

NYU | CENTER ON  
INTERNATIONAL  
CIC | COOPERATION

# 2018 Annual Report

July 2017–June 2018



Top: CIC Director Sarah Cliffe (fourth from right) joins Secretary-General António Guterres (center) and ambassadors from more than 60 member states to discuss peace and security reforms in November 2017 (New York); photo: Ida Anderson/Norway UN. Bottom: The Task Force on Justice meets with civil society at the Community Legal Action Center in Argentina in February 2018 (Buenos Aires).



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

### 2017-18 WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE, AND FOR MULTILATERALISM.

Major international agreements such as the Iran nuclear deal were put at risk. Escalating crises in Myanmar and Venezuela remained impervious to international mediation. The suffering in Syria—as well as in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which now receive less international attention—continued unabated.

Many countries are seeing the growth of popular nationalist sentiment and shifts in the role of long-established political parties. The resulting uncertainty limits sustained international engagement, even from countries long known for their support of multilateralism. Reflecting this environment, the reform agenda at the UN has moved forward in some areas but been blocked in others. The Security Council has experienced deeper divisions, and the US withdrew from the Human Rights Council.

Yet there is opportunity as well as risk: demonstrated by continued peaceful elections in West Africa, and ruling parties in Ethiopia and South Africa moving towards more inclusive reforms from within. We believe that this moment is a crucial juncture to demonstrate that practical progress towards peace, justice, and inclusion is possible, that prevention can work in practice, and that multilateralism needs strengthening to achieve these outcomes.

**At the Center on International Cooperation, we are, at our core, a group of people who believe deeply in the necessity of multilateral cooperation. It is in our DNA as an organization. This report describes some of the work that we are most proud of in the last year.**

CIC has been there since the beginning of the secretary-general's reform process, working closely with the Secretariat and cross-regional groups of member states to restructure the UN peace and security pillar, and to reform the development system and its links with humanitarian assistance.

We launched the *Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies* at the 2017 UN General Assembly as co-conveners of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies with the governments of Brazil, Sierra Leone, and Switzerland. A high-profile Task Force on Justice was launched in 2018, co-chaired by Argentina, the Netherlands, Sierra Leone, and Hina Jilani from The Elders.

This year we have made a particular effort to link the UN reforms with our country-level work. Our Congo Research Group published a report on the mandate of the UN peace operation in the DRC, and we have sought to build multilateral consensus for political reconciliation in Afghanistan through track-two programs with China, Russia, and Iran.

As we look forward to another year, we commit to applying CIC's characteristic optimism and rigor to transforming international cooperation on leading global challenges in the year ahead.

Sarah Cliffe  
Director, NYU Center on International Cooperation

## PATHFINDERS FOR PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

CIC HAS CONTINUED ITS SUPPORT TO THE Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, which CIC co-convenes with the governments of Brazil, Sierra Leone, and Switzerland. Under the Pathfinders umbrella, more than 40 countries and international organizations have united to accelerate delivery of the SDG targets for peace, justice, and inclusion (SDG16+).

In September 2017, the Pathfinders launched the *Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies* at the UN General Assembly. Since then, CIC has been supporting international and regional partners to strengthen strategies, momentum, and political will for SDG16+. At the national level, CIC staff and fellows have been working to support plans and policies that promote and protect peace, justice, and inclusion.

The Pathfinders have identified three “grand challenges” to be used as a focus for ambition and learning. To tackle the grand challenge of

justice, CIC helped to launch the Task Force on Justice in Buenos Aires in February 2018, chaired by ministers from Argentina, the Netherlands, and Sierra Leone, and the Elders. Supported by a dynamic group of justice partners, the task force is building a case for investment and action to deliver SDG16.3 and related targets.

In 2018-2019, CIC will assist the Pathfinders in launching further initiatives to tackle the grand challenges of inequality and exclusion, and to fulfill the promise of SDG16.1 to significantly reduce all forms of violence everywhere.

CIC’s work with the Pathfinders will also focus on preparations for a ministerial High-level Political Forum in July 2019, which will review SDGs 16 and 10. In September 2019, heads of state and government will meet to review all 17 SDGs and to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation. Ahead of these events, CIC is working with partners to mobilize a movement to stand up for SDG16+.

