

Government response: The Vancouver Principles

Defence Minister Lord Howe meeting Canadian Minister of National Defence Harjit Singh Sajjan at the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in Vancouver.

The ['Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers'](#) were launched at the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in Vancouver on 15 November 2017. They are a set of political commitments made on preventing child recruitment in the context of peacekeeping operations, including with regard to early warning and the active prevention of recruitment.

The UK is one of the UN Member States to endorse the Vancouver Principles, with the following declaration:

The United Kingdom reaffirms the Paris Commitments to Protect Children Unlawfully Recruited or Used by Armed Forces or Armed Groups on their 10th anniversary. The United Kingdom draws particular attention to Paris Commitment 3, to ensure that conscription and enlistment procedures comply with applicable international law, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and Paris Commitment 5, to seek the release of all children unlawfully recruited or used by armed forces or armed groups unconditionally and at all times including during armed conflict.

Having regard to the legal framework concerning the recruitment and use of children and the Paris Commitments the United Kingdom endorses the guidance set out in both the Paris Principles and the Vancouver Principles, which seek to prioritise and further operationalise child protection within UN peacekeeping missions, in advance of the launch of the Vancouver Principles on 15 November 2017.