



Charter

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict

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I. Vision, Mission and Functions

I.1 Vision

1. The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict calls for a fundamental change in dealing with violent conflict: a shift from reaction to prevention, as an approach that will save lives, and prove more effective and less destructive. The Global Partnership seeks a world in which people and governments elect nonviolent means, rather than armed conflict, to achieve greater justice, sustainable development, and human security.

I.2 Guiding Principles and Values

2. The participants in the GPPAC process are committed to the following Guiding Principles and Values and believe they are of central importance for promoting sustainable peace and justice and endeavour to fulfil them in their practice.

3. ***Achieving just peace by peaceful means.*** We are committed to preventing violent conflict to the fullest extent possible by all peaceful means. We need to continue to strengthen our proactive, nonviolent and cooperative methods of peaceful engagement in response to emerging tensions and crises. Prevention and peacebuilding initiatives should contribute to achieving justice in multiple dimensions, including restorative, distributive, gender, social and environmental justice. These values are at the heart of our ethical and political standards of action. We should continually engage in critical examination of how our own policies, practices and programs contribute to fulfilling human rights and dignity.

4. ***Primacy of local participation and ownership.*** Sustainable peace can emerge when people affected by conflict feel that the peace process is their own and not externally imposed. We believe that strategies and initiatives to address conflict should generally be locally derived and internationally supported. Foreign governments, multilateral institutions and international NGOs can help by creating spaces, providing resources and supporting inclusive processes. They should build on capacities that exist, not duplicate or displace locally developed initiatives. To fully realize this goal, we need to address disparities in power and resources that affect our relationships and peacebuilding work.

5. ***Diversity, inclusiveness and equality.*** We recognize the value inherent in diversity and pluralism and believe that differences can be a source of strength. We recognize that women's equality is a cornerstone for sustainable peace and justice. We work to create inclusive, diverse and vibrant civil societies— emphasizing the special needs and rights of vulnerable groups—through the promotion of respect and inclusiveness and by taking action to increase equality of opportunity and of resources. We aim for empowerment of all those who experience political, economic and social marginalization by supporting the development of capacities at the individual and organizational level, including through local and regional civic networks. Through capacity building and participation, we aim to strengthen inclusive societal processes for democratization and equality.

6. **Multilateralism.** Fulfilling an expanded vision of human security can only be achieved on the basis of a truly cooperative endeavour. Major global problems are often best addressed through coordinated efforts and policies developed collectively through multilateral institutions. In many parts of the world, regional institutions and networks offer expanded opportunities for strengthening cooperative responses to common concerns. We believe that CSOs have an important role to play in an expanded conception of multilateralism. We aim to strengthen the role of CSOs in global and regional organizations.

7. **Sustainability.** Addressing the causes and consequences of conflict requires sustained efforts. We commit to the long-term goal of transforming the conditions that give rise to conflict and the relationships that have been damaged by it. Our actions should be rooted in strategies that move toward medium- to long-term goals. We aim to ensure that the time frames implicit in our planning and actions are appropriate. Our strategies should help to foster social change that addresses structural and relationship challenges generating systemic conflict and to move the situation toward a desired future.

8. **Dialogue.** We promote dialogue as a principal method to respond to conflict and prevent violence at all levels of society, especially when it engages all parties. Dialogue fosters participatory processes for common learning and building of capacity to work with conflict constructively. Leadership should emerge out of and operate through dialogue, rather than the capacity to use violence.

9. **Accountability.** As the power and influence of CSOs grows so does our obligation to be accountable, especially to the communities in which we work. This is reflected in what we do, how and why we do it, and the ways we manage the resources that are entrusted to us. We recognize the importance of developing norms of accountability at all levels and within all institutional settings.

10. **Transparency.** We are committed to working transparently, including in our financial dealings. Unless otherwise disclosed, we act independently of political parties, donors, or commercial companies for the interest of developing peace within and between societies. If we have a specific set of interests or allegiances, we will declare them and acknowledge how they affect our priorities and working methods.