Left: Director Sarah Cliffe joins H.E. Samura M.W. Kamara, Sierra Leone’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, at the launch of the *Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies* in September 2017 (New York). Right: Associate Director David Steven at the launch of the Task Force on Justice in February 2018. As part of the launch, CIC joined The Elders’ Hina Jilani and Mary Robinson and the #WalkTogether campaign to demand that leaders tip the scales towards justice for all (Buenos Aires).





(L-R): Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN; Sarah Cliffe, Director, CIC; H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President, UN General Assembly; H.E. Ms. Marie Chatardová, President, UN Economic and Social Council; H.E. Mr. Vojislav Šuc, President, UN Human Rights Council; at a high-level dialogue on the importance of a cross-pillar approach to peace and security, Agenda 2030, and human rights (New York).

## UN REFORM

**CIC HAS BEEN WORKING TO BOLSTER SECRETARY-GENERAL António Guterres' efforts to reform the UN since he came into office in January 2017.**

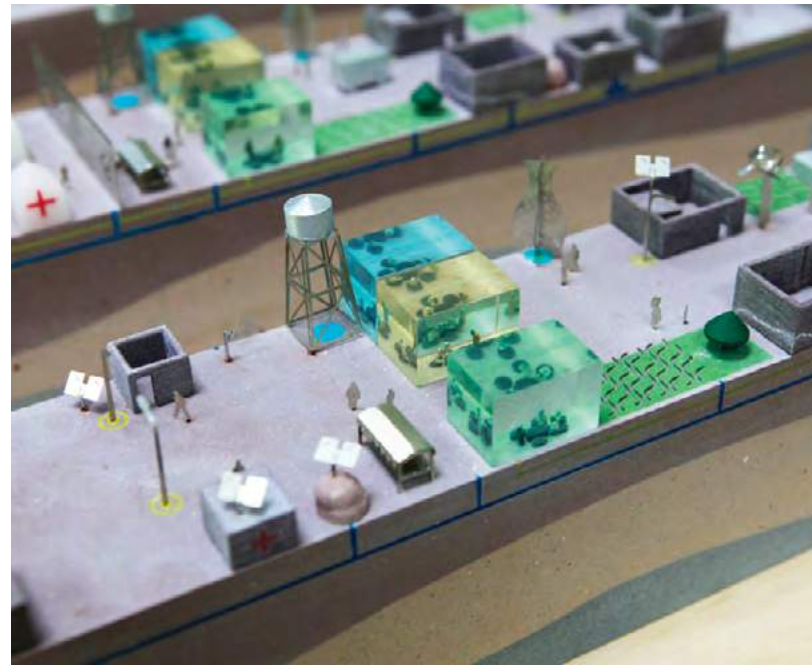
To support the transition and internal review teams, CIC developed analytical notes and publications that were used as a starting point to restructure the peace and security pillar. CIC also organized a round table meeting in September 2017 with the secretary-general and ambassadors from more than 60 member states to facilitate initial discussions on peace and security reforms.

In 2017-2018, the program expanded its analysis on peace and security reform with a note detailing how reforms were perceived by nations hosting peace operations—paving the way for further development system and management reforms. This led to quiet analysis in support of UN leadership on regional UN development system reform, peacebuilding, and the funding compact. CIC was also closely involved in the

Advisory Council and author's group for the groundbreaking UN-World Bank joint study, *Pathways for Peace*.

In July 2018, CIC facilitated a meeting of the presidents of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, and the Security Council. There was strong consensus that cross-pillar approaches to conflict prevention were crucial to achieving sustaining peace and the 2030 agenda. The importance of involving women and young people in this process was also highlighted.

In the coming year, CIC will explore further collaboration between the UN and international financial institutions on conflict prevention in follow up to the *Pathways for Peace* report, in collaboration with SIPRI. CIC will also advocate for the secretary-general's gender equality priorities by creating a Gender Observatory to track senior appointments and to develop policy options for improving gender equality within the UN.



Left: Refugees being repatriated back to Somalia wait for a plane at Dadaab Airstrip; © UN Photo. Right: As part of a joint project with CIC and the Foundation for Achieving Seamless Territory, the physical legacy of UN peacekeeping missions are reviewed to deliver more humanitarian and peacebuilding benefits to communities; design by Malkit Shoshan, production and images by Roel Huisman.

