

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation

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Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

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Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

27/09/2024

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to reaffirm that CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation remains committed to supporting the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. This letter serves as our official Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact.

In this report, we outline the measures our organization has undertaken to promote and uphold the principles of the Global Compact, in line with the expectations for an organization of our nature. Additionally, we will disseminate this information to our stakeholders through our primary communication channels.

Sincerely yours,



Ms. Hanna Klinge
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Part II. Description of Actions

CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation is an independent Finnish organisation that works to prevent and resolve political conflicts through mediation and dialogue. Founded by Nobel Peace Laureate and former President of Finland Martti Ahtisaari in 2000, CMI has since grown to be a leader in the field of international peacemaking. CMI works primarily in four geographic regions: Eurasia, Asia, Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. To integrate inclusivity, innovation, and the advancement of practice-oriented policy into its work, CMI has two specific thematic priorities: Women in Peacemaking and Digital Peacemaking.

Contemporary conflicts are characterised by their multi-level nature, as most conflicts include local, national, regional and international dimensions, as well as the participation of both state and non-state actors. Compounding factors, such as decrease in international peace and security cooperation, increase in proxy dynamics and in the presence and role of non-state armed groups, as well as the hybrid nature of modern conflicts pose great challenges to countries living under conflicts. At the forefront in addressing conflict is a collective recognition of the importance of political, non-violent solutions, which are well-aligned with the efforts to achieve the Agenda 2030.

Despite the recognition and evidence of the effectiveness of peace mediation, the international community faces several challenges in its meaningful application. There is a growing need for low-key, independent actors with broad networks and proven expertise – such as CMI – to complement the efforts of multilateral organisations and other official actors. CMI's core value added lies in its long-term cooperation with local, national, regional and international actors, where it can provide complementary, agile, and on-demand support to conflict prevention and resolution.

Having the legacy of President Ahtisaari as its foundation, CMI maintains the enduring vision that all conflicts can be resolved. Anchored in its fundamental principles of honest broker, ownership, inclusivity, complementarity and integrity, CMI's approach does not impose externally driven agendas nor insert preconceived solutions. Conflict resolution is always the most cost-efficient option to bring violent conflicts to an end; it can bring great dividends on a very modest financial investment. Peace and stability are vital for social development and wellbeing, and for the economic growth and international trade and investments that secure these social goods. By working in partnership with CMI, companies in the private sector can more effectively meet their global responsibilities.

Building on a wide range of partnerships, CMI's Programme engages international and regional actors, government officials, peer organisations and political actors with access to relevant circles of influence at different levels. Importantly, CMI also supports the participation of civil society actors, local communities as well as those excluded from processes of conflict resolution and prevention. Aligning with the Agenda 2030, CMI embraces a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) as well as the cross-cutting themes of gender equality, non-discrimination, climate resilience and low-emission development. At the core of CMI's work are two UN sustainable development goals (SDGs): SDG 16 and 5.

SDG 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

CMI's programmatic objectives address the SDG 16 and contribute to its realisation: promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. Conflict prevention and resolution contribute directly to the

reduction of violence and related deaths (Target 16.1). CMI's Programme supports efforts to ensure inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making (Target 16.7) and to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions (Target 16.6.). This is achieved through, *inter alia*, enhancing the inclusivity and representativeness of peace processes and increasing the agency of key actors, which also, for their part, contribute to strengthening democratically functioning political institutions and support the participation of civil society. Indirectly, but nonetheless significantly, CMI's Programme further supports the broader realisation of representative and inclusive institutions (Targets 16.7 and 16.6), and promotion of the Rule of Law (Target 16.3).

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Supporting women's meaningful participation in conflict resolution is a thematic priority outlined in CMI's Programme and Strategy. CMI's work in this regard directly contributes to two SDG 5 targets: ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere (Target 5.1) and ensuring women's full and effective participation in decision-making in political, economic and public life (Target 5.5).

CMI's actions regarding the areas covered by the United Nations Global Compact have been constant during the reporting period and integrated into CMI's programmatic work and operations as follows:

Human Rights

CMI's Global Programme is founded on the notion of positive peace: it contributes to the fulfilment of civil and political rights by working to reduce violence and enhance political participation, aligned with the SDG 16. CMI's Programme also contributes to the fulfilment of inalienable economic, social and cultural rights by addressing the causes of conflict and deprivation of rights in these domains. It seeks the reduction of inequalities through providing opportunities for political participation and influence for the variety of actors needed for sustainable peace, while also strengthening ownership and agency of local stakeholders. Women's inclusion and active participation in conflict prevention and resolution is a central thematic priority for CMI, one well aligned with the SDG 5.

