

**Senate Committee on Human Rights
Office of Human Rights Freedoms and Inclusion
Appearance by Global Affairs Canada – December 7, 2016**

Follow-up Questions:

Question #1:

Provide a breakdown of the \$15 million budget for the Office, highlighting in particular funds spent on programming.

Answer #1:

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is currently developing a number of projects to promote peaceful pluralism, diversity and human rights further to the announcement on May 17, 2016 of up to \$15 million for the Office of Human Rights, Freedom and Inclusion (OHRFI).

A \$7.5M programming envelope explicitly dedicated to these issues is managed by GAC's Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) and aims to improve global or multi-county efforts at addressing human rights and inclusion issues that are linked to conflict and instability situations worldwide. While a number of programming options are under development, these are the projects that have been approved to date through GAC's PSOPs:

- 1. Title:** Promoting Human Rights, Inclusion and Religious Harmony in Sri Lanka and beyond: Equipping Communities to Resist Violent Conflict
Recipient: Equitas
Category: Human Rights and Religious Freedom
Budget and timelines: \$825,001 (2016-2019)

Through research, capacity building activities and the development of a regional module on conflict mitigation strategies, this project aims to equip community and national level actors to develop appropriate mechanisms and education interventions to strengthen community resilience, reduce tensions connected to religious differences and promote a greater spirit of unity and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. This approach allows the project to extend its reach to Myanmar and lay the foundation for sharing good practices more broadly in the region in the future.

- 2. Title:** Lifeline: Embattled Civil Society Organization (CSO) Assistance Fund
Recipient: US Department of State
Category: Human Rights
Budget and timelines: \$1,500,000 (2016-2018)

This project contributes to the Lifeline Embattled Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Assistance Fund, in order to support at-risk CSOs across the world. Launched by the US in 2011, the Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund provides emergency financial assistance to CSOs under threat or attack due to their work, and advocacy support responding to broader threats to CSOs. The fund is led by Freedom House.

Lifeline assistance is provided to a variety of CSOs that conduct advocacy, promote and protect human rights, and/or act in a watchdog capacity, including human rights

organizations, journalist associations, student groups, labor unions, think tanks, and others. The emergency assistance funding provided goes towards the following types of activities: security, legal expenses, temporary relocation, equipment replacement, dependent support, trial monitoring and the funding of prison visits.

Lifeline-funded advocacy initiatives are meant to rapidly and effectively respond to restrictions on civil society space and include funding for CSOs to host or participate in events to raise awareness on urgent and priority areas of focus.

3. **Title:** Five-Year Joint Programme to Promote Education about the Holocaust and Its Relevance to Other Genocides Worldwide
Recipient: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Category: Religious Freedom
Budget and Timelines: \$662,039 (2016-2019)

This five-year joint programme aims to promote education about the Holocaust and its relevance to other genocides worldwide. The Holocaust Education Focal Point supports Member States in the implementation of education on the Holocaust, developing projects in support of this purpose and fostering innovative approaches in the field.

Canadian funding supports the first two years of the program. More specifically the program produces guidelines on how education about the Holocaust and other genocides globally, can be introduced and sustained in education systems. This project contributes to long-term efforts to develop early warning systems that can be applied to the prevention of future atrocities.

4. **Title:** Enhanced respect, promotion and protection of human rights in the post accord period in Colombia
Recipient: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Category: Human Rights
Budget and Timelines: \$1,000,000 (2016-2018)
Project Effective Date (signature of implementing agreement): Implementing Agreement not yet signed, however, the project was announced in August 2016.

This project will 1) support a robust UN human rights presence in post accord Colombia that complements the peace and security work of the UN Political Mission, 2) support the work of Government of Colombia (GoC) institutions and civil society groups who work for the promotion and protection of human rights, 3) demonstrate the dividends of peace and lay the seeds for societal transformation given the critical nature of the short period immediately after the signing of a peace agreement. All these will be critical for building a climate of security and stability, for managing local level conflict and for protecting civilians as the country advances in its peacebuilding efforts in the months ahead.

5. **Title:** Preparing for the Prosecution of Breaches of International Criminal and Humanitarian Law in Syria
Recipient: Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA)
Category: Human Rights
Budget and Timelines: \$1,800,000 (2016-2017)

The project will contribute to the Commission for International Justice and Accountability's efforts to investigate and build criminal case files against individuals responsible for violations of International Criminal and Humanitarian Law during the conflict in Syria.

- 6. Title:** Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine
Recipient: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Category: Human Rights
Budget and Timelines: \$1,500,000 (2016-2018)

The purpose of this project is to monitor the impact of the on-going armed conflict in eastern Ukraine on the protection of human rights. The mission's reporting contributes to the prevention of and accountability for human rights violations and abuses by all parties to the conflict.

Projects still under development are exploring issues such as supporting human rights defenders online and inclusive governance, and support to projects under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

In addition to this programming supported through PSOPs, OHRFI has also put in place a three-year funding agreement, totalling \$15M, which provides institutional support to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to support their work in strengthening international human rights mechanisms; enhancing equality and countering discrimination; combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law; widening the democratic space; and strengthening early warning systems and protection of human rights in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity.

Question #2:

Provide a breakdown of the gender and ethnicity of the 36 employees in the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion.

Answer #2:

With respect to Senator Martin's request for the gender and ethnic breakdown of employees within the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion (OHRFI), the *Privacy Act* imposes strict parameters on how personal information may be collected, used, disclosed, retained and disposed of. Foremost among these is the requirement set out in [Section 4](#) of the *Privacy Act* which states that "No personal information shall be collected by a government institution unless it relates directly to an operating program or activity of the institution." Accordingly, OHRFI has no authority to collect gender and ethnicity information about its employees. While government departments may collect employee personal information under the *Employment Equity Act*, this information is provided by individuals strictly on a voluntary basis, can only be used for Employment Equity purposes, and cannot be disclosed outside of a department. Please rest assured however that the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion takes seriously its responsibilities under the *Employment Equity Act*, and continuously strives to ensure a diverse and representative workforce, and an inclusive workplace, as critical components to deliver on its mandate.