11. **Learning from practice.** We must aim to be reflective practitioners: aware of our role, mandate and contribution at every stage. We need to reflect upon and examine the lessons we are learning from our work and to critically assess how we learn them. We must work closely with partners to jointly develop participatory, inclusive and just processes for planning, decision-making and evaluating our initiatives. Evaluation and strategic learning are essential for developing accountability. We have a responsibility to share our learning with others who may face similar challenges in the future.

I.3 Mission

12. GPPAC is building a new international consensus and enabling joint action to prevent violent conflict and promote peacebuilding, based on regional and global action

agendas. GPPAC is a global multi-stakeholder network of organizations committed to act to prevent the escalation of conflict into destructive violence, at national, regional and global levels. This multi-stakeholder network includes civil society organizations, governments, regional organizations and the United Nations.

I.4 Primary Function

13. GPPAC's primary function is to promote implementation of agendas and activities set by regional networks and activities rooted in the global action agenda and principles derived through a global interactive process. For this purpose GPPAC represents important regional concerns on the international level, contributes to the functioning of international systems for conflict prevention and uses its capacities to assist the implementation of key regional activities.

I.5 Specific Functions

(include, but are not limited to:)

14. ***Promoting Acceptance of Conflict Prevention:*** GPPAC supports regional efforts to raise awareness regarding the effectiveness of conflict prevention, and undertakes parallel efforts at the global level.

15. ***Mobilizing Civil Society Early Response Actions to Prevent:*** GPPAC supports civil society organizations in developing their capacity to contribute to early warning systems and to intervene effectively in impending crises/conflicts. In response to regional requests, the global network will seek to a) mobilize coordinated civil society responses, based on early warning of impending conflict escalation; and b) pressure governments, regional organizations, and the UN system to respond to early warning information.

16. ***Promoting Policies and Structures for Conflict Prevention:*** GPPAC generates ideas for improving policies, structures and practices of interaction among civil society organizations, governments, regional organizations, and UN agencies for joint action for conflict prevention.

17. ***Building National and Regional Capacity for Prevention:*** GPPAC strives to enhance the capacity of its regional networks and global mechanisms to undertake collective actions to prevent violent conflict.

18. ***Generating and Disseminating Knowledge:*** GPPAC engages in processes of knowledge generation and exchange, by learning from the experience of regions and developing mechanisms for regular communication/exchange of such information. GPPAC activities aim to improve our mutual understanding regarding important methodologies and mechanisms for action.

I.6 Key Topics and Themes

19. GPPAC Regions and their participating organizations and networks are working on a wide range of issues. The global network supports such work through mutual action, learning and exchange. Areas of collective attention may shift over time. An initial set of topics includes:

- a) Dialogue and mediation
- b) Peace education
- c) Early warning/early response systems
- d) Civil society interaction with regional and UN agencies
- e) Governance and democratization
- f) Disarmament, demilitarization and arms control

II. Governance Structures

II.1 Overall Network Structure

20. The core membership of the GPPAC network is comprised of regional and international civil society organizations and networks involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

21. Wherever possible, the network engages in active partnerships with individual governments, intergovernmental organizations, private sector associations and other relevant bodies to pursue conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

22. The GPPAC is governed by an International Steering Group weighted in favour of regional representatives selected by regional civil society networks involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

II.2 Regional Structures

Regional Networks

23. **Composition/Formation:** Regional networks are inclusive groups of organizations and networks from the region committed to the Guiding Principles and Values of GPPAC and dedicated to implementation of the Regional and Global Action Agendas.

24. Aspiring members of the Regional Networks must demonstrate their commitment to the Global and Regional Action Agendas; credentials in the area of peacebuilding and conflict prevention; and capacity to contribute to regional and global agendas.

25. **Role:** Regional Networks:

- a) Meet periodically to exchange information and experiences

- b) Monitor the status of conflicts in the region, and develop capacity to respond to early warning information
- c) Appoint representative(s) to the Regional Steering Group

Regional Steering Groups

26. **Composition/Formation:** Regional Steering Groups are selected in consultations and/or meetings of regional networks. Each Regional Steering Group should ensure geographic representation from within the region. Membership in the RSG is for two years, renewable.