## HUMANITARIAN CRISES

**CIC'S HUMANITARIAN CRISES PROGRAM AIMS** to bring a fresh, critical perspective to a long-standing policy dilemma: what is, or should be, the role of humanitarianism in chronic emergency contexts?

During 2017-2018, the program supported key efforts by member states, UN agencies, and others to confront this question. It embarked upon an external review of the UN's New Way of Working approach among humanitarian and development actors operating in countries locked in protracted emergencies. It provided on-demand policy advice related to the humanitarian-development nexus based on prior expertise and new findings and co-directed an experts' initiative that became a key forum for discussions for the Global Compact on Refugees and especially on the "development turn" in the displacement context.

The head of the program co-authored a book on

the history and future of the refugee regime to inform current policy debates on the necessity of durable solutions. The program also collaborated on a project that uses diverse techniques such as urban planning to review the physical legacy of prolonged UN interventions to provide more humanitarian and peacebuilding benefits to local communities.

The program places a strong emphasis on direct engagement, undertaking detailed field research, and raising the profile of issues through high-level convenings. Throughout the year, it has conducted regional consultations and field research in Dakar, Entebbe, Geneva, Istanbul, London, Monrovia, N'Djamena, and Oxford.

During 2018-2019, the program will continue making its case for approaches that not only save lives but that address the structures and inequities that threaten them in the first place.

# PEACE AND SECURITY

**BUILDING ON TWO DECADES OF CIC'S WORK TO** improve international responses to preventing conflict and building peace, the Peace and Security program provides innovative and policy-relevant evidence and arguments for advancing the chances for sustainable peace.

Across 2017-18, the program contributed insights on the sustaining peace and prevention agendas at the UN. Recognizing the need to promote these agendas in the face of skepticism from some member states, CIC supported the office of the President of the General Assembly in its consultations ahead of the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, and held a ministerial-level side event at the meeting on the practical role of the SDGs in sustaining peace, with a focus on African countries. The side event drew on findings from a two-year research project with the Institute for Security Studies (South Africa) and PRIO (Norway) on African approaches to peacebuilding.

Our commentary on the secretary-general's sustaining peace report, which described proposals for a

“quantum leap” in the Peacebuilding Fund, was widely viewed and cited. We also provided substantive inputs to the UN-World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace*.

Drawing on fieldwork in Haiti and Central African Republic, the program made a practical impact on implementing a sustaining peace approach by leading a strategic review of the UN Global Focal Point for Police, Justice, and Corrections. The Global Focal Point brings together the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UN Development Programme with other UN partners to foster coherence in rule of law work and overcome organizational silos on sustaining peace, particularly in conflict-affected countries.

Continuing its tradition as a key supplier of data and analysis on peace operations, CIC published *Peace Operations 2018*, focusing on peacekeeping's shift toward long-term conflict management missions.

In 2018-19, the program will continue to support national approaches to prevention and to foster innovations in peace operations, and it will explore emerging work on innovative financing for peace and data applications for peace and security.

Left: Deputy Director Paige Arthur (fourth from left) at a corrections facility while leading a strategic review of the UN Global Focal Point for Police, Justice, and Corrections in February 2018 (Port-au-Prince, Haiti). Right: A full room for a ministerial-level side event at the UN co-hosted by CIC during the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in April 2018 (New York).



## AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN REGIONAL PROJECT

CIC's AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN REGIONAL PROJECT (APRP) has played an influential role in analysis and response to the conflict in Afghanistan for more than fifteen years. It utilizes subject-matter expertise and extensive networks to support efforts to achieve greater stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Through a blend of structured dialogues, applied research, and strategic outreach, in 2017-2018 the program continued its work on many of the most pressing challenges for the region, including reconciliation, security, and regional cooperation.

In 2017, CIC continued its collaboration with various Chinese organizations, and published a series of articles on the Afghan peace process. It also participated in a track-two dialogue in Beijing that included discussions with think tanks and academics, including the China Institute of International Studies and the China Institute on Contemporary International Relations.

The program director wrote an open letter to the Taliban in the *New Yorker* magazine and an article for *Foreign Affairs* magazine assessing

Afghanistan's prospects for peace. He also gave numerous interviews to media including the BBC, CNN, National Public Radio, the *New York Times*, PBS NewsHour, and TOLONews.

