

IBCR NEWS BRIEF

Welcome to another edition of our informal newsletter, *IBCR NEWS BRIEF*, which is published on an occasional basis to share with you some of the happenings and developments at the IBCR.

These newsletters aim to bring you up to date on our successes, projects, introduce you to some of our collaborators and summarize for you our more important meetings.

We hope that you will once again enjoy this relaxed and easy-to-read bulletin that gives you an open window into the everyday world of the IBCR.



Guillaume Landry,
Director of
programmes

Another step forward on the road to protecting children affected by armed conflict...

*The IBCR has long been involved in the fight against the impact of armed conflict on children. In September 2007, the IBCR consolidated its position in this field while its Director of Programmes, Guillaume Landry, took on the role of Coordinator of the **Canadian Forum on Children in Armed Conflict**.*

The IBCR was first involved in matters related to children in armed conflict following the second hearings of the International Tribunal for Children's Rights. The Bureau then continued to support actions in the field by taking part in the Canadian Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, providing the IBCR with another tool to promote the rights of children affected by armed conflict. In 2006, the Working Group changed its name and to become the Forum on Children and Armed Conflict, when representatives of the government were welcomed on board as participants.

*We would like to introduce you to **Guillaume Landry**, our Director of Programmes for the Country Profiles and Children Affected by Armed Conflict, and to allow him to discuss his new role as coordinator for the Forum and the experience he brings to the position.*

What does your new role as coordinator of the Canadian Forum on Children and Armed Conflict consists of?

The IBCR has been first a member on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Forum on Children and Armed Conflict and, in September 2006, it accepted to take on the role of coordinator, in order to replace Ms. Kathy Vandergrift. The Forum is in fact a part of the *Peacebuild* network.

Being the coordinator of the Forum means that IBCR is responsible for organising workshops, conferences and meetings on themes that relate to the current situation of children affected by armed conflict and the extraordinary challenges linked to the process of reintegrating these children into their communities. We have organised several meetings of this nature last year and we have already witnessed positive outcomes and follow-up actions.

My hope is that my experience, particularly my work in the field, will help the Forum to move even further ahead. I worked as a Child Protection Adviser for the *United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC)* and as a Regional Representative for the *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers* in West Africa. I allowed me to gain experience while working directly with children associated with armed groups and armed forces during their demobilisation and reintegration. I am now hoping to draw on this experience to contribute to the activities of the Forum.

How does this project correspond to your work as the Director of Programmes at the IBCR?

The IBCR has always been active on the issue of child soldiers, particularly through its publications and conferences. But this new role as part of the Forum on Children and Armed Conflict gives the opportunity to the IBCR to reposition itself and to widen its contribution to the well-being of children around the world.

For example, with the Country Profiles programme, we shed light on several synergies and interactions between the regional analysis of the situation of children's rights and the fight against the use of child soldiers.

How do you see your future involvement in the fight against the use of child soldiers?

In my opinion, the Bureau should continue to consolidate its position in this area and to maintain its role as coordinator of the Forum. Meanwhile, it is important to increase our research capacity in order to demonstrate our determination and desire to make children's rights a reality in the context of armed conflict.

Furthermore, the IBCR intends to hire very soon a new person who should be integrated in our team for a year from January 2009 onwards. This should add dynamism to our action in this area, for instance by developing tools to better disseminate and explain international norms related to the use of children in an armed conflict.