27. **Role:** Regional Steering Groups:

- a) Select a primary representative to the International Steering Group and a deputy/alternate, to ensure that each region is regularly represented at the ISG.
- b) Select, if needed, national points of contact.
- c) Develop concrete plans for implementation of the Regional Action Agenda and regional implementation of the Global Action Agenda.
- d) Promote regional conflict prevention activities.
- e) Examine and approve requests from organizations who wish to become participants in regional networks according to the criteria stated above under Regional Networks.
- f) Promote cooperation within the network.

Terms and Selection of Regional Representative to ISG

28. Each RSG selects an individual and an alternate to serve as the regional Representative to the International Steering Group. It is preferred that the Representative (and the alternate) be associated with the Regional Secretariat organization, but the Representative can be from another organization, so long as good communication is maintained. A strong emphasis should be placed on continuity of representation during the term of service.

29. **Term of Service:** ISG Representatives should serve for three years, renewable once. A system of staggered terms among regional Representatives will be established, so that only a maximum of one third of all representatives would change in any one year.

30. **Selection process:** When considering selection of a Representative, the RSG will use a demonstrably clear, transparent and democratic process.

31. **Criteria for selection** of Representative (and alternative). The individual:

- a) Is a member of the RSG (or equivalent body) that has participated for at least one year in the GPPAC process;
- b) Is from the Regional Secretariat organization, or has a good relationship with the Regional Secretariat;

- c) Is known and trusted by many/most of the regional network;
- d) Has the time to attend two ISG meetings per year, and participate in Working Groups or ad hoc work groups between ISG meetings;
- e) Is a proven good communicator.

Regional Secretariat

32. The Regional Secretariat¹ serves as the primary point of contact for the global network in a designated GPPAC region. The Regional Secretariat is chosen through a regional process for a four-year renewable term (without limit, but reviewed every four years).

33. **Criteria for Selection:** The organization performing the Regional Secretariat role should meet (or strive to meet) the following criteria. They:

- a) Adhere to the Principles of GPPAC as outlined in this Charter
- b) Participate in a strong network with links nationally, regionally and internationally
- c) Are (or have access to) a legally recognized entity that is able to receive and account for funds
- d) Are active in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- e) Maintain a broad programmatic scope that extends beyond an issue-orientation
- f) Demonstrate sufficient organizational capacity and experience
- g) Display convening power and credibility

34. **Role:** The Regional Secretariat

- a) Acts as lead agencies for the region in regard to GPPAC activities
- b) Supports and strengthens regional networks partly through ensuring an inclusive and participatory process
- c) Plans, monitors and evaluates the regional process including regular reporting and communication with the global network
- d) Raises funds for implementation of the regional plans

II.3 Global Structures

II.3.1 International Steering Group

Overall Composition

35. The GPPAC International Steering Group will consist of a minimum of 16 persons representing active regions of the global network and the Executive Secretary of the Global Secretariat. There is a maximum of 6 other non-regional members as defined below. Any expansion of the size of the ISG should consider issues of manageability and cost. Regional members must comprise [2/3] of the total voting membership of the ISG. All proposed new members of the ISG must be formally approved by the sitting ISG.

¹ The suggested title for the regional organization is Regional Secretariat. However, based on culture, language, politics or other needs, other titles, such as Regional Initiator or Regional Coordinator can be used.

Voting Members

36. *Regional Representatives:* persons representing active regions of the global network, selected by the Regional Steering Groups.

37. The Executive Secretary of the Global Secretariat or his/her designated representative

38. *Non-Regional Members:* The ISG may invite the participation in the ISG of a limited number of permanent voting members that do not represent regions. Such non-regional members may represent national networks, international NGOs, international networks, or GPPAC task/working groups.

39. Proposed non-regional members must meet one or more of the following criteria. The proposed network/group:

- a) Brings a significant institutional contribution, based on their organization's conflict prevention capacities and actions;
- b) Operates within a large population area that would otherwise be underrepresented
- c) Operates within a geographic area in which there are significant conflict prevention activities or groups that would otherwise be underrepresented on the ISG; or
- d) Provides a channel for influencing a key entity important to conflict prevention.

Regular Non-voting Members

40. *Intergovernmental agencies:* Representatives of intergovernmental agencies, including United Nations Headquarters staff, field-based UN staff, and representatives of international, regional and sub-regional organizations, may be invited by the ISG to participate in ISG meetings.

