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## CANADIAN VOICE OF WOMEN FOR PEACE

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### *The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace Written Statement Supports Managing, Protecting, Conserving and Restoring Marine and Coastal Ecosystems*

June 30, 2022

The use of scientific data analysis is inextricably essential to quantify the current environmental damage to oceans, seas, ecosystems and bodies of water across the world. The future of our planet is no longer uncertain. Our world and our oceans are in peril, and a future forward must include the urgent action to protect our oceans, biodiversity and all of the natural world.

As a member of the Board of Directors, I am privileged to write on behalf of the *Canadian Voice of Women for Peace* (VOW) which unequivocally supports the use of global environmental statutes in the tourism industry, agriculture industry and marine sectors to establish strong ocean health safeguards, and a commitment to preserving ecosystems so that we can ensure that the equilibrium of our natural world is protected.

National leaders from countries that border the world's oceans have highlighted the fact that marine heatwaves are intensifying and that there has been an unprecedented loss of biodiversity in some areas of their bordering oceans due to over-fishing, reckless tourism and the lack of urgent action to prevent pollutants such as oil and plastics from seeping into our oceans.

For decades, VOW has, and will continue, to advocate, for peace amongst nations, knowing that the delicate balance that ensures international security is threatened when our shared environment is also threatened. The Canadian Minister of Foreign Policy, Melanie Joly, recently stated during the *United Nations 2022 Ocean Conference* that Canada is actively protecting approximately 15% of its marine coasts.

The Government of Germany has recently stated that healthy oceans and the maintenance of healthy biodiverse environments are in the best interest of us all. VOW wholeheartedly agrees with this statement and has shown our support by online actions, including collaboration with the *African Climate Action Initiative*, and also by asserting that: "By engaging with world leaders, academics, the financial industry, environmental activists, youth, non-profit organizations and government leaders as strong advocates for biodiversity, VOW will do everything in its capacity and power to turn the tide against the degradation of world oceans, seas and marine life."



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VOW supports initiatives such as the Government of Bahamas' recent implementation of a modernized *Fisheries Act* to curb the negative effects of over-fishing. And we applaud the Canadian government for investing millions to support developing countries in their implementation of procedures that prioritize the conservation of their oceans, seas and marine coasts. Collectively, we, the world over, have a historic opportunity to bring our oceans and all who live in them back to health. Before it is too late.

VOW is dedicated to the understanding, and will continue to take action, to ensure that an environmentally sustainable world is a peaceful one, whereby countries can continue to be rich in biodiversity whilst forging partnerships to ensure that the healthy sustainability of our oceans, seas and all bodies of water, now and for the future is ensured.

We applaud recent efforts by the Government of Sweden, that has pledged millions of dollars to support environmental sustainability groups that are working to procure solutions to a reduction of pollution like plastic waste quickly and efficiently. Current initiatives by the US to implement policy development and statutes to curb the high level of plastic waste and pollutions is also admirable. But we need more action, and more collaboration. The global advancement towards strengthening ocean ecosystems and sustainable development is dependent upon greater national and international leadership, the commitment of scientists, leader stalwarts and those in the financial community. While VOW is active in its appeals to government leaders, a large percentage of its engagement is with civil society at various levels, in regards to maintaining a sustainable planet.

VOW is committed to be part of the effort to ensure that our global community meets the challenge of ensuring that our oceans and its inhabitants, and all who all living nearby, and reliant on this irreplaceable resource, are respected and protected. There is work to be done. And VOW is ready to lead with collaboration.

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**Signature**

Yinka Oyelowo  
Board Director and Secretary of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace