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Global Affairs Canada: Feminist Foreign Policy Dialogue

Thank you for your contribution to the feminist foreign policy dialogue. We invite you to provide your contribution below, within the five (5)-page limit

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Please indicate if you are submitting this contribution:

- ☐ As an individual
- ☒ On behalf of an organization
- ☐ On behalf of a group of organizations or individuals

Please indicate the areas covered in your contribution:

- ☐ Overarching considerations
 - ☐ Enhanced diplomatic engagement
 - ☒ Women, Peace and Security (WPS)
 - ☐ Responding to evolving vulnerabilities
 - ☐ Inclusive digital transformation
 - ☐ Other: please specify
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Written Contribution:

While engaging with the Feminist Foreign Policy Scene Setter document, we found topics around civil sector partnerships and alliance building most interesting, however, we want to bring this to the domestic level. In order to better address new Women Peace and Security (WPS) Challenges through a Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP), Global Affairs Canada (GAC) should invest in and partner with Canadian WPS experts and activists at all levels. While GAC has begun doing this already, here we will outline some findings from our research on WPS expertise in Canada, funded by the Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security, and make suggestions for how to strengthen partnerships between GAC and academia in particular. GAC needs to foster WPS research at home because it will allow for better engagement with partners abroad, and bolster Canada as an important player in this space.

The body of research on WPS is expansive, spanning a variety of fields, including sociology, history and gender studies, but is concentrated in the field of political science. This research covers a variety of topics within the theme of WPS. Some sub-fields have much more of a history and a large body of research already in the works whereas others are more niche and have very few researchers focusing on them. Our research focused outside of normative scope of WPS expertise, offering a more inclusive search of a variety of experts and disciplines.¹ If this had not been the case, it would have appeared that most of the research concentrated on legalistic research on human rights and policy-oriented research on conflict and development; both historically mainstream avenues of research on the WPS agenda. Outside of the mentioned research areas, the most frequently mentioned research interests were: peacebuilding and conflict resolution, peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention, terrorism, sexual and gender-based violence – including work on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) – protest and political participation, resource security – including food, water, and natural resources – migration, genocide and crimes against humanity, justice and inequality, and feminist analysis and practice. Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy has a direct interest in human rights and peacekeeping, among other things, which are areas of concentration within Canadian WPS expertise. An increased partnership between these experts and GAC would lead to a stronger and more diverse approach to FFP going forward.

According to our research, we found that roughly 95% of expertise identified in Canada were women, and a disproportionate amount of the expertise were white.² Further, WPS expertise is disproportionately concentrated in Ontario. Outside of Toronto and Ottawa (the main hot spots), there is a significant amount of research focused at the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University, Queen's University, and the University of Western Ontario. Each of these schools had designated research centres on peace and security, with researchers who focused on gender. Most peace and security centres around Canada did not explicitly engage with WPS issues, and had not supported this research for the past five years.

¹ *Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development*. (2019). NO ROOM FOR MARGINALIZATION: AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH TO GENDER-SENSITIVE PEACE PROCESSES. <https://www.sipri.org/>.

² It is important to note that this finding may not be exact, since pronouns/gender identity and race were not listed on research profiles.

There were over 100 experts found in Ontario. British Columbia had the second highest concentration of researchers at around 20, Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Quebec had around 10, all other provinces and territories had under five, except for Prince Edward Island, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut which had none. This concentration of research in Ontario, can be partially explained as a result of a higher population and concentration of universities, but it is also due to a lack of support. Since Ontario has been seen as a research hub for WPS research for some time now, people are often drawn to Ontario from other provinces and territories to further their research on the topic. GAC should act in a way to further support and fund the development of WPS expertise across Canada in order to diversify the perspectives behind Canadian research. According to our findings, between one half and two thirds of WPS research was housed in Ontario, but according to Statistics Canada, Ontario makes up one third of academic research more broadly in Canada.³ Data from Statistics Canada also made it clear that Quebec was underrepresented in WPS research. While academics in Quebec made up around a quarter of all academics in Canada, they made up less than one twelfth of WPS researchers. Quebec is a population centre in Canada and supports almost all French language research in the country. By this logic Quebec should be supporting far more WPS research than it does. GAC can engage by increasing support for WPS research in Quebec, as well as other smaller provinces and territories. An increased support for these researchers may attract more research towards the field in these regions, leading to lingual and regional diversity in the field.