41. *Governmental representatives:* Governmental representatives may be invited to participate in ISG meetings.

Observer Status

42. Observer, Non-member Status Agencies which because of constitutional constraints, specific mandates or reasons of principles cannot be associated with any collective view adopted under GPPAC auspices, but which are interested in the purposes of GPPAC and in this context in the activities of civil society organisations, may apply for observer status. An agency with observer status, while having the right to attend GPPAC meetings, does not have the right to vote at any meetings convened under the auspices of GPPAC, including at the ISG. Agencies with observer status are not bound by any decisions taken by GPPAC (and the ISG), and cannot be associated too positions taken by GPAC member organizations, included the ISG.

Non-voting Participants by Invitation on a Per-Meeting Basis

43. Based on the needs of a particular meeting, those developing the agenda (officers, Global Secretariat, etc.) may issue invitations to groups/individuals on a per-meeting basis. These may include individuals or group representatives who can contribute to substantive matters under consideration, such as Working Group representatives or those with technical expertise needed for items under discussion.

Role of the International Steering Group

44. As the primary governing body of the network, the GPPAC International Steering Group:

- a) Sets the network's strategic direction and plan, including its vision, mission, values and goals;
- b) Establishes the framework for policy, planning and financial management to realize that direction;
- c) Monitors the organization's performance, including the work of the Global Secretariat to ensure that it is delivering on the organization's strategic plan, while meeting all legal requirements;
- d) Makes decisions on significant changes in organizational policy;
- e) Determines network structure, programming and gives advice on allocation of financial and human resources;
- f) Undertakes regular, systematic reviews of the programming of the network.

Responsibilities/Expectations of individual International Steering Group members

45. All International Steering Group members agree to:

- a) Attend in person meetings of the International Steering Group and actively participate in the consideration of issues and decision making;
- b) Serve as a two-way communications link between the ISG and their regional network;
- c) Read thoroughly all papers distributed for discussion and prepare contributions accordingly;
- d) Serve on subcommittees and working groups of the International Steering Group, and to participate in other activities or projects;
- e) Facilitate contact and communications with specialist or regional members of the network;
- f) Be prepared to raise funds on behalf of the network;
- g) Be prepared to act as an advocate, ambassador, and, where agreed, official representative of the network.

II.3.2 ISG Executive Committee

46. The ISG will appoint a Chair and two or three Vice Chairs to provide leadership to the Steering Group and the overall network in the form of an Executive Committee. Whenever necessary, the Executive Committee may appoint an alternate Executive Committee member who is entitled to stand in for any one of the four members. The

alternate members will be kept up-to-date on Executive Committed related issues by the Global Secretariat. The ISG may decide to create other leadership roles, as needed.

47. **Selection/Terms:** Chair and Vice Chairs will serve for two-year terms, on a staggered rotation basis and renewable once. Names for proposed officers will be brought forward by the Nominating Committee established by the ISG (see below), which will set its own nominating procedures based on the network's Guiding Principles and Values. Normally, such nominations will be approved by consensus, but can be decided by vote if necessary (see section below regarding decision making).

48. **Roles:** The Executive Committee is empowered to make decisions between meetings of the full ISG, but remains accountable to the ISG for actions taken. It will report its decisions, if any, at each meeting of the ISG. In addition, members of the Executive Committee:

- a) Chair International Steering Group and sub-committee meetings, or designate facilitators for sessions;
- b) In coordination with the Global Secretariat and as needed, formally represent the network at public functions;
- c) Provide advice to the Executive Director of the Global Secretariat between International Steering Group meetings;
- d) Work with the Global Secretariat on financial management to review and approve annual and multi-year budgets, annual report and financial accounting statement;
- e) Assess the urgency of matters and takes action as necessary, informing the International Steering Group.

ISG Review of Executive Committee Decisions

49. The Executive Committee is empowered to make operational and financial decisions that do not contradict overall policy and programme directions set by the ISG. The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the ISG, between ISG meetings. Their decisions stand, unless reversed by the ISG.

50. The Executive Committee will inform the ISG of all decisions they have taken and a rationale, providing an opportunity for ISG members to raise objections. Such challenges can be on procedural grounds (how was the decision made, was sufficient information available, was the matter urgent enough to warrant Executive Committee action, did the Executive Committee act with appropriate consultation) or content grounds (was it the correct decision). Any such objection must be raised within thirty (30) days after notification of an Executive Committee decision.