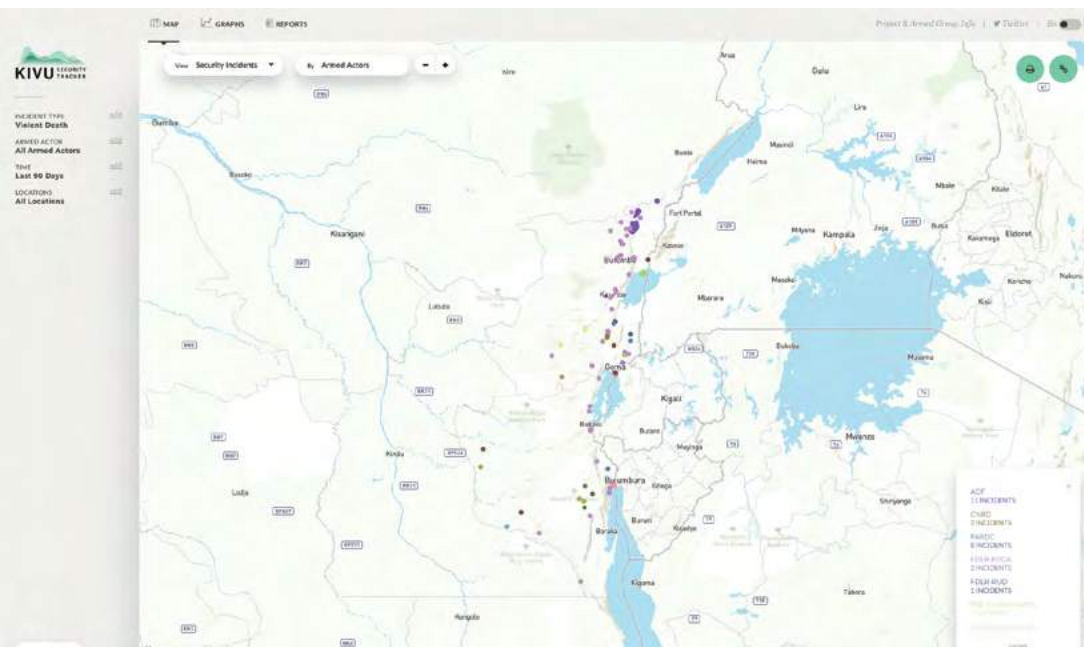
In 2018, the program co-hosted a two-day workshop in Oslo, Norway, on the history of peacemaking in Afghanistan, with the Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution. As a result of this meeting, several institutions of the Afghan and US governments sought out CIC's analysis and advice. The program also worked with the Peace Research Institute-Oslo and the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee to organize events in Oslo during Afghanistan Week.

In the coming year, CIC's APRP program will continue to organize multilateral dialogues on Afghanistan with the US and China, and regional players such as India, Central Asia, and Russia. It will focus on applied research to support Afghanistan's peace process on topics including regional connectivity, constitutional issues, the security architecture, elections, and the criminal economy and drug trade.

Left: Associate Director Barnett Rubin (left) visits the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit in July 2018. He is pictured meeting with local peace activists during his visit (Kabul). Right: Associate Director Barnett Rubin (right) joins policy experts at a track-two dialogue in March 2018 to discuss US-Russia cooperation in combating the threat of terrorism in Afghanistan (Washington DC); *photo: EastWest Institute*







Left: A screenshot of the Kivu SecurityTracker showing violent incidents and human rights abuses in eastern Congo in real time. Right: Cover of CRG's report on the businesses and investments of President Joseph Kabila's family members.

## CONGO RESEARCH GROUP

**THE CONGO RESEARCH GROUP (CRG) AIMS TO** carry out rigorous research on the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This research is informed by deep historical and social knowledge of the issues, and is often based on field research and first-hand accounts from people on the ground.

In 2017-2018, CRG continued its work addressing violent conflict in the Congo, producing in-depth investigations of armed violence and corruption, policy reports, and political opinion polls.

CRG's report on the businesses and investments of President Joseph Kabila, published in July 2017, marked the first comprehensive assessment of the president's assets. The report documented his family's ownership of more than 80 companies worth hundreds of millions of dollars. In September 2017, CRG published its second report around the town of Beni—the only rigorous investigation into the dynamics of violence in the area. Both of these reports were widely covered in the media, including in the BBC, Reuters, Bloomberg, Le Monde, The Washington Post, and The Guardian.