There are a few key organizations that come to mind when discussing women, peace and security across Canada, whose mandates more directly center around the topic. The first is Women in International Security Canada (WIIS- Canada), who has a variety of branches across Canada and university chapters. WIIS-Canada is a largely academic and law dominated network which seeks to advance women's expertise in the field. Another organization is Women Peace and Security Network (WPSN), which supports the implementation of UNSCR 1325 through research and activism across Canada. Another is Women in Defence and Security (WiDS), which seeks to promote and support Canadian women's contributions to defence and security at all levels in all fields. These three organizations are just a few that discuss the WPS agenda and work to increase participation in the field. Many of these organizations have branches across Canada, usually located within universities as clubs or chapters; for example, organizations like WIIS-Canada and UN Women. Other organizations have headquarters in one part of Canada but do work in another city or region: for example, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace or Women in the Arctic and Gender Equality in the Arctic. These branches act as a tool to increase participation across Canada.

Student advocacy is key to the WPS agenda in Canada and is why university clubs have been so successful in increasing the interest in the topic. These clubs offer students the opportunity to learn from and explore advocacy, research and topics related to WPS amongst a group of their peers. Some organizations, like WiDS and WIIS-Canada have mentorship opportunities for student members to build their networks with more senior members in the field. Youth are the future of the expansion of the WPS agenda throughout Canada. This is exemplified in the recently created Youth Peace and Security (YPS) group in Canada which has been engaged with the FFP consultations. GAC should focus resources on supporting and encouraging the growth of

³ *Statistics Canada*. Table 37-10-0076-01 Number of full-time teaching staff at Canadian universities, by rank, sex. <https://doi.org/10.25318/3710007601-eng>.

mentorship opportunities and student-based initiatives in order to increase the number of individuals interested in pursuing WPS.

During the current consultations, GAC has made attempts to engage experts and activists from a broad range of backgrounds in order to build its FFP. Of course, this work must continue, and our suggestions centre on augmenting the already existing work of GAC and pushing support further. Ultimately, GAC must engage with and foster academic research (in addition to activist participation) domestically in order to strengthen international partnerships and strengthen Canada's position as a leader in FFP and WPS. The following suggestions will aid in these goals:

Strategic funding of WPS Research and Initiatives. Though funding has recently increased for WPS initiatives, they are often buried within other more generalized calls for proposals such as the Mobilizing Insights in Defence and Security targeted engagement grants. The FFP Dialogue Scene Setter document outlined many areas of interest beneficial to GAC. While funding for some of these already exists through the Canadian government, more marginal fields of research must also be included. These are just two examples of key research topics that often fall through the gaps of funding: how to deal with female irregular combatants and war criminals before, during and after conflict; how to incorporate feminist principles in places where women and other minorities are not properly integrated into decision-making systems. More specified and well distributed funding, as well as funding which explicitly asks for proposals from BIPOC researchers and junior researchers is needed. While being specific to WPS, the actual topics of research should be broad. As we have found, BIPOC and junior scholars often stray from the more established fields of politics, law, and development and do WPS work in fields such as African studies, women and gender studies, and Indigenous studies. Calls for proposals should encourage scholars from these fields and be inclusive of research topics which stray outside of more traditional topics such as peacekeeping and human rights. Community focused funds which try to bring together research on WPS and local activism could also connect multiple parts of the community with fruitful outcomes.

Making the work visible and accessible. GAC could play a key role in encouraging the broader defence, peace, and security organizations and communities in Canada, which currently support very little WPS research, to put this work front and centre as part of their mandates and visions. This will help attract both young and established scholars to their centres, which would be especially important in provinces outside of Ontario, where WPS architectures are not as visible. Connecting the organizations that already do this work is also vital, as many have shared goals. WIIS-Canada already connects women and non-binary scholars, some of them in the WPS field, and has connections to networks primarily in Ontario such as the CDSN. WiDS primarily has connections with private and governmental sectors in Ottawa. These connections are already being made and could be facilitated by more promotion and knowledge of where WPS expertise lies. Helping to make WPS research visible helps foster partnerships. International partnerships are important for ensuring sound research and broader influence. Collaborations with the Global South in particular are an important step to inclusion in academia and align with many of GAC's FFP goals; again, this can be encouraged through specifications for collaborations in funding packages. WPS work can also be made more accessible through GAC funding and support, as more open-source work can be encouraged. *The Conversations on Feminist Foreign Policy*

public webinars were an important part of making WPS work visible. One of our team attended these webinars and found multiple experts from outside of traditional WPS fields contributing and learning. Events like this are key to fostering domestic partnership.