

**BELLAGIO DECLARATION**  
**DIPLOMATS WITHOUT BORDERS**

3 June 2022, Bellagio, Italy

We, the participants at the inaugural planning meeting of Diplomats Without Borders (DWB), at the Rockefeller Foundation Center in Bellagio, Italy from May 30-June 3, 2022, hereby agree to the Bellagio Declaration

**Whereas:**

- After a period of a relative decline in violent conflicts, the world is witnessing an increasing number of inter- and intra-state conflicts, particularly in the last decade. These social and political tensions originate in part from political differences, extreme poverty, growing inequality and increasing scarcities of critical natural resources such as water, energy and food supplies. The climate crisis is reinforcing these trends, leading to devastating repercussions on development gains as well as population displacement and migration flows;
- The international system is under great pressure, also having to withstand multiple other pressures including authoritarian trends, extremism, terrorism, cyber insecurity, epidemics and pandemics, viral misinformation campaigns and erosion of established standards for democratic institutions and the rule of law. As a result, interstate and intra-state tensions threaten international peace and security;
- Mediation, dialogue and conflict prevention and resolution have proven to be among the most effective mechanisms to combat instability and insecurity, save lives, limit risks of escalation and help circumvent political, social and humanitarian crises. However, existing mechanisms for conflict resolution are not always well designed for certain types of conflicts, e.g. between public actors and private companies, or between powerful regimes and vulnerable populations;
- Existing mechanisms are constrained when there is a lack of sufficient experience and training or in resource depleted settings. Mediators and negotiators, including civil society, would benefit from training and capacity support by experienced practitioners;
- Experienced practitioners could support governmental and non-governmental organizations to be better equipped for today's many challenges, including operating in an increasingly complex international system, and be able to better manage their responsibilities;
- Former diplomats, no longer subject to official directives, will be able to focus on the objective dimensions of their profession, including the importance of impartiality,

communication, dialogue and respect for cultural diversity and inclusivity;

- The experience of former diplomats can add immeasurable value to mediation, negotiation, consensus building and training worldwide. With their experience operating in bilateral and multilateral contexts, many former diplomats are skilled impartial interlocutors who could voluntarily assist in strengthening conflict prevention and resolution capacities, and provide support, training and advice in climate, migration, development, trade, finance and organizational issues;
- There is urgent need for a mechanism to bring together a diverse pool of seasoned former diplomats with bilateral, regional, multilateral, and sectoral expertise to offer conflict prevention/resolution services, advice and training on a *pro bono* basis worldwide, to both state and non-state actors, including governments, civil society, private sector and educational institutions.

**Resolved that:**

**1. Diplomats Without Borders be established as an independent and impartial institution in 2022.** DWB, inspired by the UN Charter, will bring together a diverse pool of seasoned former diplomats, supported by relevant experts, to offer conflict prevention/resolution, advice and training on a *pro bono* basis, globally, to both state and non-state actors, including governments, civil society, private sector, educational institutions and faith-based institutions.

**2. Vision and Mission:**

Vision:

A peaceful, stable and more just world where conflicts are resolved through diplomacy and all actors are equally equipped to negotiate and implement their commitments.

Mission:

To provide the services of experienced and impartial former diplomats, supported by relevant experts, to strengthen conflict prevention and resolution capacities, to offer advice and training, and to provide a platform for dialogue worldwide.

**3. DWB's priority focus areas will be:**

- Mediation, negotiation and preventive diplomacy in conflicts between and within countries and between public actors and private companies
- Capacity development and bridging, advice and training on global and organizational issues among both state and non state actors
- Community of practice and dialogue that generates perspectives and insights on major international crises

**4. Governance:**

A seven-member Board of Directors will govern DWB. The Board of Directors will maintain fiduciary responsibility for the organization. An international Advisory Board will provide guidance and support outreach efforts.

**5. Membership:**

Members will be recruited from among former diplomats who subscribe to the Vision and Mission of DWB, and who are

- Experienced in bilateral or multilateral diplomacy;
- Representing diverse nationalities and possessing expertise in relevant sectors; and
- Willing to provide *pro-bono* services.

**6. Headquarters:**

DWB will seek appropriate legal status and establish its headquarters in a location to be determined by the Board of Directors.

**7. Next Steps:**

The participants commit to implementing the Bellagio Declaration and expanding the role of DWB.

**Signed in Bellagio, Italy on 3 June 2022:**

Kees Rade

Abed Osman

Clements McCartney

Eric Kimani

Ertugrul Apakan

Gay Rosenblum-Kumar

Hesham Youssef

Itonde Kakoma

John Edward Greene

Jordan Ryan

Jorge Sievert Heine Lorenzen

Karel de Beer

Md. Abdul Hannan

Rebecca Reichmann Tavares

Roeland van de Geer

## **Virtual Attendees**

Alan Doss

Farid Zarif

Gail Mathurin

Gene Cretz

Marcos Caramuru de Paiva

Moustapha Soumare

Richard Blewitt