CMI's internal capacities on human rights-based work are consolidated through, for instance, training and recruitment. Assessment of human rights and inequalities are integrated into the context and conflict analysis conducted in CMI's projects. Similarly, results of CMI's work are assessed through a human rights lens at the wider programme-level, along with collecting lessons learnt on CMI's overall human rights based approach.

During the reporting period, CMI carried a baseline assessment on HRBA. This provided useful information and ideas for enhancing the application of HRBA and an institutional work plan was developed. Several trainings, piloting of strengthened HRBA and Gender integration in project work, and peer learning initiatives have been implemented.

CMI's activities enabled dialogue over critical issues linked to the fulfilment of human rights of conflict-affected populations. Issues such as the rights of internally displaced persons and refugees, social, economic and cultural rights (education, language), right to clean, healthy and sustainable environment (focus on water), minority rights, transitional justice and accountability, represented the types of topics that were considered in CMI's dialogue activities. Work on these topics is also closely linked in many cases to non-discrimination and equality.

Support towards right to political participation, also of youth, women and more marginalised groups on different basis, and to participatory dialogue processes, enabled a conducive environment for bridging civic initiatives and governmental action, and ultimately ensured wider representativeness of conflict resolution and prevention efforts. Moreover, CMI continued its Women in Peacemaking action, which is human rights transformative work on women's right to political participation, in selected geographic contexts. Finally, in addition to working directly with rights-holders in support of participation, CMI continued its support to duty-bearers at different levels – including for example regional organizations – with the potential to strengthen their capacity to fulfil their respective commitments on human rights.

Gender Equality and Women's Participation

Ensuring that all people, regardless of their gender, can equally contribute to and benefit from CMI's work, is an institutional priority for CMI. CMI ensures ownership and commitment to gender equality as a cross-cutting theme throughout the organisation. CMI both mainstreams gender equality throughout its project portfolio but also seeks to positively contribute to women's role and gender inclusive policies for mediation through its thematic priority Women in Peacemaking.

Building on contextual understanding on the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of the stakeholders, CMI understands gender equality as the provision of equal human rights, equal opportunities and equal access regardless of gender. CMI grounds its gender equality action on international norms such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and the SDG 5 on gender equality; with consideration to related regional and national commitments in its countries of operation.

During the reporting period, CMI continued the active implementation of its Women in Peacemaking thematic priority through two dedicated projects as well as its wider mainstreaming as components in CMI's other projects. Through the Women in Peacemaking thematic priority, a particular focus was placed on supporting women's political agency in different geographic contexts, as well as contributing towards the policy and practice of gender inclusive mediation.

Between ensuring the minimum level of women's meaningful participation and *do no harm* on gender equality, on one hand, and having targeted interventions proactively focusing on improving women's role or gender inclusive conflict resolution and prevention, on the other, the cross-cutting theme was mainstreamed into CMI's projects in various ways. For instance, gender perspectives were specifically integrated into analyses, mappings or research with local women's organizations or other women actors being consulted in the process, selected as a topic of capacitation efforts conducted or planned, and explored as a potential topic for further engagement and cooperation with external stakeholders.

Finally, CMI continued tracking the level of gender integration in its project portfolio through the use of the Gender Marker measurement as well as specifically monitoring women's participation in CMI organized events – both measurements are described below in detail.

Labour

CMI is an expert organisation consisting of professionals representing diverse backgrounds and committed to advancing prevention and resolution of conflict through mediation and dialogue. Our areas of operations include volatile, high-risk environments, creating a variety of demanding factors to our work. It is evident that the safety, security, professional development, and wellbeing of our teams are at the core of our ability to deliver. Only through skilled, motivated professionals can we achieve our mission to anticipate and respond to the changing character of conflicts. Our work community is based on equality, cooperation, mutual respect, and collegial support. While our operating environments are complex, we strive to create the highest degree of stability and normalcy for the wellbeing of our staff.

During the reporting period, CMI continued to enhance the wellbeing of its employees through training and capacity building based on the employee feedback received in wellbeing surveys. In addition, CMI continued close cooperation with an occupational health care provider in Finland and introduced additional insurance coverage that supports also the increased remote work. In Brussels, CMI took several wellbeing actions, for instance, by introducing an organization-wide health insurance and organizing a well-being day focusing on resilience skills. CMI also paid attention to continued creation of safe and functional post-pandemic ways of working at the offices, remotely, or on mission abroad. CMI's Helsinki office went through renovation to support the current hybrid way of working. Office rules were developed together with the employees. Similarly, workshops were organized in Brussels Office to clarify its HR processes and practices. Aligning collective working culture across different locations is at the heart of CMI's HR initiatives.

