PEACE & SECURITY WORKING GROUP OF THE G7 GLOBAL TASK FORCE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2018 G7 MINISTERIAL ON "BUILDING A MORE PEACEFUL AND SECURE WORLD"

As a coalition of civil society organizations that serve the world's most vulnerable communities and work to prevent atrocities and violent conflict, we applaud the Canadian G7 Presidency's choice of "Building a More Peaceful and Secure World" as one of the 5 themes and goals of this year's G7. Your joint Ministerial in April has the opportunity to take concrete steps to realize this important goal. The time for evidence-based action is more important now than ever as the world is becoming increasingly violent.   According to the UN and World Bank, "*Violent conflict is increasingly recognized as one of the biggest obstacles to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.*"[1]

Violence and violent conflict are on the rise, affecting millions of men, women, girls and boys around the globe -- and that number continues to climb. Furthermore, the nature of international conflict and humanitarian crises is growing increasingly complex and prolonged. The world has witnessed a relentless uptrend in forced displacement in the last ten years, with the largest number of refugees and internally displaced people since WWII. On average, instability due to humanitarian crises and/or natural disasters can last longer than seven years, and families caught in conflicts spend an average of 26 years as refugees or internally displaced people. These trends threaten to erode global development, prevent progress towards gender equity, worsen humanitarian crises, and pull finite resources away from tackling development challenges. Disturbingly, armed conflicts are becoming more deadly for civilians.[2] In the 2017 there was a 38% increase in civilian deaths from explosive weapons compared to 2016.[3]

We recognize previous G7 Communiques and actions have focused on Counter-Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism. We would urge you to reevaluate how you address violence more broadly, including by taking a fresh look at the specific drivers of conflict to ensure the most appropriate frameworks and interventions are utilized by G7 countries. While the drivers of violent extremism are context-specific and diverse, there are significant correlations across the studies of political violence, terrorism, gender and gang violence that should inform any

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[1] United Nations and World Bank. 2017."Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict- Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions ." World Bank, Washington, DC.

[2] Richard Norton-Taylor, "Global armed conflicts becoming more deadly, major study finds," The Guardian, May 20, 2015. Accessed 1/23/2018. http://bit.ly/2ngFFbo

[3] From Action on Armed Violence, accessed 3/31/2018 at https://aoav.org.uk/2018/2017-saw-38-increase-civilian-deaths-explosive-violence-new-report-finds/

actions taken by your ministries.   As rigorous research has shown,[4] the most consistent drivers to these forms of violence include a lack of economic opportunities, food insecurity, grievances against government from experienced or perceived negligence, marginalization and injustice, exposure to violence, feelings of isolation, unmet expectations, manipulated masculinities and the belief that joining a violent movement, gang, etc. holds the best prospects of achieving justice. Aggression towards or systemic exclusion of specific communities often fuels grievances and increases propensity towards violence as a means for problem solving. Any actions by the G7, especially from MoFAs and MoDs, will be vastly improved if these root causes are better understood and addressed. The financial savings are also enormous. The United Nations and World Bank estimate that a scaled-up system for preventive action could save between US$5 billion and $70 billion per year.[5]

We also encourage you to commit to improving attention to the gender dimensions of PVE/CVE. This would include a better understanding of how masculine identities are used and mobilized, but it also includes recognizing women as actors and agents-in both participating in violent extremist organizations and in resisting and countering radicalization. In this effort, we strongly urge listening to, following the lead of and supporting local women's organizations and resist contributing to their militarization.[6] We appreciate that the G7 Public Engagement Paper recognizes violent conflict and security threats often affect women disproportionately, including increasing vulnerability to rape, sexual slavery and early and forced marriage. We must also recognize harmful practices and social norms -including among women- that uphold gender hierarchies and other intersecting forms of marginalization and exclusion or condone violence, are often exacerbated during conflict. We hope Ministers will identify specific interventions to remedy these harmful practices and social norms.

Your joint Ministerial has the opportunity to consider the most appropriate next steps towards shaping a "More Peaceful and Secure World." We therefore urge the Joint Ministerial to:
- **Launch a Five-Country Peace and Inclusive Security Initiative.** In line with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy that asserts 'integrated responses are particularly important in fragile and conflict-affected contexts,' this year's G7 should launch, in five countries in conflict or at high risk of violence, a coordinated effort to resolve conflict, elevate peacebuilding and implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. This would include coordinating robust diplomatic and assistance efforts to address the root causes of conflict; support women and locally-led prevention efforts; include women's organizations in conflict resolution and peace negotiations as well ensures opportunities for young people to harness their potential and enthusiasm to solve global problems and promote peace and security.