51. If an Executive Committee decision is challenged, the Executive Committee and the ISG member raising the objection will engage in direct dialogue (by e-mail, phone, and/or face-to-face, if warranted) in an attempt to resolve the issue.

52. If the Executive Committee and objector cannot come to agreement among themselves, the question at hand will be opened to the full ISG, either (if urgent) via e-mail, or (if not urgent) at the next ISG meeting.

53. If needed, the GPPAC dispute resolution mechanism can be invoked.

Financial Decision Making

54. The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the ISG regarding financial and budget decisions, subject to the appeal procedures presented below.

55. Based on programme priorities and plans determined by the ISG, staff of the Global Secretariat develop a proposed budget.

56. The proposed budget is circulated to the entire ISG, asking for feedback by a date certain. Feedback on the budget is communicated to the Executive Committee and the Global Secretariat.

57. The Executive Committee meets (in person or by phone and e-mail) to consider the feedback received and make decisions regarding changes in the budget proposal. The Executive Committee then approves the revised budget.

58. The revised budget, as approved by the Executive Committee, is communicated to the ISG, with a date certain for receipt of any major objections. Unless major objections are raised, the budget is considered approved.

59. If major objections are received, the procedures described under "ISG Review of Executive Committee Decisions" will be followed.

II.3.3 Membership & Nominating Committee

60. **Composition:** Three voting members of the ISG, appointed by the ISG at a regular meeting.

61. **Role:** The Membership/Nominating Committee makes recommendations to the ISG regarding:

- a) New regional networks whose representatives are proposed to be added to the ISG;
- b) Non-regional representatives proposed as voting members of the ISG;
- c) Regular non-voting members of the ISG;
- d) A slate of Chair and Vice Chairs (Executive Committee) to be considered/approved by the ISG.

II.3.4 Working Groups

62. The ISG may form, as needed, Working Groups and/or *ad hoc* committees of short or long duration to address issues, guide development of GPPAC programs, or otherwise further the goals of the network. Each such group must be given a specific mandate, time

expectations, and requirements regarding reporting to the ISG. Such groups may include and be led by members of the ISG, and may also include others active in regional networks or with important technical expertise.

63. Concerning Working Groups specifically:

(a) **Structure:** each Working Group will designate a Chair and two Co-chairs (one of which must be a member of the ISG). In addition, a designated programme manager from the Global Secretariat will be assigned to support the functioning of the Working Group. Together, they form a Core Group. This small group will provide leadership for the Working Group, including:

- deciding on procedural issues and other routine business,
- assisting in the development of agendas for Working Group meetings, and
- determining whether and how to convene the full Working Group to consider important issues, planning and proposals.

The programme manager will serve as the primary point of contact for all Working Group members and ensure necessary operational support.

(b) **Composition:** each Working Group will clarify its membership, noting that Working Groups are free to invite additional non-ISG members to serve on a Working Group, particularly where it needs people with specific technical skills or expertise. This will preferably include members from the regional networks with specific expertise or engagement with the subject of the Working Group.

(c) **Process & Interaction:** each Working Group will establish clear expectations about a regular cycle of meetings and conference calls. Innovative and new technologies should also be explored to enhance interaction and communication where this would not be detrimental or exclusive to members without access to these technologies. It will report on programme development once a year to the broader ISG.

II.3.5 Global Secretariat

64. **Selection:** The Global Secretariat is a civil society organisation appointed by the GPPAC International Steering Group to proactively provide services to the network. The general roles and functions and action priorities of the Global Secretariat are determined by the ISG.

65. **Role:** The Global Secretariat:

- a) Enables effective network governance, working closely with the Executive Committee and the full ISG;
- b) Provides coordination of the global network, with particular attention to priority programmatic areas determined by the ISG;
- c) Supports the strengthening of regional networks;
- d) Coordinates development of global policy and advocacy functions;
- e) Ensures regular reporting and network communications, both within the network and with the public and key constituencies;

- f) Prepares an annual budget for consideration by the ISG;
- g) Undertakes fundraising activities together with the regions to support all GPPAC functions.
- h) Provides a legal and fiscal base for GPPAC operations, until GPPAC attains independent legal status.

