



EXPOSED (1997) by Gertrude Kearns

CAMOUFLAGE

THE NATO ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

For generations, art has been used to communicate vital messages to different communities—a medium crossing boundaries we so easily put upon our work and ourselves.

At the NATO Association of Canada, we recognized the potential of a book that addressed themes of security. However, more so, we wanted to see a work of art from NATO member Embassies to Canada, conveying what our values mean to those artists, the country, or the embassy.

This book allows for a different way of looking at peace, security, and prosperity—our mission, now artistically envisioned. It invites new disciplines into the global affairs realm and aims to reach a wider variety of people than our typical work. The submissions we received from NATO nations thoroughly display the cultural variety and diversity present within their respective nations while simultaneously expressing each artist's take on democracy, freedom, and the rule of law. The works display how security is camouflaged within each society, and its importance to each nation, respectively.

I encourage you to peruse the works and explore the many ways that the importance of peace and security can be displayed.

Kate Ferrin, HBA

Research Analyst at the NATO Association of Canada
MScGA Candidate at NYU's Center for Global Affairs

This book would not be possible without the help of many different parties:

Our thanks go out to each participating Embassy; without your submissions, we would not have the artistic diversity that unfolds on the following pages.

To Robert Baines, thank you for entrusting me with this project, and allowing me to take this idea into the book it is now.

To Pierre-Olivier Bussi res, your expertise and guidance were invaluable in the genesis of this book; thank you.

To Gertrude Kearns, for her interest in contributing to the book in such meaningful ways.

Many thanks are also extended to Christopher Maternowski, Joseph De Sapio, Shaun Sederoff, and Soeren A'Garous for their assistance in this project, helping make what it is now.

This book falls under Canada's Copyright Act Article 29 (Fair Dealing) for the purpose of education.

FOREWORD

The arts allow a bridge from what we know to how we feel, in this case about security issues. To expand our awareness of global security concerns, some of us need to feel engaged. Although a visual artist, I greatly appreciate disciplines like history and international relations for insight.

Conflicts have produced powerful art. How can they not? Even as a delayed reaction, the volatility of displacement—emotionally and intellectually—needs distilling. Distillation is the fundamental task for the visual artist, poet, filmmaker, novelist, or playwright. Their works offer the public opportunities to mourn, contemplate, and perhaps even find some resolution to personal and national loss.

Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine has exposed NATO member countries to the hard reality of recognizing the threats to their immediate security and democracies. The world is struggling to digest Russia's campaign of terror and the hardship inflicted on the Ukrainian people. The book's cover painting *EXPOSED* (1997) is a simplification of a parallel struggle as it considers the nationalistic despair of an individual caught in a previous conflict.

The prompt for *EXPOSED* was the trial of former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milošević at The Hague for war crimes committed during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. I had a more personal exposure to those considerations via a former Serbian soldier who had recently arrived in Toronto. His running commentary on the conflict indicated his personal complexities in considering assignments of guilt and innocence. He is the individual who sat for me in *EXPOSED*, a sequel to *RESOLUTION*, a larger work which showed him at three stages contemplating the taking up of arms.

FOREWORD

In 1986, he was posted to Croatia as a soldier in the Yugoslav People's Army (Jugoslovenska narodna armija [JNA]). By 1997, he was hoping to become a Canadian citizen. He kept current on news about the conflict in the Western Balkans and was historically astute with a deep love for his homeland. He lived, identified with, and could neither disassociate from nor distinguish between disbelief and shock at determinations of Serbia's guilt.

Years later, I was relieved to learn that he had come to terms with what had happened. He'd learned to live with it and was finally content (and a proud Canadian citizen).

In *EXPOSED*, two concurrent identifications—victim and perpetrator—are suspended in the double portrait. These dual representations show him exposed to deliberations over degrees of guilt or innocence. The painting followed my earlier conflict-scenario works about power and conscience, attempting to suggest, in limbo, microcosms of larger issues.

A similar dichotomy, as lived by the young Serbian ex-soldier, is perhaps present in both combatants and civilians in the current conflict in Ukraine.

The need to criticize the forces at play, to intellectualize on the meanings around conflict, to memorialize tragedy, to make monuments to the heroes and the lost, will create remarkable pieces of art in response to this invasion.

Gertrude (Steiger) Kearns, C.M. (Order of Canada)

EXPOSED, Serbia #2 (1997)

Acrylic on Canvas, 183 x 213 cm

CANADA



MEANS/ENDS

Gertrude Kearns, 2020

Multiple Original Giclee Print, 152.5 x 111.5 cm

Major-General J. Carignan, Commander of NATO Mission Iraq (2019-2020)

Contributed by Gertrude Kearns

CANADA

Gertrude Kearns was appointed Member of the Order of Canada “for her contributions to preserving and understanding Canadian war history as a contemporary artist” (Order of Canada, May 2022), focusing on conflict themes since the early 1990s.

Contracted as a war artist in 2006 in Kandahar, Afghanistan, her subsequent independent series, *The ART of COMMAND: portraits + posters from Canada’s Afghan Mission* (2006-2018), was exhibited nationally.

Kearns’ non-military work has been shown in Toronto since 1991, including Lehmann+Leskiw Fine Art, Headbones Gallery, and Angell Gallery. In 2019, The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery (Washington, D.C.) acquired her portrait of General David Petraeus, and a portrait commission of the Honourable Bill Graham is currently in progress (2023) for Trinity College (University of Toronto).

MEANS/ENDS (2020) follows the image and text format of the texted war prints in *The ART of COMMAND*. However, in this case, it is not Afghanistan, but NATO Mission Iraq, commanded by Major-General Jennie Carignan, from December 2019 to November 2020.

