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RE-IGNITING CANADA'S PASSION FOR PEACE

PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES' STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019



STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR A CHANGED POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Project Ploughshares was founded in 1976 to promote peace and disarmament. As an operating agency of The Canadian Council of Churches, Ploughshares provides analysis and advice on Canada's role in preventing war and advancing human security in zones of violent conflict.

Our vision is for a secure and just world at peace.

Our mission is to articulate policies and strategies based on the best available evidence that will prevent war, build sustainable peace where violence has caused destruction, and control and reduce expenditures on weapons and direct those resources toward sustainable economic and social development. As our name suggests, we want to turn swords into ploughshares.

To achieve these goals Project Ploughshares conducts research on defence and security issues; provides analysis and alternatives to the use of force; and engages in dialogue with governments and civil society, both in Canada and abroad, to create policy options for decision-makers and build public support in Canada for understanding and addressing the root and proximate causes of armed violence.

From the start Project Ploughshares has partnered

with churches and other faith groups, civil society organizations, and governments, providing thoughtful leadership within Canada and with international partners on the changing security landscape.

The Canadian foreign and defence policy frameworks have fundamentally changed. While we believe Canadians remain committed to seeing their government make a constructive contribution to international peace and security, which includes providing leadership on conventional and nuclear disarmament issues, the federal government has moved away from these traditional Canadian commitments.

As a result, Project Ploughshares needs to adapt and change to fulfill its mission to contribute to a more secure and peaceful world. In addition to our continuing leadership in research and creating policy alternatives, we need to broaden our approach to working with others, inspiring and building public awareness, and tapping into and amplifying the support that exists among Canadians.

This strategic plan describes how we believe change will take place to reignite Canada's passion for peace and provides objectives for Ploughshares' role in this process over the next five years (2015–2019), so that Canada can once again become a world leader in building and sustaining peace.

HARNESSING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

Realizing the change that Project Ploughshares wants to see in Canada will require a collective effort:

- citizens willing and able to express their demands for peacebuilding;
- Canadian churches and related faith-based agencies working with ecumenical and interfaith partners in Canada and internationally to advance peace with justice;
- civil society organizations that bring people together to focus their resources on critical goals;
- academics and public intellectuals bridging the gap between theoretical excellence and practical problems; and
- politicians and government officials open to applying the lessons that evidence-based research yields for advancing peace and disarmament.

To successfully realign our national security policies so that Canada is once again a global leader, the pursuit of peace and disarmament must become a priority on the political, and the popular, public agenda.

This will require complementary efforts to address both the policy content of Canada's contribution to disarmament and human security, and to animate the deeply held commitment of Canadians to peace.

Project Ploughshares' role in this process of change is to:

- provide civil society leadership by producing evidence-based research and practical policy options;
- use its convening skills to build collaboration and strengthen partnerships of all types; and
- inspire public awareness and commitment for advancing peace.

The immediate challenge facing Ploughshares in this change process is to renew its capacity to support popular and community-based peace activism in Canada.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The primary goal set out in this strategic plan is for Project Ploughshares to strengthen its position as a leading Canadian voice for sustainable peace and disarmament by enhancing its research and communications capacity, capitalizing on new academic relationships, reaching out to a broader spectrum of civil society, and strengthening sustainable governance and funding.

The following Strategic Objectives provide direction for Project Ploughshares over the next five years (2015-2019) to achieve this goal. They are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1

Be a leading Canadian civil society voice for sustainable peace and disarmament.

We want to provide an engaging vision, coupled with policy analysis and practical recommendations, which inspires and maximizes the actions and influence of others for peace. Evidence-based research, policy development, and collaboration on peace and disarmament issues are among Ploughshares' recognized strengths. This expertise, combined with our reputation for reliability and integrity, makes us well placed to provide civil society leadership in Canada on international peace and security issues. To achieve this goal, Project Ploughshares commits to finding significant new resources that strengthen its ability to communicate its work and play a central role in building relationships and a network of ideas through traditional as well as new and specialized forms of media.



PRIORITIES

- 1** Build the evidence-based research case for policy options that support and demonstrate that Canada can and should be an international leader in building sustainable peace globally.
- 2** Translate research findings into timely and innovative communication vehicles that inspire key leaders among academics, youth, faith groups, including churches, civil society organizations, new Canadians, and government policymakers.
- 3** Build internal capacity – human and technical – to provide real-time and widely accessible responses to emerging crises, including decisions on Canada’s engaging in combat missions, and arguments for alternatives to the use of force.
- 4** Develop a policy advisory group of diverse members, including academics, church officials with international experience, retired government officials, and civil society leaders, including women’s peace groups, to expand the range of relevant research activities identified over the course of this five-year plan.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2

Bring renewed focus on academic and applied research and expertise on policy options to advance sustainable peace.

