup>

## AMERICAS

**Argentina:** Several military schools provide training for officers and specialist armed forces training.<sup>59</sup> The minimum age of enrolment in such schools is 17 for boys attending the navy's non-commissioned officers (NCOs) school, and 16 for boys and girls at the National Military College and the Military Air Force School.<sup>60</sup> The minimum age of admission is 18 for commissioned officers and 16 for NCOs; there is no provision for them to participate in armed conflicts.<sup>61</sup> Students in the last two years of military high school (*liceo militar*) receive military instruction as part of a general education, but no provision is made for their participation in armed conflicts.<sup>62</sup> Military high schools are run by the armed forces and recognized by the Ministry of Education. In some schools cadets wear military uniforms or receive weapons training.<sup>63</sup> Children may enrol from 11 or 12 years of age and must be no older than 15. Cadets may graduate as reserve second lieutenants (*subtenientes de reserva*) and go on to train as officers. Since education reforms in 1994, military schools have been able to enrol girls and to offer nursery and primary schooling to children from as young as four or five.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Initial report of Niger to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/3/Add.29/Rev.1, 17 October 2001, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>56</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations: Niger, UN Doc. CRC/C/15/Add.179, 13 June 2002, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>57</sup> Nigerian Military Secondary Schools, <http://members.tripod.com/cdssikeja/links.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Nigerian Army Corps and Schools website, Nigerian Defence Academy, [www.nigerianarmy.net/schools/nda.htm](http://www.nigerianarmy.net/schools/nda.htm).

<sup>59</sup> Ejército Argentino (Army), [http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index\\_ppal.htm](http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index_ppal.htm) (Educación); Armada Argentina (Navy), <http://www.armada.mil.ar> (Incorporación); Fuerza Aérea Argentina (Air force), <http://www.faa.mil.ar> (Incorporación y educación).

<sup>60</sup> Escuela de Suboficiales de la Armada, at Armada Argentina, op. cit.; Colegio Militar de la Nación, <http://www.colegiomilitar.mil.ar>; Escuela de Aviación Militar, at Fuerza Aérea Argentina, op. cit.

<sup>61</sup> Comments by Argentina on the Report of the Working Group on a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Commission on Human Rights, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1999/WG.13/2/Add.1, 8 December 1998, <http://www.ohchr.org>

<sup>62</sup> Comments by Argentina on the Report of the Working Group on a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Commission on Human Rights, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1999/WG.13/2/Add.1, 8 December 1998, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>63</sup> Liceo Naval Militar Almirante Brown, at Armada Argentina, <http://www.armada.mil.ar>; Liceo Militar General San Martín, Liceo General Belgrano and others, at Ejército Argentino, [http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index\\_ppal.htm](http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index_ppal.htm) (Educación); Liceo Aeronáutico Militar, at Fuerza Aérea Argentina, <http://www.faa.mil.ar> (Incorporación y educación).

<sup>64</sup> Liceo Militar General San Martín, op. cit.



**Brazil:** All military schools have a minimum age of entry, and some of them admit 14 year olds. It was not known if under-18s receive weapons training.<sup>65</sup> In the last ten years, the organisation *Tortura Nunca Mais-RJ* registered 23 cases of torture and ill-treatment of recruits to military forces, including students at the *Colégio Naval* and the *Colégio Militar* in Rio de Janeiro. Investigations have been opened into only four of these 23 cases.<sup>66</sup>

**Canada:** The Canadian Defence Academy, established in April 2002, provides opportunities for approximately 600 members of the armed forces to obtain a higher education.<sup>67</sup> A one-year preparatory program for students going on to study at the Royal Military College is offered by the Richelieu Squadron at Campus St. Jean-sur-Richelieu in Quebec. The Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School, located in St. Jean-sur-Richelieu, is responsible for basic training for recruits to the regular forces.<sup>68</sup> A three-week Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program (CFAEP) offers a program that prepares applicants of 17 years and older from native communities for recruitment to the regular forces and pays a bonus for completion of the course. According to the program brochure, applicants return to their communities to conduct “home recruiting”.<sup>69</sup> The Canadian Cadet Movement, comprising the Navy League, Air Cadet League and Army Cadet League, is the largest federal government youth program, with over 60,000 members.<sup>70</sup> A child may join the Cadets at the age of 12. Marksmanship is among the activities offered on weekend training programs. The armed forces currently run 27 Cadet Summer Training Centres across the country.<sup>71</sup> One such centre, Camp Argonaut at the Canadian Forces Base in Gagetown, New Brunswick, holds training camps annually for approximately 1,200 cadets aged 13 to 18. The Junior Canadian Ranger Programme, for children aged 12 to 18, is organized by the Canadian Rangers, part-time reservists based in isolated and coastal communities. There are currently 2,100 Junior Canadian Rangers in 95 communities across the country.<sup>72</sup>

**Chile:** Students choosing to do their military service before they are 18 attend a military instruction course on two Saturdays a month and later take part in a 20-day military training course.<sup>73</sup> To enrol in the Bernardo O’Higgins Military School, students must be in or have completed the last year of secondary school, when they are generally aged 17.<sup>74</sup> In 2002 there were reports that students at the school had been ill-treated by older students as part of initiation rituals.<sup>75</sup> The military authorities and the Minister of Defence promised to investigate the allegations and to ensure that

<sup>65</sup> Centro de Orientação e Preparação as Escolas Militares, <http://www.copem-rj.com.br>

<sup>66</sup> *Tortura Nunca Mais-RJ*, <http://www.torturanuncamais-rj.org.br/denuncias.asp?Codigo=36>

<sup>67</sup> Canadian Defence Academy, <http://www.cda-acd.forces.gc.ca>

<sup>68</sup> Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School, <http://www.cflrs.forces.gc.ca>

<sup>69</sup> Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program brochure, obtained at a Canadian Forces Recruitment Centre, Ottawa, 22 June 2004.

<sup>70</sup> Department of National Defence, Support for Canada’s Youth, [http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/about/support\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/about/support_e.asp).

<sup>71</sup> Canadian Cadet Organizations, [http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view\\_news\\_e.asp?id=844](http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=844).

<sup>72</sup> Junior Canadian Ranger Programme, <http://www.rangers.forces.gc.ca>.

<sup>73</sup> Ministry of Defence, Compulsory military service, <http://www.defensa.cl> (Servicio militar obligatorio, Preguntas frecuentes).

<sup>74</sup> Escuela Militar Bernardo O’Higgins, <http://www.escuelamilitar.cl> (Admisión).

<sup>75</sup> *El Diario Austral*, “Denuncia malos tratos en Escuela Militar”, 7 May 2002, <http://www.australtemuco.cl>.



conscripts were not ill-treated.<sup>76</sup> The outcome of the investigations was not known. Candidates must be 18 to enrol in the non-commissioned officers' school (*Escuela de Suboficiales*).<sup>77</sup>

**Colombia:** The armed forces accept 17 year olds for training as non-commissioned officers in the infantry, and 16 year olds for navy and air force training programs.<sup>78</sup> Students at military secondary schools are considered cadets, and on graduation receive a "military orientation" secondary school diploma.<sup>79</sup> During their fourth to sixth years at these military secondary schools, students have to perform "special" military service, receiving 1,300 hours of military training and participating in three military exercises. On completing the training, they receive a First Class Military Card which certifies that they are soldiers, "since they also have ... been trained in all the areas which would allow them to serve as combatants".<sup>80</sup> More than 30 private military schools, which operate by special permission of the Defence Ministry, admit boys and girls of primary school age.<sup>81</sup>

**Cuba:** According to the constitution, the aims of education in Cuba include the promotion of "patriotic education" and the combination of "general education and specialized scientific, technical and artistic instruction with ... participation in political, social and military activities" (Article 38).<sup>82</sup> Military instruction is compulsory for secondary students.<sup>83</sup> There are about 15 specialized educational establishments run by the armed forces, *Institutos Preuniversitarios Vocacionales "Camilo Cienfuegos"* (Camilo Cienfuegos Vocational Pre-University Institutes), which prepare students for entrance into higher military schools. There are also 13 *Institutos Preuniversitarios Militares* (Military Pre-University Institutes) for conscripts who wish to continue their studies at the military schools (tertiary level).<sup>84</sup> Students entering preparatory vocational institutes are usually between 15 and 18 years old.<sup>85</sup> Several military academies and schools provide training for officers and specialist members of the armed forces.<sup>86</sup>

**Ecuador:** Students in their second year at senior secondary school (*ciclo diversificado* or *bachillerato*), who are usually aged about 16, may volunteer to attend military instruction every Saturday for six months, as part of the Voluntary Military

<sup>76</sup> Observatorio Cono Sur Defensa y Fuerzas Armadas, *Informe Chile No. 41*, 3-10 May 2002, Programa de Investigación Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad, Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad ARCIS, Chile, [http://www.fhdss.unesp.br/observatorio/observat%C3%B3rio\\_chile041.htm](http://www.fhdss.unesp.br/observatorio/observat%C3%B3rio_chile041.htm).

