



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrating August 9, National Peacekeepers Day in Canada:

### **Canada's support for UN peace operations: Still Missing in Action**

**Ottawa** – Canada's rank among contributors to UN peace operations remains low. The United Nations ranked Canada 67<sup>th</sup> with only 31 military personnel and 75 police officers (totaling [106 uniformed personnel](#)) in the field. The National Peacekeepers' Day is a chance to take stock of Canada's actions over the previous year and to consider how Canada can make a more solid national commitment to UN operations.

The annual Canada and UN Peacekeeping Fact Sheet documents the growing international demand for peacekeepers. Notably, other Western governments have increased their support for peacekeeping, following a Summit last September convened at the United Nations by U.S. President Obama.

Canadian officials, including Prime Minister Trudeau have repeatedly stated that Canada intends to increase this country's contributions to UN peacekeeping. But, over nine months into the new government's mandate, Canada's commitment to UN operations remains uncertain.

According to military expert Walter Dorn, "The government's rhetoric is encouraging. But the Canadian figures show a level of contribution to peace operations that is unchanged from previous years." Dorn is a member of the Advisory Board for the World Federalist Movement – Canada and also a professor at the Royal Military College and the Canadian Forces College.

Canada's lamentable performance comes at a time when UN personnel deployments remain high – over 120,000 personnel in 16 missions around the world. "It's widely recognized at the United Nations that more governments, including Canada, need to do more to help," says Dorn. "That was the impetus for the Leaders' Summit last year led by President Obama."

In May the United Nations General Assembly convened a [High-level Thematic Debate on the UN, Peace and Security](#), following a series of expert reviews in 2015 of different aspects of UN

efforts to maintain international peace and security. The United Nations has determined the need for a more coherent, system-wide approach – combining diplomacy, conflict prevention, peace operations and post-conflict peacebuilding. “Sustainable Peace” is the overarching rubric for this more integrated framework for UN operations.

According to peacekeeping analyst Peter Langille, “This makes a great deal of sense. The question remains, however, whether governments will invest in strengthening the UN’s capacity to deliver. We’ve been hearing for so long about the potential for renewed mediation capacities, conflict prevention, civilian protection, and other needed reforms. Canada could once again be a leader in this area.”

“Of particular importance is the need for the UN to improve its ability to deploy personnel quickly,” says Langille. “Canada’s stated interest in a rapidly deployable mission headquarters is in line with current UN priorities and needs. We are optimistic that the anticipated government of Canada release of a more detailed peacekeeping strategy will support efforts to improve UN rapid deployment, as well as significantly increased Canadian personnel commitments.”

“In addition, the Canadian Forces have the critical enablers often requested by the UN, with both strategic and tactical airlift, engineers and a mobile field hospital. These are available and could be provided immediately.”

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Prof. Walter Dorn

Email: [dorn@rmc.ca](mailto:dorn@rmc.ca). Mobile: (647) 205-2032

Dr. H. Peter Langille

Email: [hpl@globalcommonsecurity.org](mailto:hpl@globalcommonsecurity.org). Mobile: (519) 709-1360

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