

# RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY TO A WORLD IN CRISIS



THE PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES STRATEGIC PLAN, 2023-2027

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Project Ploughshares is a Canadian peace research institute with a focus on disarmament efforts and international security, specifically related to the arms trade, emerging military and security technologies, nuclear weapons, and outer space.

For more information please visit: [www.ploughshares.ca](http://www.ploughshares.ca).

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### STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR A CHANGED POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Project Ploughshares, the peace research institute of the Canadian Council of Churches, was founded in 1976 to promote peace and disarmament through research, analysis, and advocacy.

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

Our mission is to turn swords into ploughshares.

We begin by conducting research on defence and security issues, with a focus on matters that concern Canada. We then analyze the evidence to develop reasoned policies and strategies that will prevent war, encourage the construction of sustainable peace in conflict zones, and restrict and reduce the arms trade so that scarce resources can be redirected to sustainable economic and social development. During this process, and afterwards, we engage in dialogue with governments and civil society, in Canada and abroad, to refine these policies and build public support for them. More than this, we seek out partnerships with faith groups, civil society organizations, and governments.

Project Ploughshares strives to remain nimble, so that we can continue to fulfill our mission in a changing world. For our entire existence, the world has faced challenges relating to arms control, disarmament, and international security. Today, however, our planet also faces two simultaneous emergencies of epic magnitude: the COVID-19 pandemic and global warming. As a peace research organization, Project Ploughshares must calculate the added risks to human security that these new dangers pose and respond appropriately. We must recognize the new complexity of human security if we are to develop appropriate strategies in each of our program areas.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Project Ploughshares has “pivoted”, adopting new technologies and strategies that have allowed us to continue our important work in providing research and policy alternatives that could lead to a more just, peaceful, and secure world. We continue to explore new ways to actively broaden our ability to work with others and to build public awareness and support for peace among Canadians.

Thus, Project Ploughshares is well prepared to continue to encourage the Canadian government to make significant contributions to multilateral engagements on a wide range of peace and security issues, including conventional and nuclear disarmament.

Several of the priorities, assumptions, and strategic directions of the previous Project Ploughshares strategic plan – “Re-Igniting Canada’s Passion for Peace” – continue to provide an effective blueprint for our work going forward. The present strategic plan retains these elements, while taking stock of policy and operational changes since the last strategic planning process.

## HARNESSING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

A collective effort is needed to make Canada once again a global leader in international security. This effort requires:

- citizens willing and able to express their demands for peacebuilding;
- ecumenical and interfaith partnerships between Canadian and foreign faith-based groups that work to advance a just global peace;
- civil society organizations that allow people to focus joint resources on critical goals;
- academics and public intellectuals who bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical problems; and
- politicians and government officials who are willing to apply the lessons from evidence-based research to advance peace and disarmament.

The pursuit of peace and disarmament must become a Canadian priority. The role of Project Ploughshares in this process is to

- produce evidence-based research and practical policy options;
- build collaborations and strengthen partnerships of all types; and
- inspire public awareness of, and a commitment to, the need to advance peace.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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

The following Strategic Objectives provide direction for Project Ploughshares over the next five years (2023-2027). They are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1

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

We want to provide an engaging vision of peace that, coupled with policy analysis and practical recommendations, inspires and maximizes the actions of others. With a reputation for reliability and integrity, plus expertise in evidence-based research, policy development, and collaboration, Project Ploughshares is well placed to provide civil society leadership in Canada on international peace and disarmament issues. To achieve this objective, Project Ploughshares commits to finding significant new resources that will expand its ability to build relationships and communicate its mission through traditional as well as new and specialized forms of media.

### PRIORITIES

1. Build an evidence-based case that supports and demonstrates the position that Canada can and should be a global leader in the effort to build sustainable peace, and advances a role for civil

society organizations such as Project Ploughshares in supporting Canada in this work on the international stage.