<sup>77</sup> Escuela de Suboficiales, <http://www.escueladesuboficiales.cl> (Preguntas frecuentes).

<sup>78</sup> Dirección de Reclutamiento Naval (Navy recruiting directorate), <http://www.haztemarino.mil.co>; Fuerza Aérea Colombiana (Air force), <http://www.fac.mil.co>.

<sup>79</sup> Constitutional Court, decision T-1032/00 against Simon Bolivar Military School.

<sup>80</sup> Senator Luis Elmer Arenas, Exposición de motivos del Proyecto de Ley No. 184 de 2001 - Por medio de la cual se reglamenta el servicio militar en los Colegios y Academias Militares y se dictan otras disposiciones, Gaceta Oficial 610/2001, 29 November 2001 (draft still in the Senate at March 2004).

<sup>81</sup> Including Santander Military School (Colegio Militar General Santander), Decroly Military School (Colegio Militar Decroly), General Jose Maria Cabal Military School (Colegio Academia Militar José María Cabal), <http://www.voluntad.com.co/voluntad/colegios/indice.htm>.

<sup>82</sup> UNESCO, *Principios y objetivos generales de la educación en Cuba*, Country profiles: Cuba, August 2003, at <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/mainfram.htm> (Cuba, Profiles).

<sup>83</sup> Confidential source, July 2004.

<sup>84</sup> Ministry of Education, <http://www.rimed.cu/Enseñanzas/preuniversitario.asp>.

<sup>85</sup> See graph, UNESCO, *Principios y objetivos generales de la educación en Cuba*, Country profiles: Cuba, August 2003, at <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/mainfram.htm> (Cuba, Profiles).

<sup>86</sup> Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, [http://www.cubagob.cu/otras\\_info/minfar](http://www.cubagob.cu/otras_info/minfar). (Fundamentos, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias, Academias y Escuelas Militares).



Instruction for Students program (*Instrucción militar estudiantil voluntaria*). This program, run by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Education and Culture since 1993, was created with the aim of bringing civil and military institutions closer together. At military bases, students are instructed in physical education, military skills and the handling of weapons.<sup>87</sup>

**El Salvador:** Students wishing to pursue a career in the armed forces may enrol at the Capitán General Gerardo Barrios Military School between the ages of 17 and 20 for a two-year training program. There was little information about the military training under-18s received at the school.<sup>88</sup>

**Guatemala:** The Adolfo V. Hall Institutes, created in 1955, prepare army reserve officers and those seeking to pursue a military career. They are under the authority of the Ministry of Defence and follow a curriculum agreed in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. Students seeking enrolment must be between 11 and 14 years of age.<sup>89</sup> Internal regulations allow physical punishment as a means to discipline students. In May 2002 the UN Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) recommended that the military educational and instruction systems be reformed to abolish physical punishment and modernize the curriculum, as agreed in the peace accords.<sup>90</sup>

**Mexico:** The constitution states that Mexicans are obliged “to be present on the days and hours designated by the municipality in which they reside, to receive civic and military instruction to equip them in the exercise of their rights as citizens, to gain skills in handling weapons and to acquaint them with military discipline” (Article 31).<sup>91</sup> Under the Military Service Law, all educational institutions must provide military instruction, including for girls “according to activities appropriate to their sex and connected with military service”, with the program to be determined by the Ministries of National Defence and Public Education (Article 2).<sup>92</sup> There are numerous military schools run by the Army and Air Force University. The minimum age of entry is 15 in schools requiring applicants to have completed basic secondary education, and 16 in those requiring a baccalaureate (*bachillerato*) certificate.<sup>93</sup> According to the Military Justice Code, under- 18s in the armed forces and cadets in military education institutions are liable to half of the corporal punishment other members of the armed forces receive for the same infraction (Article 153). Cadets in military institutions are considered staff sergeants (*sargentos primeros*) (Article 156).<sup>94</sup> The Mexican Senate recently proposed the elimination of corporal punishment from the Mexican

<sup>87</sup> Army, Formación militar, op. cit. (Instrucción Militar Estudiantil Voluntaria).

<sup>88</sup> *El Diario de Hoy*, “Ingresa 179a. promoción en Escuela Militar”, 7 January 2004, <http://www.elsalvador.com/noticias/2004/01/07/elpais/pai1.asp>; Escuela Militar Capitán General Gerardo Barrios, <http://www.escmilitar.edu.sv>.

<sup>89</sup> Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mindef.mil.gt/escuelas/iavh/central/index.html>.

<sup>90</sup> UN Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA), *Situación de los compromisos relativos al Ejército en los Acuerdos de paz*, May 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Constitution, at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, <http://info4.juridicas.unam.mx/ijure/fed/9> (Coalition translation).

<sup>92</sup> *Ley del Servicio Militar*, 11 September 1940, at Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, <http://www.sedena.gob.mx/index4.htm> (Artículos de interés, Legislación militar) (Coalition translation).

<sup>93</sup> Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, <http://www.sedena.gob.mx/index4.htm> (Educación militar, Universidad del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea, Admisión).

<sup>94</sup> *Código de Justicia Militar*, at UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, <http://info4.juridicas.unam.mx/ijure/tcfed/3.htm?;> Gilda María García Sotelo, *Razones y sinrazones sobre los niños soldados: Una reflexión jurídica*, Law Degree Thesis, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico, 2000.



Constitution. The bill has been sent to the Chamber of Deputies for approval.<sup>95</sup> If passed, all national legislation, including the Military Justice Code, would need to be reformed accordingly.

**Paraguay:** See separate entry in Section I.

**Peru:** Ill-treatment of recruits has diminished since the ending of compulsory military service, but has not completely disappeared. In December 2002, the Ombudsman's office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) reported on investigations into complaints about conscript deaths and alleged torture and ill-treatment of conscripts between April 1998 and August 2002. Out of 174 cases, 56 were deaths; 155 (90 per cent) were from the army, 12 (seven per cent) from the air force and seven (four per cent) from the navy. In 2003, in response to recommendations by the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Defence announced, as part of the continuing reform of the armed forces, the creation of a Recruits' Military Instruction School and the establishment of regulations, rights and duties in relation to recruits.<sup>96</sup> Minimum age for entry into the navy school is 16.<sup>97</sup>

**Uruguay:** Military training and military schools Students may enrol from the age of 16 at the *Liceo Militar General Artigas* (General Artigas Military School), a military secondary school run by the Ministry of Defence. The school provides a general secondary education and weekly "pre-military" instruction. Students participate in annual army manoeuvres. Graduates can opt to enter army, navy, air force and police academies.<sup>98</sup>

**United States:** The Defense Department targets high school seniors (students in their final year of secondary school) for recruitment into the armed forces. However, high school juniors, typically aged about 16, may enlist and attend basic training after their junior year of high school, and then enter skills training a year later after graduation.<sup>99</sup> Over 470,000 high school students are enrolled in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), a program that they may join as cadets from the age of 14. At over 2,900 secondary schools, cadets attend an elective course taught by retired military personnel. The military provides uniforms and instructional materials, and shares the costs of the instructors with the schools. Girls make up 56 per cent of army cadets, and about 40 per cent of air and navy cadets.<sup>100</sup> The program's stated goal is to motivate and develop young people.<sup>101</sup> Its curriculum includes communication skills, leadership, physical fitness, history and citizenship, and drug abuse prevention. Cadets participate in military drills with real and dummy firearms, and some programs include marksmanship and use of guns in firing ranges. Effectively, the program serves to boost recruitment to the armed forces.<sup>102</sup> Additionally, the Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States (AMCSUS) lists 42 military institutions, including secondary (high) schools, as

<sup>95</sup> "Senado Mexicano elimina pena de muerte y tortura de Constitución", EFE, 17 March 2005.

<sup>96</sup> Ombudsman's Office, *Sexto Informe al Congreso de la República 2002-2003*, Chapters 3 and 4, <http://www.ombudsman.gob.pe>.

<sup>97</sup> See Escuela Naval, <http://www.escuelanaval.com.pe/admision2005/admi.htm>

<sup>98</sup> Liceo Militar General Artigas, <http://www.liceomilitar.edu.uy>.

<sup>99</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, *Population Representation in the Military Services*, Fiscal Year 2002, March 2004, Tables B-1 and C-2.

<sup>100</sup> National Catholic Reporter, "Junior ROTC at a Glance", 28 March 2003.

<sup>101</sup> US Army JROTC, <https://gateway.usarmyjrotc.com/http://portal.usarmyjrotc.com/jrotc/dt>.

<sup>102</sup> American Friends Service Committee, Youth and Militarism Program, <http://www.afsc.org/youthmil/jrotc/Default.htm>.



members.<sup>103</sup> Five military junior colleges offer an Early Commissioning Program, or ECP, a two-year program that allows qualified cadets to earn an Army commission in just two years. Students must be at least 17.<sup>104</sup> The military status of students undertaking ECPs was not clear.

