

Beat: Health

Security sector plays key role in ending use of child soldiers in Somalia

Peace Support Training Center

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USPA NEWS - A ten-day Training of Trainers' course for representatives of the Somali Security Sector ended at the International Peace Support Training Centre, in Kenya's capital Nairobi, with a commitment to work together to end the recruitment and use of children in conflict in Somalia. The training, which was sponsored by the British Embassy Mogadishu and conducted by AMISOM in conjunction with the British Peace Support Team- East Africa and the Dallaire Initiative, equipped the 24 participants with the skills and expertise needed to plan, organise and train others on preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers in the country.

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This is the second capacity building training of trainers' course for the Somali Security Forces, FGS Regional Administration personnel, AMISOM military and AUPOL personnel.

British Ambassador to Somalia David Concar said:

This course was all about protecting children and preventing them from being recruited as child soldiers. All the participants will now be better able to do this "" and teach others to do it. The UK is committed to continuing to support the Somali government and AMISOM to ensure the practice of child recruitment is stamped out.-----

Roméo Dallaire, Former Force commander of the UN mission in Rwanda during the Genocide and founder of The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative said: Soldiers and police officers need to be part of the solution in the prevention of the use of children as weapons of war. I have witnessed how our approach changes attitudes held by soldiers and police officers about children caught up in the conflict and how this then impacts their behaviour and actions when interacting with children used as soldiers.-----

Col. Osman Sheikh, a participant serving with the Somali National Army said: This course was an eye opener. We learnt many things that we didn't know before which we plan to take back and practice during conflicts in Somalia. Alshabaab continues to enlist child soldiers in disregard of international laws and conventions; under the Rome Statute, conscripting or enlisting children into armed forces or groups constitutes a war crime. The UK government is committed to working with the Federal Government of Somalia to end this practice. With APO on behalf of British Embassy Mogadishu.

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