

## *November 6 Joint Statement on Environment and Conflict Day*

### **From words to action: time to act on the environment, peace and security**

Over the past year, the crises facing the global environment have become more visible than ever before. The climate emergency, biodiversity collapse, plastic pollution and the murder of environmental defenders have driven powerful civil society movements demanding change. Now is the time for leadership and bold actions to deliver this change and safeguard our environment.

Just as international civil society movements are demanding bold action to combat global environmental threats, so communities and activists in states affected by conflicts are calling for action to prevent and address the environmental consequences of wars. Whether it is the deliberate burning of crops in the Middle East, massive deforestation in protected areas in Colombia, or attacks on water and oil infrastructure in Libya, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Syria, it is the environment and the people depending on it that suffer.

Environmental degradation threatens peace and security, while conflicts can have a devastating impact on ecosystems, and on human health and livelihoods. By reversing sustainable development, they undermine progress towards tackling the massive environmental challenges that we face in the 21st century. Peace and security relies on healthy and productive ecosystems and a protected environment, just as environmental protection relies on peaceful societies.

Our **103** signatories are drawn from many different organisations and experts who are working to improve our understanding of the connections between the environment, peace and security, and to identify opportunities to protect people and ecosystems. And there are no shortages of opportunities.

Where once the environment was a “silent victim” of conflicts, on-the-ground data collection and reporting, innovative research and technologies are improving the visibility of environmental damage and our understanding of its causes. This information will help drive the development of the transformative policies that are urgently needed to reduce harm and help build peace.

We welcome the many initiatives that have emerged in recent years on the environmental dimensions of armed conflicts. From local advocacy to international legal and security policy debates, to new processes to integrate environmental protection into humanitarian response and post-conflict recovery.

But in many cases these initiatives have not yet translated into change on the ground and, just as 2019 has highlighted the urgency of action to address global environmental crises, so it is also time for bold action from the international community on the environment, peace and security.

To move from words to action this #Envconflictday, the international community must:

- Establish the capacity to identify, act on and mitigate the environmental risks that can lead to armed conflicts.
- Strengthen, implement and respect the laws protecting the environment in relation to armed conflicts, and hold those responsible for harm to account.
- Assess environmental risks and assist victims after conflicts, remediate damage, and employ all the environmentally sound tools at its disposal to regenerate ecosystems while supporting communities to build sustainable peace.

## Signatories

### Non-Governmental Organisations

- Action on Armed Violence (UK)  
Article 36 (UK)  
Conflict Awareness Project (US)  
Conflict and Environment Observatory (UK)  
Environmental Law Institute (US)  
Mines Action Canada (CAN)  
Norwegian People's Aid (NO)  
Nobel Women's Initiative (CAN)  
Peace Movement Aotearoa (NZ)  
International Women's Rights Project (CAN)  
PAX (NL)  
Environmentalists Against War (US)  
Conflict and Health Research Group, King's College London (UK)  
Igarapé Institute (BRA)  
International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (GER)  
Centre for Environmental Humanities, University of Bristol (UK)  
Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (COL)  
Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization (IRQ)  
Airwars (UK)  
Facing Finance (GER)  
West Virginia Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Bombs/PSALM: Proud Students Against Landmines and Cluster Bombs (US)  
Nonviolence International Canada (CAN)
- Association for Human Rights in Kurdistan of Iran- Geneva (CH)  
Promoção da Paz, Prevenção do Crime e Reintegração Social (MOZ)  
Fundación Instituto de Ecología Política (Chile)  
Associazione Nazionale Vittime Civili di Guerra (ITA)  
Italian Campaign Against Landmines (ITA)  
IANSA Women's Network Nigeria (NIG)  
The Iraqi Environment and Health Society- United Kingdom (UK)  
Biosecure Ltd (UK)  
Disarmament Dynamics (UK)  
Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (UK)  
Al-Haq (SoP)  
ECPAT Guatemala  
Vision GRAM- International (CAN/DRC)  
Somali Human Rights Association (SOM)  
Foundation Network of Survivors and People with Disabilities (SLV)  
Win Without War (US)  
Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (PAK)  
Nonviolence International Southeast Asia (THA)  
The Initiative for a Mine Free Turkey (TR)  
Soka Gakkai International (JAP)  
Congolese Campaign To Ban Landmines (DRC/AUS)  
Humanitarian Mine Action Initiative (Myanmar)  
Ban Landmines Campaign Nepal (NCBL)  
Women Development Society (IND)  
Save the Tigris Campaign, Iraq (IRQ)  
Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines (Japan)

Global Water 2020 (US)  
Association de Prise en Charge des Orphelins de Guerre (BUR)  
Fight for Humanity (CH)  
Uganda Landmine Survivors Association (Uganda)  
Journalists for Human Rights (North Macedonia)  
Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection (India)  
Zoological Society of London (UK)  
Zoï Environment Network (CH)  
Armed Conflict and Civilian Protection Initiative, Harvard Law School (USA)  
Peace Rising (USA)  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Norway (NOR)  
Society for the Environment (UK)  
Mercy Corps (US)

#### **Individual Experts**

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