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[4] For example, individuals who experience violence from state security forces, witness a drone strike on their community, or grow up in violent households are more likely to support intergroup violence at some point in their lives. See "Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan (2012):http://bit.ly/2tsAASu; The Effect of Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq (2010) : http://bit.ly/2t053Gr; and Compendium of anecdotal comments and qualitative/quantitative studies (2015) : http://bit.ly/2u7ue8E and Steven E. Finkel et al., "Contextual Violence and Support for Violent Extremism: Evidence from the Sahel" (September 2016) http://bit.ly/2dWxekU

[5] United Nations and World Bank. 2017."Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict- Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions ." World Bank, Washington, DC.

[6] United States Institute of Peace. 2015. Women Preventing Violent Extremism.

This effort would must include addressing poor, non-inclusive governance, corruption, food insecurity, inequality and lack of women's participation. Coordinated G7 action- especially amongst Ministries of Foreign Affairs- must also support strengthening civil society movements, especially movements and prevention efforts led by youth and women. Prioritizing climate-smart development will be critical too, as sources[7] estimate that over the past 60 years, 40 percent of civil wars have been associated with competition over natural resources. Additionally, G7 leadership and prioritization of education within this initiative (and globally) could change the course of millions of children and adolescents currently out of school due to conflict and crisis, and at the same time, promote gender equality, peace and security and the rejection of extremism. Evidence shows that quality education can break the cycle of violence and conflict, redefine gender norms and promote tolerance and reconciliation. Education is a key factor in helping children and youth contribute to peacebuilding, more gender equal societies, and building prosperity for all.

- **Increase Investments and Accountability in Peacebuilding.** Following from Canada's pledge to increase funding for women in peacebuilding, and building off the 2016 Ise-Shima communique which noted: "*The international community should therefore increase its efforts towards conflict prevention, stabilization, and post-conflict peacebuilding and focus on finding solutions…*" we ask that your Ministerial endorse a requirement for G7 countries to increase funding for conflict prevention and mitigation, inclusive peacebuilding, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the prevention of recruitment of child soldiers,[8] and add this commitment to the G7 Progress Reports so countries can be held accountable to investing in peace. Currently, only approximately 1.4% of all ODA is spent on civilian peacebuilding, women's equality organizations and institutions, ending violence against women and girls and prevention and disarmament of child soldiers.[9]

    Additionally, building on the "Participation Revolution" agreed by all G7 countries and fellow signatories to the Grand Bargain, the United National-World Bank Study "Pathways for Peace" and the precedent set by Canada's new Women's Voice and Leadership Program, investments should support the equal and meaningful participation of civil society, especially diverse women and youth in all management and leadership committees, and consultations with displaced and crisis-affected persons in urban, rural and camp settings, including return areas. Towards this end, increased funding should support local women's and youth groups by providing tools, training and dedicated

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[7] UNCCD (2014) Desertification the Invisible Frontline and CARE Denmark, Fleeing Climate Change November 2016.

[8] This could include establishing a new G7-specific indicator, or a commitment to increase funding for OECD-DAC CRS Peace and Security subcategories like "Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution" (15220), "Women's equality organisations and institutions" (15170)," Ending violence against women and girls" (15180), and "Child soldiers (Prevention and demobilisation)" (15261).

[9] Data pulled from OECD DAC QWIDs database using 2016 data, disbursed funding for CRS categories: Women's equality organisations and institutions; Ending violence against women and girls; Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution; and Child soldiers (Prevention and demobilization).

resources that generate <u>meaningful participation</u> in decision-making processes in conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, protection and early recovery, while strengthening leadership skills and increasing access to economic and employment opportunities.

While we believe the above steps will help decrease the number of civilians affected by conflict, there is still an urgent need to address the needs of civilians living in conflict, or who have fled violence. Your joint Ministerial is the appropriate venue to elevate and initiate the following:

- **Publicly Recommit to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and accompanying resolutions and political agreements, including funding of National Action Plans[10]** in any Ministerial statement. We appreciate that all G7 countries have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) and urge G7 countries to fully implement United Nations Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, including strengthening women's meaningful participation in all political, governance and security structures at all levels to achieve sustainable peace and security.   But the Women, Peace and Security Agenda requires resources and predictable long-term funding to make significant advances in the implementation of this agenda. All G7 countries' NAPs should have accompanying resource or budgeting plans to ensure the full implementation of the NAPs no later than 2020. This commitment should be included in future G7 Progress reports.