2. Translate research findings into timely and innovative communication vehicles that inform and inspire various constituencies, including academics, youth, faith groups, civil society organizations, government policymakers, and the Canadian public.
3. Increase internal capacity – human and technical – so that Project Ploughshares is better able to provide real-time and widely accessible research and policy alternatives in response to emerging crises and other developments that relate to Project Ploughshares programs.
4. Maintain and expand key program areas related to nuclear disarmament, outer space security, conventional weapons controls, emerging military technologies, and the protection of civilians. Be mindful of, and draw linkages to, cross-cutting issues that intersect with these concerns, such as the global climate emergency, the plight of forced migrants, and the gender implications of armed violence.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2

**Strengthen ties with relevant academic experts and researchers to grow collaborations that advance sustainable peace.**

Project Ploughshares is a member of the Kindred Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement (CPA) at Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo. Our presence on one university campus and proximity to another – Wilfrid Laurier University – present constant opportunities for partnerships and collaborations with academic researchers and students. Close proximity and long-standing ties with the Balsillie School of International Affairs and the Centre for International Governance Innovation offer even more. By building on this local base, Ploughshares can create national and international networks.

### PRIORITIES

1. Pursue collaborations with faculty, students, and research centres at academic institutions across Canada that allow access to academic infrastructures, finances, and programs.
2. Be a firm and evidence-based civil society voice for arms control and disarmament efforts in collaborative networks with academic partners.
3. Advance toward a professionalized, highly regarded and competitive student internship program that expands the present capacity of Ploughshares and engages a younger constituency.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

**Participate in the development of new and expanded partnerships of individuals and organizations that build and sustain global peace.**

Canada needs the support of an informed and engaged citizenry if it is to engage more constructively in matters of global security and contribute to positive policy development at international forums. Working with likeminded organizations, Project Ploughshares can help to support and educate such a citizenry. Adapting in real time to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Ploughshares has adopted an expanded range of communication technologies and is now better

prepared to respond to the rapidly changing contexts in which disarmament and peace animation must often be undertaken. Ploughshares is also familiar with the humanitarian focus that is increasingly being used to animate the content of traditional arms control and disarmament campaigns and is able to apply that focus in materials it provides for its audiences.

#### PRIORITIES

1. Animate Canadians' deeply held commitment to peacebuilding and disarmament through a clearly defined communications strategy and a strong, professional online presence that capitalize on the opportunities offered by new technologies and communication channels.
2. Strengthen existing partnerships and pursue new ones that build public awareness and momentum for change in Canada and beyond.
3. Employ 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 in campaigns to control or ban new weapons systems such as drones and autonomous weapons.
4. Strengthen the relationship of Project Ploughshares with Canadian churches and national and international ecumenical leaders. Project Ploughshares should be the go-to source of policy advice for faith-based organizations, which, in turn, can provide us with valuable perspectives on non-violent conflict resolution, peacemaking, and encouraging cultures of peace.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4

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

Since its founding, Project Ploughshares has built an enviable reputation among Canadian churches and civil society partners as a trusted organization that steadfastly pursues peace and disarmament. But it faces real challenges in the next five years.

Ploughshares needs to grow its individual donor base, which is the source of its core operational funding. As well, the federal government's diminished interest in policy dialogue has shut the door to much of our project funding. We must locate new funding partners, which will likely be academic-related and/or international funders.

Canada's national churches and church organizations have always supported Ploughshares financially and in other ways. But that support has been shrinking. The churches and their still-vital constituencies must be persuaded to support in a significant way Canada's premier voice for peace and disarmament issues.

For Project Ploughshares to continue its essential work to remain a leader in its field in international peace and security, it must meet these combined challenges of governance, funding, and program delivery.

#### PRIORITIES

1. Maintain a robust governance structure that aligns supporting the needs of constituencies and fundraising with appropriate oversight and governance.
2. Ensure the alignment of organizational resources and capacities to effectively meet strategic ob-

jectives and related program plans for research and policy recommendations, as well as public engagement and animation activities.

3. Establish a Development Committee to review existing fundraising methods, critically analyze potential new approaches to fundraising, and make recommendations for revenue diversification and expansion.

