



**Convention on the
Rights of the Child**

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Forty-ninth session
15 September – 3 October 2008

**OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ON THE INVOLVEMENT
OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT**

**List of issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration
of the initial report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland (CRC/C/OPAC/GBR/1)**

**The State party is requested to submit in written form additional and updated
information, if possible, before 8 August 2008.**

1. Please indicate whether there is any plan to withdraw or amend the interpretative declaration on article 1 of the Optional Protocol with respect to deployment of children to take direct part in hostilities.
2. Please provide the Committee with data, disaggregated to the extent possible, on the number of voluntary recruits under the age of 18, including in the Overseas Territories, for the years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. With respect to voluntary recruitment, please elaborate on any initiative taken to give priority to the oldest when recruiting persons below 18 years, in accordance with article 38, paragraph 3, of the Convention and in line with the spirit of the Optional Protocol.
3. Please indicate whether the State party is taking measures, in accordance with article 4 of the Optional Protocol, to prevent the recruitment of children into paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland.
4. Please provide information on the number of cases of reported misconduct and abuse in the military, the number of investigations into such cases and the sanctions applied since the entry into force of the Optional Protocol. In this respect, please indicate any initiative taken to follow-up to the House of Commons Defence Committee recommendation submitted in March 2005 with respect to the lack of independent complaint mechanisms available for abuses committed.

5. Please inform the Committee of the training for and dissemination of the Optional Protocol among relevant professional groups working at the national level with children who may have been recruited or used in hostilities, including teachers, migration authorities, police, lawyers, judges, medical professionals, social workers and journalists. Please also provide information regarding the training on the provisions of the Optional Protocol provided for soldiers serving in military operations abroad, notably in Iraq and Afghanistan. Do military codes of conduct and rules of engagement take into account the Optional Protocol?

6. Please provide detailed information as to whether the United Kingdom assumes extraterritorial jurisdiction over the war crime of conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 into the armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities. Also in relation to extraterritorial jurisdiction, please indicate whether British courts have jurisdiction in case of forced recruitment or involvement in hostilities of a person under 18 if committed outside the United Kingdom, by or against a British citizen.

7. Please clarify whether children enrolled in the Army have a full right to leave the service, without any consequence for them and/or their parents, in case they consider they have made the wrong career choice. Is the commitment to adult Armed Forces service linked to that of under-18 service? In this respect, how is the Government ensuring that all recruits fully understand the terms of enlistment and the conditions of service before they enlist?

8. Please comment on the use of under-18s on “armed guard duty” and elaborate what this entails. Are these children allowed to carry and use arms during this activity?

9. Please provide disaggregated data (including by sex, age and country of origin) covering the years 2005, 2006 and 2007 on the number of asylum-seeking and refugee children coming to the United Kingdom from areas where children may have been recruited or used in hostilities. In this respect, please also provide information on measures adopted with regard to physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant children entering the United Kingdom who may have been recruited or used in hostilities abroad.

10. Please provide further information on existing bilateral or multilateral programmes of technical cooperation and financial assistance entered to by the State party to provide assistance for the implementation of the Optional Protocol.

11. Please inform the Committee whether national legislation prohibits the sale of arms when the final destination is a country where children are known to be, or may potentially be, recruited or used in hostilities.