- **Hold the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations accountable for gender mainstreaming.**
  The G7 countries, which represent some of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' (DPKO) top donors,[11] must hold DPKO accountable for appropriately resourcing and supporting gender mainstreaming as mandated. Recent cuts to the UN peacekeeping budget have disproportionately affected critical gender functions, such as senior gender advisers to DPKO missions and peacekeeping strategic assessments.[12] When gender analysis is absent in such early stages of mission planning, research[13] shows that resulting mandates, staffing, and priorities are often gender-blind, leaving missions unreflective of the populations they are meant to serve, ill-equipped to address the different needs of men, women, boys, and girls in conflict, and more likely to commit sexual exploitation and abuse themselves. UNSCR 2242 mandates DPKO to mainstream technical gender expertise throughout "all stages of mission planning, mandate development, implementation, review and mission drawdown." In de-prioritizing gender mainstreaming throughout this process, DPKO is contravening their UNSC obligations and directly impeding their own potential as a force for peace.

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[10] This should include all UNSCRs related to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and also prioritize UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

[11]"Who fights, and who pays for UN peacekeeping missions," *The Economist*, June 2016, http://econ.st/2GoC0RG

[12] Louise Allen, "Gender Continues to be Overlooked by UN Peacekeeping," NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security, October 23, 2017, http://bit.ly/2BypnzR

[13] "Keeping the Peace in an Increasingly Militarized World," in *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Security the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, UN Women, 2015

- **Protect IHL, including Children's Rights, and Improve Security Sector and Governance.** With Canada holding the Presidency of the G7 and prioritizing the needs of women and girls in armed conflict, this year's Agenda should include a <u>G7 commitment to undertake concerted efforts to restore and demand respect for civilians in armed conflict.</u> A lack of restraint in the conduct of hostilities fuels protracted conflict and often complicates the process of negotiating political settlements. Conversely, rigorous adherence to the norms of international humanitarian law by one party encourages adherence by other parties to the conflict. To counteract the current trend of violence against civilians, the G7- especially Ministries of Defense- should forcefully commit themselves to rigorously minimize civilian harm in their own military conduct and security partnerships, while calling on all parties to respond in kind and to hold those using violence against civilians responsible. This requires comprehensive capacity building of defense and security forces on civilian harm mitigation, the adoption of practical measures to exercise proportion and precaution in the conduct of hostilities, and conditioning security cooperation on IHL compliance. Specifically, G7 countries should adopt a common commitment to transparency in reporting on civilian harm resulting from military operations, and on steps they are taking to ensure security sector assistance to partners is prioritizing IHL and civilian harm mitigation. A new commitment in the G7 Progress Report should track these efforts.

o Additionally, with a growing number of adolescents and children living in conflict-affected states, it is more important than ever to ensure their rights and safety are protected. We applaud the Canadian government for endorsing the Safe Schools Declaration and launching the Vancouver Principles, and encourage other G7 countries to commit to these to help prevent human and child rights violations. We also endorse the need for a Declaration to Educate and Empower Girls in Crises. Investing in education - in both development and humanitarian contexts - is foundational to the achievement of all other development goals, in particular, SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies). The Declaration would reinforce previous political commitments that are broadly aimed at improving access to education and/or supporting refugees and internally displaced populations, but would also add value by putting girls *and* education at the center of our global humanitarian efforts – an important legacy for the Canadian G7 Presidency for years to come. Evidence shows that quality education can help break the cycle of violence and conflict, redefine gender norms and promote tolerance and reconciliation, resilience and recovery. Additionally, prioritizing investments in adolescents and youth to drive recovery and development can help decrease fragility and break cycles of violence.

These measures should explicitly recognize the particular needs and rights of refugees, internally displaced persons, and other forcibly displaced people, through a human rights-based (and non-securitized) approach.

- **Improve Vulnerable Peoples' Livelihoods and Resilience and Eliminate Factors Contributing to Conflict and Instability**

We are deeply concerned by the recent trend in the number of hungry people increasing from 795 million to 815 million, with this increase due in large part to conflict; 11 of the 13 largest food crises in the world today are conflict-related. The G7 can help reverse this trend. Conflict causes hunger and studies show that hunger contributes to conflict and instability. We urge you to include in your Ministerial statement a recognition of deep concern about the link between hunger and conflict, including calls on all parties to conflicts to allow unfettered humanitarian access to those in need, in line with IHL and a commitment to working jointly to address factors that fuel conflicts. Investing in food security and resilient livelihoods strengthens efforts to prevent conflict and achieve sustainable peace.[14] While G7 countries must still close the gap in humanitarian funding, increased investment in building resilience, including helping families feed themselves, is urgently needed. Recent research has shown that every $1 invested in resilience over 15 years will result in between US$2.3 and US$3.3 in reduced humanitarian assistance and avoided losses.

We appreciate the efforts you and your governments are making to build a more safe and peaceful world and would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you further steps to take to realize this critical agenda. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

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[14] FAO Welcomes UN Security Council Recognition of Conflict-Famine Link: UNSC acknowledges conflict as a major cause of famine. 17 August, 2017, Rome.