**Venezuela:** The Military Conscription and Enlistment Act requires all secondary school students to complete pre-military instruction during the last two years of schooling, when they are usually 15 to 17 years of age (Article 71). This is in addition to compulsory military service (Article 73). In state or private military secondary schools, students who complete military instruction courses approved by the Ministry of Defence are deemed to have completed military service (Article 63).<sup>105</sup> Such military schools enrol children from 14 years of age and are under the authority of the Ministry of Defence.<sup>106</sup> On 17 November 2000 human rights organizations in Venezuela applied to the courts for annulment of a decision by the Education Ministry to establish compulsory military instruction, on the grounds that it was in breach of the constitution. The case was still awaiting decision in early 2004.<sup>107</sup>

## ASIA

**Australia:** The age requirements for entry to military training establishments, which include the Australian Defence Force Academy, the Australian Defence College and the affiliated Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, were not specified.<sup>108</sup> Most new recruits initially attend a training establishment or program before joining regular service units, the government reported in 1996. Officer cadets take a four-year course at the Australian Defence Force Academy. General recruits follow a nine month training program, and sometimes join regular units shortly before they are 18. Further training or specialization may follow short programs, including the three months' basic entry training for soldiers.<sup>109</sup> About 25,000 young people are involved in the Australian Defence Force Cadets, which comprise army, navy and air force cadet corps, each administered by the respective branch of the forces. Cadets are not members of the armed forces, according to the Defence Act (Article 62), the Naval Defence Act (Article 4) and the Air Force Act (Article 4). The minimum age of entry is 12 years and six months. The cadet corps aspires to develop "youth with a sense of purpose, responsibility, respect of self and others" and enables cadets to take part in "adventurous, fulfilling and educational activities in a military setting". Activities include firearms training. The government states that joining the cadet force may represent a "first voluntary step towards recruitment in the permanent or reserve forces".<sup>110</sup>

**Bangladesh:** Military training involves six months at a training centre and two to three months within an armed forces unit. The training is the same for recruits of all ages, including those under the age of 18, who on completion are required to perform

<sup>103</sup> See AMCSUS, <http://www.amcsus.org/index.htm>

<sup>104</sup> See "Virtual Guide for Military Education and Careers in the Armed Forces of the United States of America," <http://www.olympicinstitute.com/VGOfficerPr.htm>

<sup>105</sup> *Ley de Conscripción y Alistamiento Militar*, <http://www.gobiernoenlinea.ve> (Legislación).

<sup>106</sup> Jauregui Military School, <http://www.licmiljau.mil.ve> (Misión).

<sup>107</sup> Communication from *Programa Venezolano de Educación y Protección de los Derechos Humanos (PROVEA)*, Venezuela, 3 March 2004.

<sup>108</sup> Department of Defence, <http://www.defence.gov.au> (Careers and Learning).

<sup>109</sup> Initial report of Australia to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/8/Add.31, 1 February 1996, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>110</sup> Australian Defence Force Cadets, CadetNet, <http://www.cadetnet.gov.au>.



the same duties as other soldiers. Recruits are not considered part of the armed forces until they have completed training.<sup>111</sup> Officer candidates attend a two-year training course at the Bangladesh Military Academy near Chittagong.<sup>112</sup> Children may attend Cadet College after completing the sixth grade in school, when they are usually aged about 12. There are about ten such colleges, where students follow the national curriculum as well as receiving military training. On completion, students are not obliged to join the army but generally do so.<sup>113</sup>

**Bhutan:** In 2003 volunteers were invited to join a national militia in response to growing tensions in the south.<sup>114</sup> In 2003 more than 700 militia volunteers received two months' military training in Yongphula, Shaba, Samtse, Gelephu and at the army training centre at Tencholing. Women volunteers were trained at police headquarters in the capital, Thimphu. Officer trainees attended an intensive training course in Dechencholing. The militia was subsequently deployed in the south to provide support to the regular army.<sup>115</sup> There were no reports of the involvement of under-18s involvement in the militias.

**Brunei Darussalam:** The Training Centre, one of the five main units of the armed forces, is responsible for military training, and includes a cadet school and a boys' company.<sup>116</sup> The armed forces have a Boys Wing, created in 1979, which provides a two and a half year training program for students aged about 15 to 17 looking for careers as armed forces engineers and technicians. As of January 2004, 619 recruits had graduated from the Boys Wing, of whom 424 were still working with the armed forces.<sup>117</sup>

**Cambodia:** Four levels of professional military education were set out in a Defence White Paper in 2000. Comprehensive Recruit Training was to be provided by commanders in each military region, with emphasis given to physical training and sport. The Junior Officer School would develop courses on discipline and humanitarian law for all newly commissioned officers. A Command and Staff Course would provide training to middle level officers. Finally, a Senior Officer Training Program would be started at the Officers Academy.<sup>118</sup> Minimum ages of entry into the schools were not known.

**China:** The Law on Military Service states that "military institutes and academies may, according to the needs in building up the armed forces, enrol cadets from among young students. The age limit for the cadets to be enrolled must be the same as that for the active servicemen" (Article 30). It therefore appears that under-18s may enrol for military training at specialist institutions. By 2002 more than 50 higher education institutions, including Peking University and Tsinghua University, had

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<sup>111</sup> Information from Major-General Jamil D. Ahsan, Director General, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, provided to Child Soldiers Coalition by Dr M. Masum, Jahangirnagar University, 24 April 2001.

<sup>112</sup> Bangladesh Army, <http://www.bangladesharmy.info> (Career, Officer, Training commission).

<sup>113</sup> Information provided by a government representative to Child Soldiers Coalition Asia-Pacific Conference on the Use of Children as Soldiers, Kathmandu, May 2000.

<sup>114</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition correspondence with Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the UN at Geneva, September 2000; Kuensel, "Assembly discusses volunteer militia force", 18 July 2003, <http://www.kuenselonline.com>.

<sup>115</sup> Kuensel, "Serving the nation", 13 September 2003; "Militia posted", 6 December 2003.

<sup>116</sup> Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mindef.gov.bn/rbaf1.htm>.

<sup>117</sup> Royal Television Brunei, "Doa kesyukuran held to mark Boys Wing's Silver Jubilee", 3 January 2004, <http://www.rtb.gov.bn/NewsUpdate/2004/January/030104/main2.htm>.

<sup>118</sup> Defence White Paper 2000, at Ministry of National Defense, <http://www.mond.gov.kh>.



provided training for armed forces personnel.<sup>119</sup> In November 2003 the government said that state military academies were being restructured as part of military reforms that would reduce the number of service personnel by 200,000 by 2005.<sup>120</sup> There are close links between the military and the education system. The Military Service Law requires secondary school and higher education students to undergo one month's military training (Articles 43 to 46).<sup>121</sup> In 2002 about 60 per cent of new university and college students were receiving military training.<sup>122</sup>

**India:** A number of military schools and institutions provide preliminary training for students wishing to go on to join the army. The Rashtriya Indian Military College takes students between the ages of 11 ½ and 13 years. All students of schools and colleges may join the National Cadets Corps on a voluntary basis.<sup>123</sup> Cadets receive intensive practical and theoretical military training at camps throughout the academic year. They are reportedly not liable for active military service.<sup>124</sup> However, they have been deployed in the past, for example when cadets aged between 18 and 22 guarded “non-sensitive” polling booths during elections in 1999. In January 2000 the Ministry of Defence proposed the use of trained cadets in non-combat roles during national emergencies.<sup>125</sup>

**Japan:** Youth cadets from the age of 15 receive secondary school education, basic military training and training to become technical specialists in the armed forces.<sup>126</sup> About 2,000 cadets attend the National Defence Academy, an institution of the Japan Defence Agency. The emphasis is on academic education: most of the teaching staff are civilians, and university level degrees may be taken in sciences, engineering and social sciences. Cadets may study defence sciences. They receive basic military training for two hours a week and during an annual six-week course. They are expected to become armed forces officers, and further military training is provided after graduation at Officer Candidate Schools.<sup>127</sup>

**Democratic Republic of Korea:** While little information was available, militarization and political indoctrination of children was believed to start from a young age. Foreign visitors and education sources report that young children received mandatory military training and political education for several hours a week at school.<sup>128</sup> Secondary school students between the ages of 14 and 16 receive basic military training as members of the Red Youth Guard, which has units in every secondary school.<sup>129</sup> According to one source, Red Youth Guard members receive over 400 hours of military training annually, at schools and training centres. A four-

<sup>119</sup> China's National Defense in 2002, posted at People's Liberation Army (PLA) Daily, <http://english.pladaily.com.cn/special/book/c2002/index.html>

<sup>120</sup> China Daily, “China to reduce 200,000 servicemen by 2005”, 5 November 2003.

<sup>121</sup> Military Service Law of 31 May 1984, [http://www.novexc.com/military\\_service\\_law.html](http://www.novexc.com/military_service_law.html).

