From Youth Affected by War to Advocates of Peace, Round Table Discussions with Former Child Combatants from Sudan, Sierra Leone and Cambodia

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Dr. Kirsten Johnson is an Emergency Physician at two teaching hospitals in the McGill University Health Centers. Dr. Johnson is also the founder and director of the McGill Humanitarian Studies Initiative (HSI), an innovative multi-disciplinary program that trains graduate students and resident-physicians in humanitarian response to disaster and refugee crises. Dr. Johnson’s research has focused on genocide, child combatants, sexual gender-based violence and conflict-related mental health and psychosocial support. She has been involved in humanitarian professionalization, working as part of the Enhancing Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance (ELRHA) on the development of competencies for training, education and certification in this sector. She was awarded the Segal Centre’s 2010 Janusz Korczak award for her work on protecting the rights of children in conflict, the College of Family Physicians of Canada Award of Excellence for contribution to International Health and Humanitarian Assistance in 2010, and Canada’s Top 40 Under 40 for 2011.

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Gillian Morantz is completing an Academic General Paediatric Fellowship at the Hospital for Sick Children and a Master’s in Public Health at the University of Toronto. She has a long-standing interest in global child health and human rights advocacy. During medical school and residency, she has worked with orphans and other at-risk children in Burkina Faso, Botswana, Kenya and post-earthquake Haiti.

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Helen Seignior has worked on child rights, child labor and human trafficking issues for the International Labor Organization and World Vision (WV) in Latin America and the Caribbean. Helen headed the ILO’s International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) in Haiti, while supporting IPEC programs in Guatemala. Helen completed international consultancies for the International Centre on Child Labour and Education (ICCLE) and was WV Australia’s Program Officer for Colombia, Haiti, Ecuador and Peru. Previously with WV, Helen travelled widely in Latin America and Zambia, Malawi and the DRC to research articles on commercial sexual exploitation of children, child domestic labor, human trafficking, refugees and HIV/AIDS.