



**FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council**  
**Panel discussion on the tenth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights**

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) welcomes this opportunity to speak on the tenth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – and congratulates the Working Group on their efforts in promoting them.

We have long supported progressive policy on the intersection between business and human rights, particularly relating to arms control, peacebuilding, and climate change, and with a holistic recognition of the substantially gendered dimensions of these phenomena.

We would like to particularly recognise the Working Group's highlighting of the practical steps that States and business enterprises should take to implement the Guiding Principles in conflict and post-conflict contexts, work which culminated in a report last year.

We welcome the report's key message on the need for heightened action both throughout the conflict cycle as well as throughout the business cycle. The report usefully fleshes out some of the indicators for when heightened due diligence is warranted. It also importantly challenges the assumption that the provision of jobs and investments by companies in post-conflict contexts is always positive - highlighting that businesses are not neutral in conflict settings.

Some areas for further exploration were outlined, to which we would add the need to visibly and meaningfully address the defence sector, and with it the arms industry as a priority for the Working Group.

Corporate actors supply large volumes of weapons and military equipment to parts of the world experiencing violence and instability, where they are often used unlawfully – in turn, negatively impacting the enjoyment of human rights. The defence sector thus faces a range of human rights risks related to its business relationships, and the misuse of its products and services.

**Our question to the panel is: How would you suggest practitioners better engage with the defence sector to ensure the application of the Guiding Principles – and does the Working Group hope to address this sector and how in the future?**

**\*ENDS\***

Delivered by Alice Munnelly, Program Assistant (Peace & Disarmament)