In 2023 and 2024, the work to enhance wellbeing continued with emphasis on improving resilience, psychosocial support and supervisory and leadership capabilities in the organisation. In addition to Staff wellbeing surveys, an additional survey on SEAH (sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment), equal treatment and wellbeing was organized. The feedback received from the surveys was valuable in designing necessary actions for going forward. Many SEAH policy related actions were put in place, such as whistleblowing channel and training. Furthermore, CMI employees elected and appointed an internal whistle-blower who acts as a trusted person for anyone who wishes to discuss whistleblowing or specific incidents they wish to report confidentially. CMI's Psychosocial Support Model was defined and related structures were strengthened.

Anti-Corruption

CMI's reputation as an honest and reliable organisation is of paramount importance to us, and each staff member is expected to safeguard this reputation. CMI therefore maintains a zero-tolerance approach towards all forms of corruption or abuse of power or position and abides by the anti-corruption and ethical conduct practices and applicable laws in the countries in which we operate. CMI is aware that we are working in many contexts where corruption is rife. All staff are informed of the most common situations where corruption may be expected to occur, and they are given advice on how to monitor and prevent these situations. For all CMI employees an anti-corruption training is mandatory as part of their onboarding. CMI staff and partners are required to report all incidents or attempts of corruption through the established channels, among these is an anonymous whistleblowing channel. Any suspected incidents of corruption are dealt with the institutional processes related to alleged misconducts through complaints management.

The operational approach towards mitigating corruption has been laid out in the CMI Code of Conduct and the CMI Finance Handbook. This strict attitude towards corruption and aim at demonstrating high integrity in all its actions is also manifested in our principle that any agreement is deemed invalid and renounced immediately, if corruption or fraudulent practices are engaged in making or implementing the agreement.

During the reporting period, CMI continued integration of anti-corruption measures especially as a part of its programmatic risk management approach. Through the implementation of the Risk management policy, CMI assesses risks and defines relevant mitigation measures to these both at project and programmatic levels. Corruption related risk sources are considered as part of the mandatory risk assessments.

Environment

Through its work, CMI seeks to use its expertise in dialogue and mediation in a forward-looking manner and contribute to building more responsive states, inclusive societies, and dialogue-driven institutions. Thereby, conditions are created which allow for local and regional stakeholders to better prevent or resolve violent conflicts, and to address the various challenges presented by climate change with the necessary resilience. In this regard, CMI's work often has an important indirect positive effect.

CMI acknowledges that the evident linkages between climate change related impacts and peace and security require long-term efforts of the international peacemaking community to consider the theme of **climate resilience**, that is climate adaptation, in their approach. During the reporting period, CMI conducted a limited number of activities where climate resilience was a primary focus. However, in some project climate and conflicts remained and important theme and a conflict driver that was considered at the analytical level. Efforts in this regard focused, for instance, on water diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa region. Effects of climate change were also considered and discussed in CMI's activities organized in Sub-Saharan Africa region, including through joint analysis of conflict drivers, trends and scenario-building. Lastly, connections between the climate crisis and conflicts continued to be considered in the Ahtisaari Days global education material on conflict resolution used in Finnish schools.

Low emission development aims to mitigate climate change and to facilitate the transition to low emission development and further to climate neutrality, while taking into account wider development impacts. Climate neutrality means minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing sinks for greenhouse gases. This contributes to the goal of the Paris Agreement to limit the global average temperature rise to 1,5° C, or a maximum of 2° C, above preindustrial levels.

CMI's relationship to low emission development is mostly indirect, as the focus of the organisation's work is to contribute to preventing and resolving conflict, and thereby building more resilient and sustainable societies. Climate change affects CMI's work, which has both an indirect mitigating and adaptive effect and a contributing effect on climate change. Therefore, CMI recognizes its responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. CMI continues to further and institutionalise its current objectives for emission reductions. CMI also improves the energy efficiency of its premises with its own smart practices and by striving to influence the energy use of the properties it operates in.

