

November 3rd, 2025

The Honourable Anita Anand
Minister of Foreign Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

CC: The Honorable Randeep Sarai, Secretary of State for International Development
The Honorable Mona Fortier, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honorable Rob Oliphant, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Yasir Naqvi, Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for International Development

Re: Canadian leadership in peacebuilding

Dear Minister Anand,

We write to you today as a collective of organizations committed to the role that peacebuilding plays in building bridges and creating sustainable change in moments of conflict and crisis. As you review Canada's foreign policy and lead the G7 Foreign Minister's track, we ask that peacebuilding be prioritized as a focus area for Canadian leadership and that Canada publicly recommit to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

Recently, at the UN General Assembly, you rightfully stated that "Our goal will always be to prevent and to resolve international conflicts while modernizing global institutions so that they can meet the challenges of the future[...] Canada is committed to leaving future generations not only a safer, more prosperous, more inclusive and more peaceful world, but also a more sustainable one. Ambassador Bob Rae added on October 6th "the commitment to Women, Peace and Security has never received the resources or the political will required to be achieved. Now, we are forced to spend precious time defending progress against pushback at the very moment when the Women Peace and Security agenda is needed most..." These direct quotes give us hope that we are aligned in our desire to see prevention as the priority, through peacebuilding.

Wars fuel climate change and affect everyone, including Canadians. War prevents communities from developing, stops children going to school and makes it harder for people to access healthcare. Wars also exacerbate sexual and gender-based violence, disproportionately affecting women, children, and marginalized groups. Poverty then drives more conflict, and the cycle continues. In a global context in which development aid is being reduced in favour of military armament, as a country, based on our history of pluralism and peacebuilding, we have an opportunity to choose something different. At this moment, the world needs more of Canada as a peacebuilding leader, ready to support peace processes, diplomacy, healthy dialogue and community and institutional building processes.

Peacebuilding leadership has been the backbone of our Canadian history, under multiple different political traditions. A key component of this leadership must be the courage to take a principled

stand, to say what needs to be said, and, as required, to do what must be done. Canada has led with a peace focus in many global moments of uncertainty, including the work to promote peace in the Suez Canal, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission here at home, and ongoing support for grassroots peacebuilders around the world. The Canadian value of building bridges demonstrates what it means to be a part of a pluralistic society, where our diversity is our strength and where we care for our neighbours. This is exactly what we have to offer at this moment.

As part of our foreign policy, we urge continued attention to Canada's role in providing nonviolent support for human rights and international law as well as expertise in diplomacy. We also encourage a sustained commitment to Canada's official development assistance envelope, with a strong focus on peacebuilding, social cohesion and Humanitarian-Development and Peace nexus approaches. Peacebuilding programs contribute to lasting peace in countries and communities around the world by addressing the root causes of violent conflict through long-term, inclusive efforts. And just as bridge-building requires a team of builders with diverse skills, peacebuilding requires the expertise of local actors, communities, nongovernmental organizations, national governments, and international organizations working together.

As organizations engaged in, or supportive of, peacebuilding, we view peacebuilding as a vital component of Canada's global leadership. We are ready to offer our support and expertise to advance a vision of Canada that prioritizes peacebuilding and conflict prevention. As a first step, we respectfully urge the Government of Canada to continue making public statements affirming its commitment to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and to ensure that these priorities are clearly integrated and elevated within Canada's foreign policy. Beyond statements, as civil society organizations, many with local partners directly engaged in peacebuilding, we also ask to be meaningfully and practically involved in conversations about implementing peacebuilding.

We ask for a meeting to continue to discuss the ways in which our organizations can support Canadian leadership in peacebuilding through triple nexus programming, human rights and nonviolence, and public engagement for Canadian leadership for peace here at home.

Thank you for your attention. We look forward to hearing from you and welcome the opportunity to meet for further discussion.

Signatories:

Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Kenneth Kim, Executive Director

Canadian Friends Service Committee

Jennifer Preston, General Secretary

Development and Peace - Caritas Canada (Développement et Paix – Caritas Canada)

Carl Hétu, Executive Director

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Kate Higgins, Executive Director

Global Centre for Pluralism

Meredith Preseton McGhie, Secretary General