Ploughshares' new location and relationship with the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement (CPA) at Conrad Grebel University College make possible new partnerships and strategic opportunities with academic researchers, institutions, and students in Canada and abroad. There is an opportunity to help guide the development of the Centre's mandate and to build strong collaborative partnerships that span civil society and academia. Being located at the University of Waterloo and close to Wilfrid Laurier University offers strategic opportunities to engage students and youth campus groups in Waterloo and across the country.



PRIORITIES

- 1** Actively contribute to the development of the new CPA and collaborate with it to leverage opportunities provided through its infrastructure, finances, and programs.
- 2** Promote joint research projects and other collaborative opportunities for publications, speakers, and conferences with Canadian and international academic peace and disarmament researchers.
- 3** Establish a student advisory group to provide input and creative ideas on how to best relay Ploughshares' work and peace perspectives to student populations locally and across the country.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

Engage and mobilize new and expanded partnerships of individuals and organizations for building and sustaining peace globally.

Building public awareness and citizens' commitment to peace issues is essential if Canada is to regain its standing as a leader in building and sustaining peace. Disarmament and peace animation must be undertaken in a rapidly changing context. Communication methods have diversified and speeded up. Attention spans have diminished. Paper is being replaced by digital media. Public demonstrations occur in new ways. Increasingly a humanitarian focus is being used to animate the content of traditional arms control and disarmament campaigns. Staying current with these technical and cultural shifts requires a greater capacity to engage across media platforms with a variety of partners.



PRIORITIES

- 1** Create a vehicle to animate Canadians' deeply held commitment to support peacebuilding and disarmament.
- 2** Identify and strengthen existing partnerships with those who want to collaborate in building public awareness and momentum for change in Canada and internationally.
- 3** Engage in new mission-driven partnerships. Examples could include:
 - a) women's full and equal participation in peacebuilding and disarmament processes, as highlighted in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions; and
 - b) the connection between climate change and armed conflict, including the impact of climate on operating military equipment.
- 4** Develop new partnerships to engage and mobilize more youth, varied diaspora, multifaith communities, new Canadians, and other groups. Connecting to new constituencies will require adept use of social media and meeting the inherent challenge of conveying detailed policy research and recommendations to audiences that may lack expertise in peace and security issues.
- 5** Capitalize on the humanitarian rationale used to advance multilateral instruments to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons, ratify and implement the Arms Trade Treaty, and ban landmines and cluster munitions. International campaigns also are now under way to control or ban, based on humanitarian considerations, new weapons systems such as drones and autonomous weapons.
- 6** Renew and redefine Ploughshares' relationships with the churches and national and international ecumenical leaders, including the World Council of Churches. Although Canadian church capacity and engagement in issues of peace and conflict have decreased over time, people of faith across generations continue to be active agents in movements for peace. The churches and ecumenical leaders can provide valued perspectives to Ploughshares to address non-violent conflict resolution, peacemaking, and encouraging cultures of peace.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4

Continue to build a well governed, inspiring, and financially stable and healthy organization-of-choice for staff, volunteers, and funding partners.

Since its founding in 1976 Project Ploughshares has built an enviable reputation among Canadian churches and civil society partners as a trusted and reliable organization in the pursuit of peace and disarmament. But it faces real challenges as it looks forward to the next five years.

Ploughshares needs to generationally renew its individual donor base, which is the source of its core operational funding. It also needs to find new funding partners, in the face of the federal government's diminished interest in policy dialogue, which has affected access to project funding. New academic-related and international funders must be pursued if Ploughshares is to fulfill its mission.

Ploughshares' supporting national churches and church organizations are shrinking, even as they retain significant constituencies with recognized national profiles. The churches and their constituencies need to be approached in new and innovative ways to support today's peace and disarmament issues.

For Project Ploughshares to remain a leader in the pursuit of renewing Canada's contribution to international peace and security, it must meet these combined challenges of governance, funding, and program delivery.



PRIORITIES

- 1** Explore new and improved governance models that align supporting constituencies and fundraising needs with appropriate oversight and governance.
- 2** Ensure alignment of organizational resources and capacities to effectively meet strategic objectives and related program plans for research and policy recommendations, as well as public engagement and animation activities.
- 3** Create an expert advisory committee on fundraising to review existing methods, critically analyze potential new approaches, and make recommendations for revenue diversification and expansion.
- 4** Appoint a policy and program advisory committee to provide guidance and advice on international peace and security issues.
- 5** Give priority to the recruitment and formation of a new generation of program staff, as well as attracting and retaining volunteers for governance and advisory positions.

Founded in 1976 Project Ploughshares is a non-governmental organization that supports arms reduction and control, nuclear disarmament, space security, and peacebuilding efforts around the globe.

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