Throughout the year, CRG released a series of public opinion polls, giving the Congolese people a voice in the intense political battles ahead of elections in December 2018. The polls have influenced the process of coalition formation and provided an important benchmark for the elections.

In December 2017 CRG and Human Rights Watch launched the Kivu Security Tracker, a website that tracks human rights abuses in the eastern Congo in real time. Since its launch, the tracker has published 3,000 incidents with 6,233 victims. The data is used by prominent international databases of armed violence and has been featured in various international news outlets.

In the coming year, CRG will launch a major project to bring greater transparency and accountability to the upcoming, contentious elections scheduled for December 2018. CRG will convene three town hall debates among the major candidates, conduct several rounds of polling, and conduct investigative reporting on corruption and abuse linked to the elections.



(L-R): H.E. Park Chull-joo, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations; H.E. Nabeela Tunis, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Sierra Leone; and H.E. Yoka Brandt, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands at the "Stand Up for SDG16" side event to the High-level Political Forum 2018 (New York).

## DONOR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Bridgeway Foundation

Carnegie Corporation of New York

The G7+ Secretariat

Humanity United

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Open Society Foundations

Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations

The Schmidt Family Foundation

Sweden Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

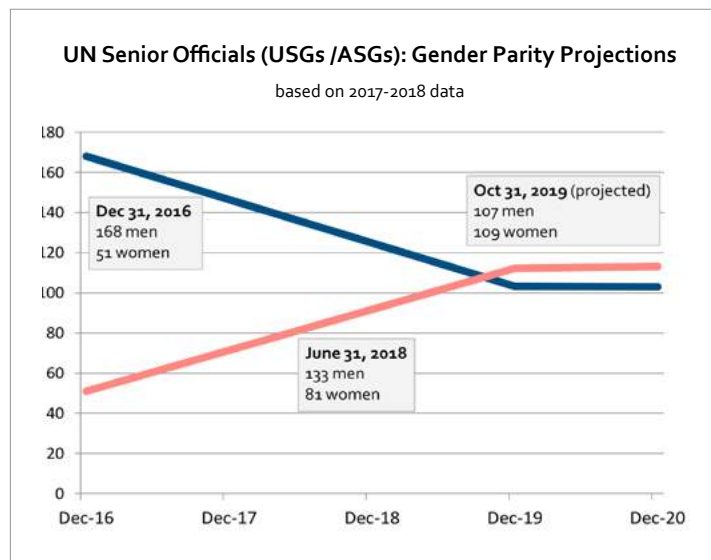
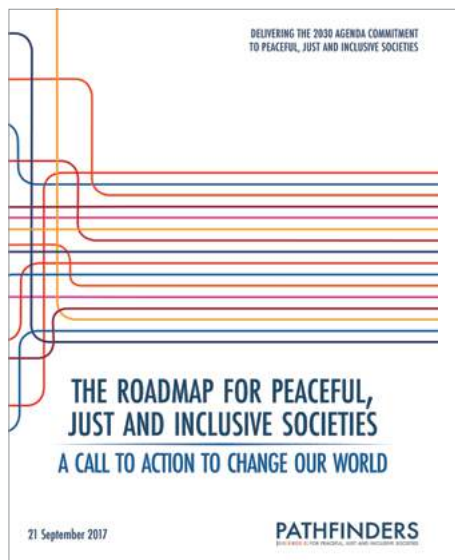
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United Nations Development Programme

