

**Government of Canada Update to the 2018 Annual Report
Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights Initiative
(2020 calendar year)**

All of the below information should be read as an update and in addition to the information provided in the 2018 report

A. Commitment to the Voluntary Principles

Commitment to the Rules of the VPI

1. Statement of commitment or endorsement of the Voluntary Principles

Canada remains committed to the Voluntary Principles. No significant update since 2018 report.

2. Statement of commitment to implement National Plan (s)

No significant update since 2018 report.

Engagement in the VPI

3. Describe government engagement in the VPs Initiative

Canada volunteered to serve as chair of the initiative after Australia's term comes to an end in March, 2021.

Transparency and Dialogue

4. Describe how government shares information about efforts to assist in implementation of the Voluntary Principles with other participants and the public

Canada published information online on its support for a gender analysis of the VPI to improve the effectiveness of the initiative through the project "Enhancing Gender Equality through the Voluntary Principles - 2019-2022": <https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/P008114001>

B. Policies, Procedures and Related Activities

Rule of Law

5. As related to the Voluntary Principles, describe relevant policies, legislation, procedures, and/or guidelines relevant to promoting and protecting human rights, consistent with international human rights obligations

The Government of Canada expects Canadian companies operating abroad to respect human rights, operate lawfully and conduct their activities in a socially and environmentally responsible manner consistent with international principles and standards on responsible business conduct, including the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

The Government of Canada has had a responsible business conduct strategy since 2009. The Voluntary Principles have been endorsed as an important guideline for Canadian companies to follow in both the 2009 and 2014 Strategy iterations.

- 6. As related to the Voluntary Principles, describe (where appropriate and feasible) if the government has conducted or assisted with security sector reform, strengthening of the rule of law, and developing institutional capacities**

No significant update since 2018 report.

- 7. Within the context of the Voluntary Principles and in accordance with national and international law, describe how the government takes appropriate steps to prevent, investigate, punish and redress human rights abuses within its territory and/or jurisdiction by third parties, including extractive companies and public and private security providers**

No significant update since 2018 report.

Verification and Accountability

- 8. Describe progress on the execution of National Voluntary Principles Action Plan**

N/A

- 9. Provide a summary of the findings of the verification process as outlined in the Government Pillar Verification Framework**

No significant update since 2018 report.

C. Promotion/Implementation

- 10. Public communication of commitment to the Voluntary Principles**

Publication of information online and on social media on Canada's support for the VPI through the project "Enhancing Gender Equality through the Voluntary Principles - 2019-2022."

<https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/P008114001>

- 11. Describe how the government engages with external stakeholders on the Voluntary Principles**

Canada regularly engages with external stakeholders on issues related to sustainable natural resource management and standards such as the Voluntary Principles through different means, including:

- Throughout 2020, Canada continued to organize meetings of the Canada Working Group on the Voluntary Principles in order to convene Canadian affiliated VPI members and other organizations that demonstrate a strong effort to implement or support the Voluntary

Principles at a global level. The Working Group discusses collaborative efforts to strengthen the VPI, shares best practices and lessons learned, and updates one another on the efforts of other VPI members and general initiative news.

- Canada engaged potential new government members of the VPI through outreach in Canada, online, and through Canada’s network of missions abroad.

Please see #13 for information on in-country outreach to governments.

12. Promotion of the Voluntary Principles within the government

Specific information on the Voluntary Principles continues to be developed for inclusion in training courses for Canadian trade commissioners attending international trade outreach events:

- In February training on Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) was provided to Canadian trade commissioners on the margins of the annual Africa Mining Indaba Convention in South Africa.
- In March RBC training was provided to trade commissioners on the margins of the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) Convention in Toronto.

13. Coordination in-country around the Voluntary Principles

In 2020, Canada continued to engage in VPI In-Country Working Groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In South Africa, Canada’s mission in Johannesburg organized a CSR event in February 2020 in partnership with the legal firm Norton Rose. The event was held on the margins of Mining Indaba in Feb 2020 and focused on how climate change impacts responsible business practices. The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade provided opening remarks describing Canada’s action on climate change and approach to RBC. Panelists represented a cross-section of industry and civil society. The discussion focused on how extreme weather and events such as floods, fire, and drought can impact mining. Sheri Meyerhoffer, the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise, also participated in the event, as well as in the Alternative Mining Indaba parallel civil society forum.

In Colombia, Canada holds a seat on behalf of the foreign governments in Colombia on the directive board of the “[Mining and Energy Committee for the VPs](#)” (CME) which meets monthly. Through its membership in the CME in 2020, Canada financed the production of a [video](#) showcasing the work of the CME in Colombia and Canada’s international work on the VPI. The video was aired during the online commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the VPs in Security and Human rights.

14. Describe how the government conducts outreach with domestic extractive companies to encourage them to implement the Voluntary Principles and join the Voluntary Principles Initiative

No significant update since 2018 report.

15. Describe how government enables and supports companies in implementing the Voluntary Principles.

No significant update since 2018 report.

16. Describe how government engages in conflict areas to assist Corporate Participants to help them identify, prevent and mitigate the human rights related risks of their security arrangements.

No significant update since 2018 report.

Risk Assessment

17. Describe how the government engages with companies on issues related to company risk assessment

No significant update since 2018 report.

Public Security

18. Describe government efforts to promote and allow for training of public security providers

No significant update since 2018 report.

19. Describe how government works with companies around engagement with public security forces

No significant update since 2018 report.

20. Describe how the government promotes and enables inclusion of Voluntary Principles language in agreements between companies and public security providers

No significant update since 2018 report.

Private Security

21. Describe government efforts to promote and allow for training of private security providers

No significant update since 2018 report.

22. Describe how the government develops appropriate policies and oversight for the government's own use of private security service providers

No significant update since 2018 report.

D. Lessons and Issues

23. To help determine what best practices and lessons learned can be leveraged going forward, provide a summary of issues from this reporting year, as well as plans or opportunities to advance the Voluntary Principles for the government (e.g. successful/unsuccessful engagement and implementation; from lessons learnt any changes to future priorities and plans for continues or emerging opportunities).

Opportunities in the coming year:

- Canada looks forward to chairing the VPI from March 2021 to March 2022 and continuing to work on the progress achieved in 2020.
- Canada looks forward to seeing the gender-sensitive VPI implementation in 2021 through the Gender and Vulnerable Groups project that focuses on how the human rights of women, girls, men, boys, and non-binary genders, as well as vulnerable groups are impacted by security forces in different ways.
- Canada will work with other VPI members to continue supporting the Secretariat's work developing guidance on human rights defenders and understanding conflict drivers.