66. The Executive Director of the Global Secretariat is a member of the International Steering Group and an *ex officio* member of the International Steering Group's Executive Committee.

67. **Terms:** Sustainability of the network both in content and structure will always be at the forefront of a decision to move the Global Secretariat and the following considerations will be made:

- a) The Global Secretariat term is four years and can be extended by four year periods
- b) A change in Global Secretariat will be communicated to the current and incoming Global Secretariats two years in advance for proper fundraising and turnover to occur.

III. Decision Making & Amendments

III.1 Use of Consensus Decision Making

68. The network, including its Regional Networks, Regional Steering Groups, International Steering Group and its Executive Committee will attempt to make all decisions by consensus.

69. In the consensus process, participating members introduce ideas, background information or proposals for discussion to arrive at a point of decision. In the course of discussion, participants are encouraged both to express support for a proposed action/policy and to articulate concerns or outright objections. The concerns/objections serve as the basis for group problem-solving, in which all participants attempt to discover and address underlying unmet needs or interests.

70. As the group comes close to making a decision, group members have three options:
- a) To *give consent*, when one is willing to support the proposal and stand in solidarity with the group.
 - b) To *stand aside*, when one cannot personally support a proposal, but is willing for the rest of the group to move forward and adopt it. If a person stands aside, he/she may ask that his/her objection be recorded in the meeting notes.
 - c) To *block* a proposal, when one believes that, if adopted, the effect of the proposal would violate the morals, ethics or safety of the group. This amounts to a veto and prevents the proposal from going forward. Blocking should be used rarely, and only when the member exercising it believes that fundamental values will be violated. However, if a group or person(s) consistently block ISG initiatives, this probably

displays a fundamental difference of opinion with the network. Such actions will be reviewed and recommendations will be made to the network on how to address the situation.

71. Consensus decisions can only be changed by reaching another consensus.

III.2 Use of Voting

72. If a serious effort has been made to address the concerns and interests of participating members and it is not possible to reach a consensus in a reasonable time [and/or when a matter is urgent and consensus does not emerge quickly] a simple majority of the voting members of the ISG can require a vote, with a 2/3 majority of voting members required to carry an issue. That is, the vote to move from a consensus process to a voting procedure requires a majority; the vote on the matter at hand requires a 2/3 majority for a decision.

III.3 Conflict of Interest

73. Members of GPPAC governance bodies will remove themselves from any decisions in which they, or their organization, have a potential conflict of interest, as defined in a full policy (to be developed and approved by the ISG) regarding conflicts of interest, including definitions and procedures.

III.4 Dispute Resolution Mechanism

74. Inevitably, disputes will arise, either within single regions, between two or more regions, or between regions and the global level. We need a mechanism for addressing such disputes, in a manner consistent with our principles and experience with alternative dispute resolution. The ISG will develop and approve such a mechanism, for trial and revision, as needed, based on experience using the process.

III.5 Charter Amendment Process

75. Any two ISG members may propose an amendment to this Charter. (A single ISG member must find a second member to join in the proposal.)

76. Proposals for amendment to this Charter must be communicated to the ISG at least one month prior to a full face-to-face ISG meeting.

77. Proposed amendments will be discussed early in an ISG meeting, with time provided for a preliminary discussion.

78. By the end of the meeting, the ISG will consider approval of the amendment.

79. GPPAC will formally review this Charter after an initial two years (that is, in 2008), with a view to making improvements based on experience.

Charter Amendments

Date	Issue
27/09/2008	text inserted concerning 'observer status' – para. 42
16/01/2006	amendments based on ISG meeting 23/10/2008 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="574 407 1339 438">▪ task forces to be referred to as 'working groups'<li data-bbox="574 449 1339 585">▪ para. 46 amended from The ISG will appoint a Chair and two or three Vice Chairs to provide leadership to the Steering Group and the overall network in the form of an Executive Committee. The ISG may decide to create other leadership roles, as needed.<li data-bbox="574 596 1339 661">▪ new para. 63 inserted to elaborate on structure, composition and process & interaction