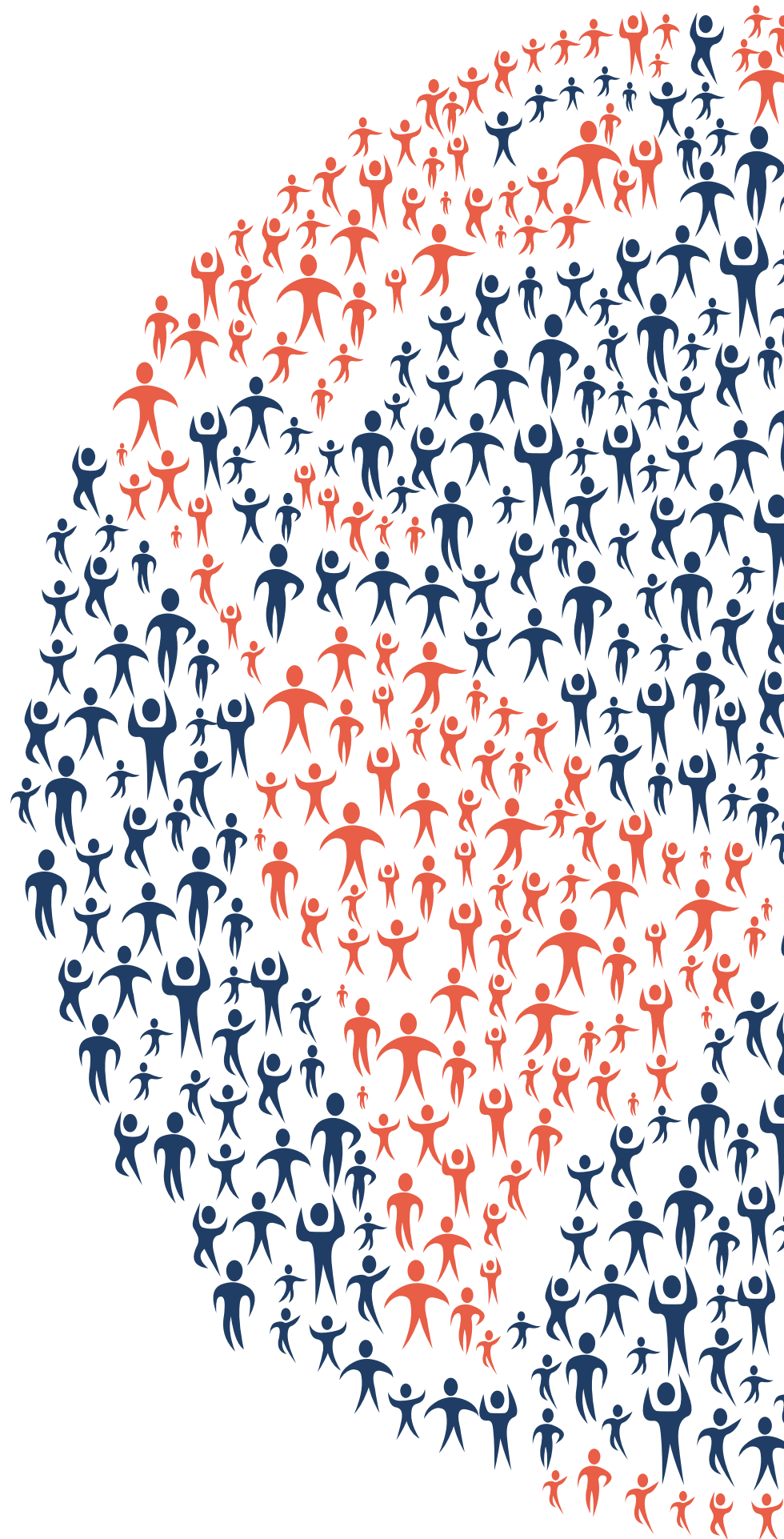
United States Institute of Peace

The World Food Programme

CIC also extends its gratitude to the government of Argentina for hosting the first meeting of the Task Force on Justice in Buenos Aires in February 2018.



Top Left: Jason Stearns (center), Director of the Congo Research Group at CIC launches a new report, *The Art of the Possible: MONUSCO's New Mandate*, in February 2018 (New York). Top Right: Former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Xanana Gusmão, and CIC Director Sarah Cliffe (center) at a meeting in October of representatives from the g7+ countries (Lisbon). Middle Right: Based on recommendations from the UN Gender Parity Strategy, CIC has been monitoring and reporting on progress toward gender parity (for example, this graph shows gender parity projections for UN senior officials). Bottom Left: Deputy Director Paige Arthur with UN Police staff in Haiti, while leading a strategic review of the UN Global Focal Point for Police, Justice, and Corrections in February 2018 (Port-au-Prince). Bottom Middle: Associate Director David Steven (far left) joins 35 civil society representatives from across Sierra Leone to explore the role civil society plays in implementing SGD16+ in June 2018 (Freetown). Bottom Right: Associate Director Barnett Rubin (closest to camera) presents at Afghanistan Week in March 2018 (Oslo).



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