<sup>122</sup> China's National Defense in 2002, posted at People's Liberation Army (PLA) Daily, <http://english.pladaily.com.cn/special/book/c2002/index.htm>

<sup>123</sup> Indian Army, <http://joinindianarmy.nic.in> (Careers, Other ranks).

<sup>124</sup> Bharat Rakshak (Consortium of Indian military websites), “Recruitment Information for Non-Resident Indians”, <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/recruitment>.

<sup>125</sup> S. Sharma, “1,700 NCC cadets to lend colour to polls”, *Times of India*, 1 September 1999, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>; Confidential sources, India, July 2002.

<sup>126</sup> Initial report of Japan to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/41/Add.1, 5 August 1996.

<sup>127</sup> National Defence Academy, <http://www.nda.ac.jp>.

<sup>128</sup> US Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2003*, February 2004, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/c1470.htm>.

<sup>129</sup> Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies, Institute for Contemporary International Problems, *The DPRK Report*, No. 10, November-December 1997.



hour military training exercise is carried out in school grounds each Saturday, consisting of an obstacle course, grenade throwing, and basic military training such as close order drill and individual combat. In their fifth year, students reportedly attend Red Youth Guard training centres in each region in their summer vacation, for training in marksmanship, camping and marching. On admission at training centres, the youth are reportedly provided with heavy weapons and personal firearms.<sup>130</sup> About 1.2 million male and female students in their fourth to sixth years in secondary schools were reportedly members of the Red Youth Guard.<sup>131</sup>

**Republic of Korea:** There are several military schools, including the Military Academy, Third Military Academy, Naval Academy and Air Force Academy. Applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 22 for the Naval Academy, and 17 and 23 for the Air Force Academy.<sup>132</sup> The minimum age of entry to the other institutions was unknown.

**Malaysia:** Applicants to the Malaysian Military Academy must be between 17 and 20 years old. They sign an agreement to serve in the armed forces for ten years on completion of their studies.<sup>133</sup>

**Mongolia:** There are reportedly no military schools for under-18s or any explicitly military-patriotic training in the main education system. However, a module in schools related to policing encouraged children to obey the law and inform on others who broke rules, and some inappropriate practices relating to the punishment of children were reported.<sup>134</sup> There are no youth organizations with a military orientation.<sup>135</sup>

**Myanmar (Burma):** There was little information about formal military training institutions, although a Defence Services Academy existed for officer training in Yangon. The *Ye Nyunt* or “new leaf” system, referred to as a youth organization by the government, reportedly functioned as a network of camps for orphans and street children run by the army. Children were held at the camps and trained until big enough to be enlisted. In March 2004 the government told the Child Soldiers Coalition that the *Ye Nyunt* movement was discontinued in 2000, and that children in the program were given the option to join the Nationalities Youth Development Training School, which provided free education to “children from regions of different national races” but no military training.<sup>136</sup> It was not possible to verify these assertions independently.

**Nepal:** It was not possible to obtain up-to-date information on military training. UNICEF reported in 1999 that special military schools based on the national school curriculum existed, with a strict quota system for admission. Places were usually reserved for children of military personnel aged between about nine and 18 years old. Students were not automatically enrolled in the army.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Republic of Korea National Intelligence Service, [http://www.nis.go.kr/eng/north/defense\\_index.html](http://www.nis.go.kr/eng/north/defense_index.html).

<sup>131</sup> Republic of Korea National Intelligence Service, op. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Naval Academy, <http://www.navy.ac.kr>; Air Force Academy, <http://www.afa.ac.kr>.

<sup>133</sup> Malaysia Military Academy, <http://www.atma.gov.my/FAQ.htm>.

<sup>134</sup> Confidential source, 12 March 2004.

<sup>135</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition interview with Mongolian embassy in the United Kingdom (UK), 2 March 2004.

<sup>136</sup> Letter from Myanmar embassy, United Kingdom (UK), to Child Soldiers Coalition, 9 March 2004.

<sup>137</sup> Information from UNICEF, 16 June 1999.



**New Zealand:** There are no military schools run by the armed forces.<sup>138</sup> The New Zealand Cadet Force, comprising cadets in the cadet corps, the sea cadet corps and air training corps, is “a voluntary, disciplined, uniformed training organization” for young people aged between 13 and 18, according to the 1990 Defence Act. It aims to promote training programs or courses similar to those undertaken by the armed forces, appreciation among cadets of the function and operations of the armed forces, and the development of good citizenship (Section 77). Cadets are not members of the armed forces (Section 2).<sup>139</sup>

**Pakistan:** A number of cadet colleges admit children from the age of ten. The government has said that the colleges are focused exclusively on academic pursuits and that no military training is provided.<sup>140</sup> The pupils are not considered members of the army and may choose whether or not to join the armed forces after completing schooling and attaining the age of 18.<sup>141</sup> The minimum entrance age to Pakistan’s higher military academies was not known.

**Philippines:** In 2002 a two-year compulsory military training course for college students was abolished by the National Service Training Program Act of 2001, Republic Act No. 9163. The Act established a training program aimed at “enhancing civic consciousness and defence preparedness in youth”, which comprises literacy training, civic welfare training and, as a voluntary option, reserve officer training. The program forms part of the curricula of all college degree courses and of technical vocational courses of at least two years, and completion of one component is required for graduation. Graduates of the Reserve Officer Training Corps become members of the Citizens Armed Force.<sup>142</sup> The Philippine Military Academy provides the highest level of military training and offers a curriculum to serve the needs of the three armed services. Recruits must be aged 17 or over, and, once enrolled as cadets, become members of the armed forces. Cadets receive monthly payments and various allowances to cover the cost of uniforms, books, meals and other incidental expenses.<sup>143</sup>

**Singapore:** Military training and military schools As of 2000, trainees over the age of 16 ½ could enlist in the Learn as You Earn Scheme (LAYE), which provided opportunities for voluntary recruits to improve their secondary school qualifications. LAYE trainees were considered part of the military.<sup>144</sup> It was not known if this practice continued in 2004.

**Sri Lanka:** There are various military training institutions. The minimum age for entry is 18, and students are not considered members of the armed forces. According to the 1985 Mobilization and Supplementary Forces Act, the National Cadet Corps is open to those over 16 (Sections 40 and 51). It provides pre-military and civil training

<sup>138</sup> Report of New Zealand to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the Optional Protocol, UN Doc. CRC/C/OPAC/NZL/1, 30 July 2003, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>139</sup> Defence Act, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz> (Statutes); see also unofficial cadet corps website, <http://www.geocities.com/nzarmycadets>.

<sup>140</sup> Communication from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 April 2001.

<sup>141</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition partners, Pakistan, 11 June 1999.

<sup>142</sup> An Act Establishing National Service Training Program for Tertiary Level Students Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7077 and Presidential Decree No. 1706, and For Other Purposes.

<sup>143</sup> Philippine Military Academy, <http://www.pma.ph>; <http://www.angelfire.com/trek/nevcal/mainpage.html>.

<sup>144</sup> Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the UN at Geneva, Letter to Child Soldiers Coalition, 25 February 2000.



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to students, but cadets may not be called to active service and are not members of the armed forces (Section 49).<sup>145</sup>

**Taiwan:** The Chung-cheng Armed Forces Preparatory School, founded in 1976, provides senior high school education and basic military training for students who wish to continue in one of the armed forces academies or the college for political warfare training. The minimum age for enrolment in the school appeared to be about 15 years.<sup>146</sup>

**Thailand:** The Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School offers secondary education to students before they join the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy or the Police Cadet Academy. The school aims to enhance the knowledge and efficiency of pre-cadets before further military training. Pre-cadets are divided into four battalions directly controlled by platoon commanders, and their military education and training is provided by the Regiment of Cadets. Applicants to the school must be unmarried boys between 14 and 17 years of age, who have educational qualifications to the level of Grade Ten and meet the health and height qualifications required by the armed forces or police.<sup>147</sup>

**Timor Leste:** The first recruits to the new armed forces completed basic training in 2001. Australia, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Portugal and the USA were involved in training the first battalion. A training complex at Metinaro, built by Australia, was formally handed over to the Timorese armed forces on 6 July 2001. A second battalion of 261 was recruited in January 2002, and began training in February.<sup>148</sup>

**Viet Nam:** On ratifying the Optional Protocol, the government declared that male citizens “up to the age of 17” who wished to join the army could be admitted to military schools. Applicants are required to submit their birth certificates and educational records, as well as undergoing health checks to ensure they are physically able to serve in the armed forces.<sup>149</sup> The 1981 Law on Military Service Duty provides for wide-ranging military training programs for boys who have not reached military service age. A general program, to be formulated by the defence and education ministries for students in state schools, was to include political education as well as physical and military training. The law provides for similar programs to be organized by People’s Committees for boys not in school.<sup>150</sup> Little was known about whether the programs had been set up or how many under-18s were participating in such training.

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<sup>145</sup> Information from UNICEF, 1999.

<sup>146</sup> *Taiwan Yearbook 2003*, Government Information Office, <http://www.gio.gov.tw> (About Taiwan, National Defense).