During the reporting period, CMI continued actively tracking its flight based Coe2 emissions – described below in detail. In 2022, CMI offset CO2 emissions with the total amount of 811 kg and continued to explore options for the practice. CMI also continued to apply green office practices especially related to recycling and the use of ecologically and ethically sustainable products and services. CMI also made use of local providers of goods and services – both at the office and in external events, when possible. As an important action, CMI renewed its internal travel policy during the reporting period with the aim of promoting economical, safe, consistent and environmentally sustainable official travelling.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Below are listed some measurable outcomes of our actions:

Gender Equality and Women's Participation

CMI has integrated a Gender Marker (GM) assessment as a part of its annual planning process since 2022 – before that, GM assessments were completed during annual reporting. Integration in the planning process has sought to turn the focus towards more proactive gender integration as opposed to retrospective assessment. The GM looks at gender mainstreaming considering four categories: conflict analysis, objectives and targets, activities as well as monitoring and evaluation. It is important to note that the Gender Marker score (1-3) does not imply a straightforward desirability for the highest scores; while a GM score of 1 (some integration) is generally preferable to a GM score of 0 (no integration), a GM score of 3 (the project has a specific focus on gender equality or women's participation) is not automatically the most desirable outcome – depending on the context and the theory of change set for the work.

GM assessments completed during the annual planning process in autumn 2023 show a slight increase of the overall average (1,59) as compared to 2022 (1,57). As during the previous years, the highest GM average (2,22) was seen in the Thematic team focused on Women in Peacemaking and Digital Peacemaking and in the MENA region (1,94). Assessment in Asia projects improved during the year (from ave. 0,92 to 1,50) especially due to more conscious gender integration in objectives and targets as well as activities. Assessments in Sub-Saharan Africa projects also improved slightly (from ave. 1,29 to 1,38), but in Eurasia (from ave. 1,58 to 1,29) they weakened due to lack of specifically targeted activities related to gender equality in some of the projects.

CMI set a target for its Global Programme 2022-2025 in terms of ensuring participation of at least 40% of either sex in CMI organized events. The overall average of women participants in CMI organized events increased from 47% in 2022 to 50% in 2023. Hence, the remarkably linear year-by-year development, that had begun already in 2016, continued. In 2023, most women participants were present in Thematic projects' events (82%) as well as those by the Eurasia team (55%) – the latter being a significant improvement as compared to 2022 (38%). Sub-Saharan Africa (40%) and MENA (40%) both reached the set target, whereas least women participants were included in Asia events (30%).

Labour

In addition to the more comprehensive staff wellbeing survey conducted every other year, CMI has followed staff satisfaction with monthly wellbeing surveys between 2019-2023 and since 2024 with tertile-based wellbeing surveys. These more regular pulse surveys have ensured quick feedback to the leadership on staff wellbeing. The quantitative results have been shared with all staff and open feedback has been reviewed regularly by management. As per the surveys, both job satisfaction and stress levels have been steady without big variation. In the more comprehensive biannual staff wellbeing survey one can see a positive trend from 2021 to 2023. The management continues to take actions to ensure that this positive trend continues.

Anti-Corruption

Anti-corruption is part of our integrated risk management system. All risks are considered through their likelihood and impact and assessed by each project three times a year. Based on the findings from the Overall Programme Risk Report, the overall corruption risk level has been assessed as low due to the operational approaches and practices in place to mitigate the risk even though CMI works in many contexts where corruption is rife in the society. Moreover, CMI’s projects are regularly audited according to donors’ requirements.

Environment

CMI tracks its carbon footprint (Coe2 emissions) annually as a part of its organization wide annual reporting process.

CMI’s Flight Kilometers and Emissions

	2022	2023
Flight kilometers	5 856 525	6 120 000
CO2e kg emissions	503 550	555 280

Travelling is an essential part of CMI’s work and the flight-based emissions are the most notable influence what comes to CMI’s carbon footprint. As compared to 5 856 525 flight kilometres and 503 550 CO2e kg flight emissions in 2022, CMI’s flight emissions grew by approximately 10% to 555 280 CO2e kg and flight kilometres to 6 120 000. Long-distance travel to key capitals in Asia, Africa and Middle East as well as frequent travel to Brussels as a key hub were the main sources of flight emissions. Increase in emissions could be expected as the overall operational volume of CMI also grew from 2022 to 2023 (13% total growth in budget). Utilization of virtual platforms and meetings as well as developing CMI’s Brussels presence have been key ways to mitigate emissions, yet they do not replace the need for face-to-face meetings and a frequent need to travel between Helsinki and key capitals. In this regard, CMI’s teams sought to prefer direct connections whenever possible, combine mission travel and choose meeting venues requiring least flights for convening dialogues.