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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 9 – National Peacekeepers Day in Canada

Canada's support for UN peace operations: Still a work in progress

Ottawa - [In March of this year](#), Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and National Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan announced the future deployment of an Aviation Task Force to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for a period of one year. The Canadian deployment to Mali, now well underway, will include up to 250 military personnel (plus twenty police) and an aviation task force composed of Canadian Chinook transport helicopters and Griffin armed helicopters to provide escort and protection.

While the World Federalist Movement - Canada (WFMC) welcomes this initiative, questions remain about Canada's commitment to the Mali operation, as well as what further steps Canada will take. According to WFMC President Walter Dorn, "After a couple of years of dithering, Canada needs to do more. The Mali deployment needs to be sustained for a reasonable period of time. And there are many other ways we can participate and contribute to the UN's efforts on behalf of international peace and security."

The [Canada and UN Peacekeeping fact sheet](#), released each August 9 on National Peacekeepers Day, uses data as of June 2018. These data indicate that Canadian contributions were at a historic low – 44 military and police personnel, ranking Canada 77th among contributors to UN peacekeeping. Once Canadian uniformed personnel are fully deployed in Mali, Canada's world ranking will rise to 45th or 46th.

WFMC's [Canadians for Peacekeeping](#) campaign calls on the Government of Canada to increase and improve its commitment to United Nations peace operations. The campaign's website tracks the status of the promises and pledges that Canada has made, and actual Canadian deployments, using statistics and benchmark data that are updated on a monthly basis.

According to this year's report, three significant questions regarding the Mali deployment also raise questions regarding the extent of the government's longer-term support for UN peace operations.

- 1) Duration. A Department of National Defence March 19 [press release](#) indicated that Canada's aviation task force would deploy for "up to 12 months." A minimum three-year deployment is customary. How long will Canadians be deployed to Mali?
- 2) Mandate. Media reports have said that Canadian helicopters and support personnel will be tasked to operate as part of MINUSMA, but also as part of the French-led counter-

terrorism Operation Barkhane as well as the newly created G5 Sahel regional force (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger). Will Canadian personnel deploy outside Mali, or remain on Malian territory, as required by the MINUSMA mandate?

3) Training. The Canadian Forces have contributed very low levels of personnel to UN peace operations for a long time. There is a need to train Canadian military personnel for participation in future United Nations peacekeeping missions, but no measures to increase Canada's training for UN operations have been taken.

In August 2016 [Canada announced](#) a commitment of up to 600 military personnel, 150 police and \$450 million over three years. That commitment was reiterated last November by the Prime Minister in remarks at the Vancouver Ministerial Meeting on UN Peacekeeping. The Prime Minister went on to [announce](#) that Canada would make available tactical airlift support, an Aviation Task Force, a Quick Reaction Force and new deployments of police. In addition Canada is supporting the "Elsie Initiative" to increase the number of women in peacekeeping, as well as a program of training for UN personnel.

The [World Federalist Movement – Canada](#) is a longstanding peace organization advocating more effective and accountable global governance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Prof. Walter Dorn, President, World Federalist Movement - Canada
Email: Walter.Dorn@rmc.ca.
Mobile: +1 929-376-7313

Fergus Watt, Executive Director, World Federalist Movement – Canada
Email: ferguswatt6@gmail.com
Mobile: 613 859-7591