<sup>147</sup> Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School, <http://www.afaps.ac.th/engindex.html>; Armed Forces Academies, [http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5522/T\\_T\\_HE.HTM](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5522/T_T_HE.HTM).

<sup>148</sup> UNTAET, Daily briefing, 3 December 2001, op. cit.; *Fact Sheet 16: East Timor Defence Force*, April 2002.

<sup>149</sup> Declarations and reservations to the Optional Protocol, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>150</sup> Law on Amendments and Supplements to a Number of Articles of the Law on Military Service Duty, 22 June 1994, <http://hannover.park.org/Thailand/MoreAboutAsia/vninfo/docs/t344.html>.



## EUROPE AND EURASIA

**Armenia:** Officers are trained at the Vazgen Sarkisyan Military Institute but the minimum age of admission for cadets was not clear.<sup>151</sup> The Law on Conscription provides for pre-conscription training in schools and specialized secondary education institutions (Article 8).<sup>152</sup> The training reportedly consists of civil defence classes and weapons training for one hour a week.<sup>153</sup> It was unclear to what extent the training is provided in schools across the country. The government provided no specific information in response to questions about the “use of extra-curricular activities and the inculcation of patriotism” in children when the Committee on the Rights of the Child was reviewing Armenia’s January 2004 periodic report.<sup>154</sup>

**Azerbaijan:** When ratifying the Optional Protocol in July 2002, Azerbaijan declared that youths may volunteer for “active military service” as cadets at military school once they were 17, in accordance with the Law on Military Service of November 1992.<sup>155</sup> No official minimum age for voluntary recruitment exists for other recruits.<sup>156</sup> Children in ordinary secondary schools receive “integrated military-patriotic training” and military education lessons as part of the national curriculum. There are two Supreme Military Schools for under-18s, in Baku and in the autonomous Nakhichevan region. The age of entry was unclear, reports varying from 14 to 16.<sup>157</sup> After a “full military education” for three years, students may go on to Higher Military Schools.<sup>158</sup> There were no known youth organizations with a military orientation.<sup>159</sup>

In the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) children receive “military-patriotic” training, and several ordinary schools run “military-patriotic” clubs.<sup>160</sup> In secondary schools, senior students take an “initial military training” course. There are no dedicated military schools for under- 18s, but one “military-sports lyceum” provides both a general and “sports-military” education.<sup>161</sup> In 2004 a journalist visiting a school in the NKR capital, Stepanakert, reported seeing 15 year olds in a compulsory military training program demonstrate assembling Kalashnikov assault rifles.<sup>162</sup>

**Belarus:** The Suvorov Military School in Minsk admits children from the age of 12. They live in barracks, wear military uniforms and receive “extended military training”

<sup>151</sup> Armenian Public TV, “Strong army guarantees peace in region – Armenian leader”, 16 March 2004, posted 18 March 2004 at *Armenia Daily Digest*, <http://www.eurasianet.org>.

<sup>152</sup> Second periodic report of Armenia to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc.

CRC/C/93.Add 6, 17 July 2003, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>153</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition interview with defence spokesperson, Armenian embassy, United Kingdom (UK), 7 March 2004.

<sup>154</sup> UN news release, “Committee on rights of child reviews second periodic report of Armenia”, 15 January 2004, <http://www.unog.ch/news2/documents/newsen/crc0405e.htm>.

<sup>155</sup> Declarations and reservations to the Optional Protocol, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>156</sup> Correspondence from Reliable Future, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and Azerbaijan NGO Alliance for Child Rights, 4 March 2004; Child Soldiers Coalition interview with defence spokesperson, embassy of Azerbaijan, United Kingdom (UK), 8 March 2004.

<sup>157</sup> Correspondence from Reliable Future, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and Azerbaijan NGO Alliance for Child Rights, 4 March 2004; Child Soldiers Coalition interview with defence spokesperson, embassy of Azerbaijan, United Kingdom (UK), 8 March 2004.

<sup>158</sup> Reliable Future and Azerbaijan NGO Alliance for Child Rights, op. cit.

<sup>159</sup> Defence spokesperson, embassy of Azerbaijan, op. cit.

<sup>160</sup> *Azat Artsakh*, “Karabakh Defence Minister Does Not Expect War”, 7 April 2001, *Azerbaijan International Magazine*, <http://www.azer.com> (Karabakh, Media).

<sup>161</sup> NKR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, op. cit.

<sup>162</sup> Frank Viviano, “The rebirth of Armenia”, *National Geographic Magazine*, March 2004.



as well as a basic education.<sup>163</sup> Most students go on to the Belarus Military Academy and the “military and educational institutions of the Russian Federation”.<sup>164</sup> Voluntary classes on military history and patriotism are provided in some secondary schools. Students are also offered summer camps on military bases.<sup>165</sup> Students attending military schools from the age of 16 or 17 were reportedly considered to be on active military service.

**Belgium:** There are a number of military schools, including the Royal Military Academy, a university, the Royal Defence College for postgraduates, and French and Dutch language academies for non-commissioned officers.<sup>166</sup> According to a Royal Order (*Arrete Royale*) of 11 August 1994, as amended on 21 June 2001, recruits may present themselves for training as non-commissioned officers (*sous-officiers*) once they have completed secondary education; the minimum age is not specified (Article 9). Candidates for training as regular soldiers must be 16 by the end of the year in which their training begins, so may be 15 years old when admitted (Article 9). All candidates are required to sign an oath stating that they will be subject to military regulations (Article 5).<sup>167</sup> On 19 February 2002 the Defence Minister told parliament that recruits were permitted to start non-commissioned officer training at military schools at 16, but that they were not considered part of the armed forces and would “never be engaged” in military operations.<sup>168</sup>

**Bulgaria:** Applicants to military colleges must have a high school diploma but there are no specific age requirements. However, high school graduates under the age of 18 may enter military schools until they are old enough to perform military service. Students are also sent to military colleges in other countries.<sup>169</sup> In its declaration on ratifying the Optional Protocol in February 2002 Bulgaria stated that “Persons who have not come of age shall be trained at military schools subject to the conclusion of a training agreement to be signed by them with the consent of their parents or guardians. Having come of age, the trainees shall sign a training agreement on a regular military duty”.<sup>170</sup>

**Czech Republic:** The minimum age for enrolment in military secondary school is 15, and the minimum age for enrolment in military university is 18. In 2004 around 800 students under 18 were attending military secondary schools. Students at military university receive weapons training; such training is not given at secondary schools. As part of plans to professionalize the armed forces, the Defence Ministry developed new recruitment programs for these institutions and was targeting 15 to 25-year-olds.<sup>171</sup>

**France:** Military schools in France include four for the army (*Prytanée nationale militaire*, *Lycée Militaire de Saint-Cyr*, *Lycée Militaire d’Aix-en-Provence*, and *Lycée Militaire d’Autun*) and one for the navy (*Lycée Naval de Brest*). Students are admitted

<sup>163</sup> Correspondence with Belarusian Defence Attaché to the USA, 3 and 4 March 2004.

<sup>164</sup> Ministry of Defence news article, 20 June 2003, [http://www.mod.mil.by/2003june\\_eng.html](http://www.mod.mil.by/2003june_eng.html).

<sup>165</sup> Belarusian Defence Attaché to USA, op. cit.

<sup>166</sup> Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.be> (Departments, Training and Schools).

<sup>167</sup> Law of 16 January 2003, adopted in March 2003, Ministry of Justice, <http://www.just.fgov.be>.

<sup>168</sup> Information from Child Soldiers Coalition Belgium, February 2004.

<sup>169</sup> Communication from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18 May 2004.

<sup>170</sup> Declarations and reservations to the Optional Protocol, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>171</sup> Communication from Defence Ministry, 20 April 2004; Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, report by Working Group on Military and Society, 15-19 November 2002, <http://www.dcaf.ch/news/miso/presentations>.



to the air force school, the *Ecole d'Enseignement Technique de l'Armée de L'Air de Saintes*, from the age of 16. There is also a Polytechnic School (*Ecole Polytechnique*). Under Law No 70-631 of July 1970, as amended by Law 94-577 of July 1994, candidates for the Polytechnic School must be 17 to sit admission exams and may enter the school during the year in which they turn 18.<sup>172</sup>

**Georgia:** Many high schools in Georgia have military departments, which oversee “military preparedness” courses as part of the national curriculum for pupils from grades 9 to 11, aged 14 to 17. The costs involved in weapons training for children preclude full implementation of the program.<sup>173</sup> One day a year is reportedly devoted to “mass defence activities”.<sup>174</sup> Military departments in schools are integrated into the structure of the armed forces.<sup>175</sup> Graduates are awarded the rank of sergeant in the reserve forces. Those who go on to the Joint Military Academy are promoted to the rank of junior lieutenant after one year.<sup>176</sup> Students may enter the Academy upon the completion of secondary education, which generally occurs at 17 years of age.<sup>177</sup> In late 2003 a 16-year-old boy died and five others were injured during a compulsory military training class in Tbilisi when a live hand grenade exploded. An official said dummy grenades were supposed to be used for school training.<sup>178</sup> In May 2000, in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region, a three-day Boy Scout military exercise was carried out under the auspices of a commando unit.<sup>179</sup> Three military schools similar to Russia's Suvorov schools, which admit children in their early teens, reportedly operate in Georgia.<sup>180</sup> There are also three Higher Military Schools, the Police Academy, the Joint Military Academy and the Security Ministry's Academy. In line with other Georgian higher educational institutions, pupils are permitted entry on completing secondary education, which generally occurs at 17 years of age.<sup>181</sup>

**Greece:** Military educational institutions include the Hellenic Military Academy, the Hellenic National Defence College and the Non-Commissioned Officer Army School. Military academies enjoy the same status as universities and entrance is conditional on completion of high school education. Students also train abroad at institutions of other NATO member countries.<sup>182</sup> There was no information available about the minimum age of entry to these institutions.

