

Abstract

The study of “Child Protection in Armed Conflict: Case Study of Child Soldiers” is to examine the critical principles of protecting child rights under armed-conflict situation. This project considerably analyzes humanitarian laws which are Geneva Convention 1949, Additional Protocol 1977 and other relevant principles of international humanitarian laws. The role of international organizations in both government and non-government levels, in terms of protecting violated children under armed conflict, is herein being discussed. The scope of this study also includes the responsibility of countries under Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court 1998 concerning the violation of child rights under humanitarian laws.

The primary purpose of this thesis is to investigate the notion of protecting and equally treating the helpless victims of conflict, especially those who are children. Recently the research has revealed that in several countries there are a large number of violated children, hereinafter referred to ‘Child Soldiers’, who unwillingly directly and indirectly participate in armed conflict; additionally, such abominable violence has been advocated by both government and non-government organizations.

This thesis has found that the laws on child protection in armed conflict do not exist as recruiting children into the army is illegal. Additionally, approving the rights of such soldiers may lead to acknowledge employing child soldiers. Therefore, the laws sheltering child soldiers from armed conflict and providing them fundamental child rights should be enacted.

Though above-mentioned laws are necessary, the campaign which is launched to unify all states to accept the obligations under Geneva Convention 1949 and Additional Protocol 1997 is preferred. Eliminating child soldiers, helping children under armed conflict as well as following the principles and provisions regarding child protection may lead to eradicate the existence of child soldiers.