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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 9 — National Peacekeepers Day in Canada

Next Canadian government faces decisions on UN peacekeeping

Ottawa – Following this October's federal election, the next government of Canada will have to make important decisions about how best to support United Nations peace operations.

The 2019 **Canada and UN Peacekeeping** fact sheet, released today by the World Federalist Movement – Canada (WFMC), reports that with the winding down of Canada's deployment to Mali now underway, the number of Canadian peacekeepers will soon reach a critically low level.

According to WFMC President Walter Dorn, "Canada's deployment of an aviation task force to the UN's Stabilization Mission in Mali was a step in the right direction. But that deployment of one year (plus a month) was shorter than most. A two or three-year deployment is what usually occurs."

"On the whole, Canada's commitment to UN peace operations over the last few years has been uncertain and inconsistent — well below what Canadians expect, as shown by polls, and falling far short of the promises made by political leaders."

WFMC maintains a [website](#) that tracks monthly Canada's personnel commitments to UN peace operations.

- Upon election in 2015 Justin Trudeau promised that Canada would re-engage in UN peacekeeping. The Prime Minister gave explicit instructions to this effect in Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan's Mandate Letter.
- At the September 2016 Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting in London, UK, the government of Canada announced additional personnel commitments: up to 600 military personnel and 150 police officers. These significant new pledges helped Canada become host of the next Ministerial Meeting.
- At the November 2017 Ministerial Meeting held in Vancouver, the Prime Minister made additional new personnel pledges. These were, in fact, part of the existing

(and at the time not acted upon) pledges made in London: a Quick Reaction Force, Tactical Airlift Support, Aviation Task Force, new police mission to be considered. The new 2017 commitments included training (in Canada and internationally) and a new project (“The Elsie Initiative”) dedicated to increasing the proportions of women deployed in peace operations.

The 2019 WFMC Peacekeeping fact sheet reports that other NATO members are doing more than Canada to support the UN’s requirements for nearly 100,000 military, police and civilian peacekeepers. And so are Canada’s competitors for a Security Council seat (Ireland and Norway).

As a middle power with no significant external threat to its borders, a nation dependent on international trade and with a strong interest in the rule of law, Canada needs to contribute to strengthening and supporting the multilateral system, especially the United Nations. Until 1995, Canada had participated in every UN peacekeeping mission. Now it participates in less than half of them.

As Dorn notes, “The current Liberal government has failed to meet expectations and its promises. Canada's contribution to UN peace operations will soon reach drastically low levels. Let’s hope that a future government is a little more sure-footed and demonstrates a greater commitment to the operational efforts of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security in our fragile world.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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