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<sup>172</sup> Ministry of Defence, <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/actualites/dossier/index.html> (Lycées militaires), and <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/air/index.html> (Les formations).

<sup>173</sup> Confidential source, 2004.

<sup>174</sup> International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor Report 2003*, Georgia, <http://www.icbl.org/lm>.

<sup>175</sup> Communication with Emil Adelkhanov, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Tbilisi, 23 June 2004.

<sup>176</sup> *Army and Society in Georgia*, March-April 2001 and September-October 2000, Centre for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD), <http://www.cipdd.org> (Research and publications, Periodicals).

<sup>177</sup> Communication with Emil Adelkhanov, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Tbilisi, 23 June 2004.

<sup>178</sup> Civil Georgia, *One Child Dies in a Hand-Grenade Explosion at School*, 9 December 2003, <http://www.civil.ge>.

<sup>179</sup> *Army and Society in Georgia*, March-April 2001 and September-October 2000, Centre for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD), <http://www.cipdd.org> (Research and publications, Periodicals).

<sup>180</sup> Confidential source, 2004.

<sup>181</sup> Emil Adelkhanov, op. cit.

<sup>182</sup> White Paper on Defence, Organisation and Operation of the Armed Forces, [http://www.hri.org/mod/fylladia/bible/e\\_k4\\_7.htm](http://www.hri.org/mod/fylladia/bible/e_k4_7.htm).



**Hungary:** Hungary has several military educational institutions, including the Beri Balogh Adam Secondary School and Dormitory for Home Defence for students below the age of 17. Students aged between 18 and 23 may attend the Kinizsi Pai Professional Non-Commissioned Officers Training School (KTSZ) or the Zrinyi Miklos National Defence University for officers.<sup>183</sup>

**Italy:** Admission to military schools is between the ages of 15 and 17. Recruits to these schools are likely to apply subsequently to attend the Military Academy. The minimum age of admission to schools for non-commissioned officers and for the Military Academy is 17.<sup>184</sup>

**Kazakhstan:** The law was unclear as to whether 17 year olds could sign up for voluntary military service in military schools. The law provided for 16 year olds to be called for military service in an emergency. Disadvantaged children and orphans could be admitted to special schools from the age of ten, where they received some military training. Many reportedly went on to enlist in the armed forces.

Under the Law on Universal Military Duty and Military Service, the preparation of children for military service begins when they are 15 and includes training within the general education system and in specialist institutions.<sup>185</sup> Plans to revive such training, which was provided in schools until recently, were said to be in formation.<sup>186</sup> Children are admitted from as young as ten years old to *Zhas Ulan* (Young Guardsmen) military schools in Almaty, Astana and Semipalatinsk where they receive physical and other training to promote their interest in the military. First established in 1999, these schools are similar to Suvorov schools in the Russian Federation in their curriculum and in the enrolment of disadvantaged children such as orphans.<sup>187</sup> The commander of the school in Astana said that all school staff “should encourage the cadets to join the armed forces” and estimated that around 50 per cent of them did take up military careers.<sup>188</sup> Students aged between 15 and 17 at three military boarding schools, in Almaty, Shymkent and Karaganda, receive training in military and technical skills from the Cadet Corps of the Ministry of Defence. By the time they graduate, most at the age of 18, they are qualified as non-commissioned officers in the armed forces. At three higher military academies, 17 year olds can begin service in the armed forces. In addition, students attending over 20 institutions providing higher education can receive officer training.<sup>189</sup>

**Kyrgyzstan:** On acceding to the Optional Protocol in August 2003, Kyrgyzstan declared that “the minimum age for recruitment of its citizens (men) to ... active military service is limited by the age of 18 years”.<sup>190</sup> However, under the Law on the Universal Military Duty of the Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, as amended in December 2003, boys may volunteer for military schools from the age of 17 and, as

<sup>183</sup> Communication from the Ministry of Defence to Child Soldiers Coalition, 3 May 2004.

<sup>184</sup> Communication from Ministry of Defence to Child Soldiers Coalition, 3 May 2004; Recruitment information on army website, <http://www.esercito.difesa.it>.

<sup>185</sup> *Zakon o vseobshchei voynskoi obiazannosti i voennoi sluzhbe* (Law on Universal Military Duty and Military Service) (in Russian) at Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mod.kz>.

<sup>186</sup> See Child Soldiers Coalition Global Report 2001; Child Soldiers Coalition interview with the Kazakh Defence Attaché to the United Kingdom (UK), 8 March 2004.

<sup>187</sup> Kazakh Defence Attaché to UK, op. cit.; *Voennoe obrazovanie* (Military education) (in Russian), Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mod.kz>.

<sup>188</sup> Interview with Colonel Kuangaliev, reported in British Council, *Peacekeeping English Project (PEP) Newsletter*, 4 September 2001, [www.britishcouncil.org/english/pep/newsletter/pep4anin.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/english/pep/newsletter/pep4anin.htm).

<sup>189</sup> Military education, op. cit.

<sup>190</sup> Declarations and reservations to the Optional Protocol, <http://untreaty.un.org> (subscription required).



cadets, are on active military duty (Article 11).<sup>191</sup> In a national emergency, those aged over 16 are considered eligible for military service under the 1998 Law on Mobilization Preparation and Mobilization in the Kyrgyz Republic (Article 20), and all members of the armed forces will be put on standby, under the Law on Universal Military Duty (Article 108).<sup>192</sup>

The Law on the Universal Military Duty provides for boys to receive pre-conscription training, including physical training and technical skills, before they are called up for military service (Articles 17 to 23). This pre-conscription training is available in schools and in professional and higher educational establishments (Article 19).<sup>193</sup> In schools, boys in the final two years of secondary education may take a course entitled “elementary military training”, which includes weapons handling, shooting exercises, military theory and aspects of civil defence.<sup>194</sup> There are two military schools for officer cadets, the Kyrgyz State National Military Lycée, which admits boys from the age of 16, and Bishkek Higher Military School, for “young people with a military inclination”.<sup>195</sup>

**Latvia:** The minimum age for entering a military educational institution is 18.<sup>196</sup> As part of its plan to phase out conscription, the Ministry of Defence aims to interest young people in professional military service through education and pre-military service training.<sup>197</sup> This will be provided by the Youth Guard (*Jaunsardze*), a voluntary organization based in secondary schools throughout the country and managed by the Ministry of Defence. In early 2004, the Youth Guard had nearly 10,000 members. Children can be members of the Youth Guard Junior Group between the ages of 12 and 15, and the Senior Group from 16 to 18. School students may take Youth Guard education courses on military history, the structure and functions of the armed forces, the basics of military training or specialized technical training. Members of the Senior Group receive training similar to that of soldiers in the armed forces, and can obtain a diploma that gives them an advantage in entering military educational establishments and professional military service.<sup>198</sup>

**Luxembourg:** Military training is provided at the Royal Non-Commissioned Officers School and the Infantry School in Belgium. A minimum age is not specified but students are required to have completed at least four months of basic training, by which time they are 18. Officer training is provided at the Royal Military Academy in Belgium or the military schools of Coetquidan in France. The minimum age is 17, but all candidates are required to have a high school diploma and in practice are at least 19. All students receive weapons training.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Law on the Universal Military Duty of the Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2003; Correspondence with Anita Trimaylova, Uzbekistan. For the 2002 version of the Law (in Russian) see Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.kg>.

<sup>192</sup> *Zakon o mobilizatsionnoi podgotovke i mobilizatsii v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike* (Law on Mobilization Preparation and Mobilization in the Kyrgyz Republic) (in Russian), at Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.kg>.

<sup>193</sup> Law on the Universal Military Duty of the Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2003; Correspondence with Anita Trimaylova, Uzbekistan. For the 2002 version of the Law (in Russian) see Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.kg>.

<sup>194</sup> Information from Akipress News Agency, Kyrgyzstan, January 2004.

<sup>195</sup> *Voennoe obrazovanie* (Military Education) (in Russian), Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.kg>.

<sup>196</sup> Mandatory Military Service Law, Chapter 3, Section 18, Part 1, at Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mod.gov.lv>. (Regulatory Acts, Legislation).

<sup>197</sup> Ministry of Defence, op. cit. (Public affairs, Premilitary service training).

<sup>198</sup> Ministry of Defence, op. cit. (Public affairs, Premilitary service training, Youth Guard).

<sup>199</sup> Communication from Office of the Chief of Army Staff, 10 May 2004; Luxembourg army, <http://www.armee.lu> (Requirements for recruitment).



**Moldova:** Military-patriotic training courses are provided in secondary schools, but, because of lack of financial support and teaching staff, do not include practical training.<sup>200</sup> The Moldovan mission to the UN said that there were no youth organizations with a military orientation in Moldova.<sup>201</sup>

**Netherlands:** There are no military secondary schools. The minimum age of admission to military academies is 17. The Royal Military Academy and the Royal Institute for the Navy train future career officers and short-term officers. Their status is comparable to that of universities, and students must have completed secondary school to qualify for admission. The military academies are considered part of the armed forces, and are being modernized in line with reforms outlined in the Defence White Paper 2000.<sup>202</sup>

**Poland:** In recent years Poland has been reforming its military education system. In 2004 there were four military academies, four military colleges, 11 warrant officers' colleges, 10 vocational schools for non-commissioned officers and 12 military high schools. Poland regularly sends recruits abroad for training, including by serving "on the job" within the defence structures of other countries.<sup>203</sup>

**Portugal:** Portugal has several military higher education institutions, including the *Escola Superior Politécnica do Exército* and the Air Force Academy. Applicants are required to have completed secondary school rather than fulfil specific age requirements, but candidates for the Army Sergeant School must be 18 years old. Under-18s may apply to the Air Force Academy with parental consent. All military school students receive weapons training.<sup>204</sup>

**Romania:** The Law on the Preparation of the Population for Defence provides for pre-military training for youths between the age of 15 and 20 on a voluntary basis (Article 45). Its aims include "providing adequate knowledge and orientation in the military and technical field, [and] ... cultivating ethical and civic values". Students admitted to military education institutions are considered as enlisted in the armed forces (Article 34).<sup>205</sup>

**Russian Federation:** See separate entry in Section I

**Serbia and Montenegro:** A Military Grammar School provides students with a preparatory education to enable and motivate them to enter higher military academies. A Secondary Military School appears to offer children a direct entry route into the armed forces, providing a professional education lasting three or four years, vocational training for two years, vocational training improvement for a year, and a one-year special advanced training after graduation. The vocational education program trains pupils directly for professional military service in a variety of units, ranging from the infantry to nuclear, chemical and biological warfare. On completing

<sup>200</sup> Correspondence with Laws and Treaties Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 8 March 2004; Confidential source, March 2004.

<sup>201</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition interview and correspondence with Moldovan military representative to the UN, New York, 8 March 2004.

<sup>202</sup> Communication from Ministry of Defence, 18 June 2004; Defence White Paper 2000 [http://www.mindef.nl/nieuws/media/170701\\_whitepaper2000.html](http://www.mindef.nl/nieuws/media/170701_whitepaper2000.html).

<sup>203</sup> Information from Ministry of Defence, <http://www.wp.mil.pl>.

<sup>204</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition interview with Ministry of Defence, 8 May 2004.

<sup>205</sup> European Commission Regular Report on Romania's progress towards accession (2002)



up to eight years of training, students are awarded the rank of sergeant and admitted to professional military service. The minimum entrance ages for the secondary schools and the Armed Forces Military Academy were not known.<sup>206</sup>

**Slovakia:** The military education system of secondary schools and academies was being overhauled as part of the modernization of the armed forces. Students may enter military secondary schools at 15 but are not considered members of the armed forces until they perform military service upon reaching the age of 18.<sup>207</sup> In 2003 the military academies of Liptovsky Mikulas and Kosice were merged to form the Defence Academy of the Slovak Republic, and it was planned to close the two secondary schools attached to them. Professionalisation of the armed forces included a revision of recruitment policy, the intention being to draw most new professional soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers from civilian high schools and universities, and to employ them on fixed-term contracts.<sup>208</sup>

**Sweden:** Young people aged between 15 and 20 may take part in pre-military training provided by voluntary defence organizations in line with demands from the armed forces. Training is usually at a military site at weekends, and parental consent is required for children under 18. Participants are not considered members of the armed forces, but it is unclear whether they might be drafted in the event of mobilization.<sup>209</sup> Although such training is said to comply with Ministry of Defence rules based on the Optional Protocol, it appears that children may receive weapons training with ordinary guns from the age of 15 and with automatic weapons from 17.<sup>210</sup>

**Switzerland:** Recruits may receive information about training when they are 16, and generally attend an “orientation day” before being called to military service. Military service is composed of training that in total usually lasts for 330 days, undertaken at cadet schools. Basic training, which includes weapons handling, endurance exercises and specialist training, lasts for 15 weeks at the age of 19 or 20, and is followed by ten refresher courses, each of three weeks, at two-yearly intervals.<sup>211</sup>

**Tajikistan:** One Ministry of Defence military school admitted students from the ages of about 13 or 14 for three years, primarily in physical and “military-patriotic” training for cadets, and also studies in social sciences and military theory. The governmental Organization for Defence Assistance ran “sports-military competitions” and provided courses in driving military vehicles and military mountain skills for under-18s. In ordinary schools, students could take a “primary military training” course in the final two years of secondary school that included training in first aid and the basics of civil defence.<sup>212</sup>

**Turkey:** There are a number of military educational establishments for under-18s. By law, students of military high schools are not liable for compulsory military service

<sup>206</sup> Armed forces, *Military schools*, <http://www.vj.yu> (Education).

<sup>207</sup> Communication from Ministry of Defence, 2 June 2004.

<sup>208</sup> *Slovak Army Review*, “Conscription could be shortened”, Spring 2002, [http://www.mod.gov.sk/e-ziny/sar/2002\\_spring/flash.html](http://www.mod.gov.sk/e-ziny/sar/2002_spring/flash.html).

<sup>209</sup> Information from *Rädda Barnen* (Save the Children – Sweden), 11 May 2004.

<sup>210</sup> Centraförbundet för Befälsutbildning (Central Association for Voluntary Officer Training (FBU)), <http://www.fbu.se/ungdom/skjututb> (Rules for weapons training).

<sup>211</sup> Information from Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport; International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance*, 2003.

<sup>212</sup> UN Tajikistan Office of Peace Building (UNTOP) in correspondence, 17 March 2004.



and not members of the armed forces. Admission to military high schools and preparatory schools for non-commissioned officers is voluntary and requires parental consent. The minimum entrance age is 15 years, and students are permitted to leave at any time.<sup>213</sup> It is not apparent from the Law on Military Academies whether there is a legal prohibition on admission of under-18s to Turkey's Higher Military Schools, the Naval, Air and Military Academies. The Naval Academy, for example, has no stated minimum entrance age but stipulates that candidates must be no more than 19 years old and that admission must occur no more than 12 months following graduation from civilian high schools.<sup>214</sup> Students normally graduate from secondary schools at about the age of 17, and it is therefore possible that under-18s could be admitted to the Academy.<sup>215</sup> Information about admission procedures was not available for the other academies.<sup>216</sup>

**Turkmenistan:** Children may enter a number of military educational establishments from the age of 16. There are no military organizations for children or military-patriotic training in the general education system as there was under Soviet rule.<sup>217</sup> School children's patriotic education is instead focused upon study of the Rukhnama, a spiritual guide written by President Niyazov and other materials that foster the cult of his personality.<sup>218</sup> Higher military education is provided at the Military Institute.<sup>219</sup>

**Ukraine:** The minimum age for voluntary applicants for officer training at military school is 17.<sup>220</sup> Trainees are considered as members of the armed forces once they take the military oath of allegiance.<sup>221</sup> "Military-patriotic" training of young people was given increased emphasis as part of a move towards a fully professional, volunteer military by 2015. Such training aims at developing positive attitudes towards professional military service as a "constitutional duty".<sup>222</sup> In the final two years of secondary school, students attend a weekly "Defence of the Motherland" class that is reportedly less militaristic than under Soviet rule.<sup>223</sup> There are at least six military schools, including the Naval Institute in Sevastopol, Vasilkiv Air Force College, Mykolaiv Military Motor College, the Zabolotny Vinnitsa Medical College and schools in Kiev and Bojarka. Some of these schools were said to have recently altered their entrance requirements to admit children younger than 12. One was specifically for orphaned children.<sup>224</sup> All were inclined to admit children from deprived backgrounds.<sup>225</sup> There appeared to be a number of nongovernmental organizations

<sup>213</sup> Declaration of Turkey on ratifying the Optional Protocol, May 2004, <http://untreaty.un.org> (subscription required).

<sup>214</sup> Turkish war colleges, <http://www.harpak.tsk.mil.tr>; Naval Academy, <http://www.dho.edu.tr> (History, Admission).

<sup>215</sup> Initial report of Turkey to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/51/Add.4, 8 August 2000, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>216</sup> Military Academy, <http://www.kho.edu.tr/english/index.htm>; Air Force Academy, <http://www.hho.edu.tr>.

<sup>217</sup> Confidential source, 14 March 2004.

<sup>218</sup> RFE/RL, *Turkmen Report*, 2 September 2002; *Izvestia* (Moscow), 31 July 2003.

<sup>219</sup> "Ashgabat Turkmen Television First", 9 December 2003, posted on Post-Soviet Armies Newsletter, <http://www.psan.org>.

<sup>220</sup> Correspondence with Ukraine Air Attaché to the United Kingdom, 8 March 2004; Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.gov.ua>.

<sup>221</sup> Child Soldiers Coalition interview with Ukraine Military Attaché to the UK, 3 March 2004.

<sup>222</sup> Presidential Decree about the State Program of the Armed Forces of Ukraine transition towards the manning on contract basis, <http://www.mil.gov.ua>.

<sup>223</sup> Confidential source, March 2004.

<sup>224</sup> Ukraine Military Attaché to UK, op. cit.; Child Soldiers Coalition interview with Ukraine mission to NATO, 4 March 2004; Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.gov.ua> (Military education).

<sup>225</sup> Confidential source, March 2004.



(NGOs) for young people with a “military orientation”. Their activities had received press coverage. Reportedly located in western Ukraine, they operated unofficially and on their own initiative, in violation of a legal ban on such organizations.<sup>226</sup>

**United Kingdom:** See separate entry in Section I

**Uzbekistan:** A committee of government ministers is in charge of conscription and pre-conscription training and education in secondary schools, military schools and reservist training centres. Local officials have operational control in areas including civil protection training, physical training and patriotic education.<sup>227</sup> In schools, boys start military-patriotic training, which reportedly does not include weapons handling, at the age of about 14 or 15. In February 2004 an organization called Jar was reported to be training orphans as “cadets”, providing physical and martial arts training.<sup>228</sup>

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

**Djibouti:** In 2003 the government piloted the Service National Adapté, a voluntary national service program for those between the ages of 16 and 25. They undergo three months’ military training at the Holl Holl military school, and learn vocational skills for public service.<sup>229</sup>

**Egypt:** Military training for recent secondary school graduates was provided at the Military Academy, Heliopolis, Cairo; the Air Defence College, Alexandria; the Egyptian Naval College, Alexandria; the Military Technical College, Cairo; the Egyptian Air Academy, Belbais; and the Armed Forces Technical Institute.<sup>230</sup> There was no further information on the minimum admission age for any of these institutions.

**Iraq:** There was extensive military training of children under the Ba’ath party government in power until March 2003. The *Ashbal Saddam* (Saddam Lion Cubs), formed after the 1991 Gulf War, recruited children aged 10 to 15 years old who attended three-week training courses in use of weapons, hand-to-hand fighting and infantry tactics. There were an estimated 8,000 members in Baghdad alone.<sup>231</sup> There was no evidence that these children participated in hostilities.

**Israel:** Two military academies, one religious and one secular, provide military training for school students in grades 9 to 12, aged between 14 and 18. Every year 27,000 young people aged 16 to 18 attend week-long *Gadna* (Youth Corps) courses run by the education wing of the armed forces, which are intended to prepare them for military service.<sup>232</sup> The courses include weapons training, navigation and military

<sup>226</sup> Ukraine Military Attaché to UK, op. cit., confidential source, op. cit.

<sup>227</sup> Sergei Mazurenko, *Civil military relations in Uzbekistan and armed forces reforming*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, April 2003, <http://www.dcaf.ch/pfpc-ssr-wg/Meetings/roma/papers/Mazurenko.pdf>.

<sup>228</sup> Confidential source, 23 March 2004.

<sup>229</sup> “Le SNA ou le pari d’une insertion sociale des jeunes citoyens”, *La Nation*, 2 October 2003; Journal Officiel de la République de Djibouti, Arrêté n°2003-0914/PR/MDN portant Organisation et modalités de fonctionnement du Service National Adapté.

<sup>230</sup> Egyptian armed forces website, <http://www.mmc.gov.eg/Academies/academie.htm>.

<sup>231</sup> US Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2003*, February 2004, and *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2001*, March 2002, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/c1470.htm>.

<sup>232</sup> Communication from Israeli Defence Force (IDF), 21 February 2004.



history. The Gadna also organizes a summer program for American Jewish and Israeli 14 to 18 year olds in cooperation with the scouts (*Tzofim*), the Ministry of Absorption and the Jewish Agency. The program involves “learning first hand what every Israeli soldier experiences” as well as cultural and educational activities.<sup>233</sup>

**Jordan:** Basic military training was carried out for 19-week courses at the King Talal Military School, and a number of other academies and institutions offered further training.<sup>234</sup> The minimum age of admission was not known, although the authorities had previously indicated that enrolment into military schools and academies was restricted to candidates over the age of 18.<sup>235</sup> The Armed Forces’ Directorate of Education was responsible for running 19 schools in socially deprived areas for around 9,500 students. The intention was to “build the Jordanian character and provide them with science and faith to be able to interact positively with the modern life”.<sup>236</sup> The proportion of students that subsequently volunteered for the armed forces was not known.

**Libya:** Secondary school students aged between 16 and 19 receive military training and weapons instruction.<sup>237</sup> A military academy for girls, created in 1979, accepts girls holding a secondary school certificate (*shahadah thanawiyah*) and who are below the marriageable age of 20. Training in the academy is for two years.<sup>238</sup>

**Morocco:** There were two military schools in Morocco, in Kenitra and Meknes.<sup>239</sup> Students who attended military schools did so voluntarily and those aged under 18 followed the same national curriculum as in ordinary state schools.<sup>240</sup>

**Oman:** Military training is offered to children in at least one school. Students at the al-Sahwa School in Grades 9 and 10, aged between 14 and 16, were trained in marching, parading and rifle shooting under the supervision and instruction of the Royal Oman Police.<sup>241</sup>

**Syria:** For 30 years Ba’athist military education, including civil defence training, was compulsory in state schools. On 17 March 2003 the Ba’ath party formally resolved to replace military education with extra-curricular activities such as computer training and summer camps for older children (Resolution 381/31). It was unclear whether military training for minors would continue at summer camps. In April 2003 military style khaki school uniforms were replaced with pink and blue uniforms. On 1 October 2003 the Ministry of Education ordered the cancellation of all military education (Circular 2997/543), and the Office of Military Education was replaced with an Office of Sport.<sup>242</sup> Training schools for conscripts include three officer schools – the Military

<sup>233</sup> Tzofim promotional brochure, 2003.

<sup>234</sup> Jordan Armed Forces, <http://www.jaf.mil.jo/mainframe.htm>.

<sup>235</sup> Communication from Jordan’s Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, 17 June 1998.

<sup>236</sup> Jordan Armed Forces, op. cit.

<sup>237</sup> ME-Schools.com, a website providing information on education in the Middle East and North Africa, <http://www.me-schools.com/countries/libya.htm>.

<sup>238</sup> “al-Mar’ah wa al-Amal al-Askari fi al-Alam al-Arabi” [Women and military work in the Arab world], discussion on Al-Jazeera, 17 January 2003, comment by Sergeant Fathiya Abu Turaba of the Girls Military Academy, <http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/ladies/articles/2003/1/1-17-1.htm>.

<sup>239</sup> Information from Coalition member, 19 March 2004.

<sup>240</sup> Report of Morocco to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/28/Add.1, 19 August 1995, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

<sup>241</sup> Al-Sahwa Schools, <http://www.alsahwaschools.edu.om/BoysSch.htm>.

<sup>242</sup> Information from Syrian Coalition member, 9 February 2004; information from Syrian Ambassador to the UN, op. cit.; AP, “Syria cancels military education for elementary and high schools”, 22 May 2003.



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Academy at Homs, the Naval Academy at Latakia, and the Air Force Academy near Aleppo – and an institution for reserve officers in Aleppo.<sup>243</sup>

**United Arab Emirates:** Military education is part of the secondary school curriculum for students aged from 15 to 18. It aims at “inculcating values of patriotism, self-denial and readiness to defend one’s country in students and thus motivate them to take up military careers”.<sup>244</sup>

**Yemen:** There are four military schools, for the training of officers only. From 2002 special forces training was provided by up to 100 US military trainers and advisers at a base in Yemen.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Syria Military Training, <http://www.exploitiz.com/Syria-Military-Training-cg.php>.

<sup>244</sup> “Accession Day Feature: UAE Armed Forces”, posted 2 August 2003, Ministry of Information and Culture, <http://uaeinteract.com>; International Association of Universities, *UAE Education System*, <http://www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/ae.rtf>.

<sup>245</sup> BBC Online, “US military advisers heading for Yemen”, 2 March 2002, and “Yemen’s new anti-terror strategy”, 16 December 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>.