The digital files of the original ‘hard copy’ portraits include Kearns’ variously sourced texts which surround and infiltrate the image, creating a parallel piece to the portrait itself. The alternate, often ironic interpretations within the texted image reflect the commander’s personal investment in her command within a more official context. The artist’s mandate guides the process throughout these ‘non-traditional military art’ collaborations with some of our Canadian Armed Forces general officers.

CANADA



Our World Today

William Kurelek, 1968

Acrylic on Masonite

Catalogue no. C.C.55; Global Affairs Canada, Visual Art Collection

Contributed by Global Affairs Canada

CANADA

William Kurelek is a celebrated Canadian artist and son of Ukrainian immigrants who grew up in the prairies of Alberta and Manitoba. Although he studied art briefly at school, Kurelek was mainly a self-taught artist. Disapproval from his father for his choice of vocation led to mental anguish, and Kurelek was institutionalized for a brief period in England. After his discharge, he travelled throughout Europe, to view works by Northern Renaissance painters such as Jan van Eyck and Hieronymus Bosch. He enrolled in an art therapy program and works he created often draw on imagery from his youth in the Canadian prairies. After his recovery, Kurelek continued to draw inspiration from his life in Canada and his religious beliefs to explore social and cultural commentary.

During his life, Kurelek produced over two thousand paintings. Many of his works were featured in books such as Kurelek's Canada, The Polish Canadians, Jewish Life in Canada, A Prairie Boy's Winter, A Prairie Boy's Summer and Lumberjack.

Our World Today has been a long-time fixture on display in the lobby of the Global Affairs Canada's Headquarters building in Ottawa. Nicknamed the "The Burning Barn" by Global Affairs employees, this well-known painting exemplifies Kurelek's use of everyday 1950s prairie life as allegorical imagery to comment on social, political and cultural issues. The painting features a burning barn with children playing inside, blissfully unaware of the impending danger surrounding them; pigs run into the burning building and sheep graze passively in the background. These details present an allegory that remains relevant to this day, speaking to humanity's ability to ignore the pressing realities of the world around them and disconnect from the broader implications and impacts of such truths.

CANADA



Feast Serving Console - Eagle & Salmon

Sabina Hill with Mark Preston, 2017

Wood, Glass, Metal

Photo via sabinahill.com, November 2022

Contributed by Global Affairs Canada

CANADA

In collaboration with First Nations artists, Sabina Hill creates art, limited edition furniture and custom installations which merge the rich mythology of North West Coast aboriginal culture with a contemporary design aesthetic. Her creations are presented through unique material combinations and leading edge technologies, with an aesthetic informed by Hills' artistic and architectural background. In West Coast native mythology, the eagle is a symbol of peace and friendship—the salmon, a symbol of bounty, steadfastness and dependability.

This piece was commissioned by Global Affairs Canada for the Joint Delegation of Canada to NATO.

BELGIUM



Peace Flowers / Fleurs de la Paix

Tom Cech

Modern Art Wall in Ottawa, Canada

Contributed by Belgium's Embassy to Canada

“The world is my canvas” is a well-known quote in the world of urban art. In Belgium and Canada, we witness a growing collective of street artists who use spray, canvas, paint brushes, and various installations to liven up the cities’ streetscape and bring it to another level. As a result, wall art has become an essential and accessible medium of creativity, an art form that reaches many people and reflects on various themes.

BELGIUM

The Embassy of Belgium in Canada was therefore very excited to contribute to the wall art scene in Ottawa and to realize the first mural artwork of its kind in Lansdowne, a beautiful area at the heart of the city featuring events and activities for all ages and all seasons.

The mural is entitled **PEACE FLOWERS** and evokes moments in history when Canada and Belgium crossed paths and bonded in times of peace and war. Belgian artist Tom Cech designed a **powerful modern art wall** (about 24.6 x 8 ft) consisting of 6 panels, **colourfully intertwining two symbolic flowers and two inspiring Canadian figures**:

The ‘Peace Rose of Ghent’ was offered to the American and British delegates who negotiated a peace treaty in the Belgian city of Ghent to end the American-British war of 1812. The ensuing “Treaty of Ghent” has settled the border between Canada and the United States up to this day.

The **Remembrance Poppy** is one of the world’s most recognized memorial symbols for all men and women who fought and died for freedom.

Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae wrote the famous poem “In Flanders Fields” after presiding over a funeral of a close friend who died in the battle of Ypres (Belgium), describing the red poppies growing over the graves of the fallen soldiers.

Mary Riter Hamilton, born in Teeswater (ON), was a Canadian pioneer female artist who, in 1919, painted the battlefields of Belgium and France, recording the destruction left by World War I. She donated her works to the Canadian Public Archives to benefit “war veterans, their families and future generations.”

Belgium is forever grateful to Canada and its soldiers for the sacrifices made to liberate Europe.

CZECH REPUBLIC



World War I Postcard

Vojtěch Preissig

Postcard

Contributed by Czech Republic's
Embassy to Canada

CZECH REPUBLIC

In 1897, Vojtěch Preissig moved to Paris and worked for two years with his fellow countryman, world-renowned Art Nouveau co-founder Alphonse Mucha. His early Secessionist work was influenced by Japanese art and Symbolism. He moved to the United States in 1910. He worked as a designer and an art instructor and later became the Director for graphic design and print at the Wentworth Institute in Boston.

During World War I, Preissig worked for the Bohemian National Alliance headquartered in Chicago. This organization was founded in response to the call from future 1st Czechoslovak President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. In 1914, Professor Masaryk condemned the declaration of the unjust war on Serbia by the Habsburg Empire. In his view, the victory of democracy over autocracy in the emerging world war was the only path to a lasting peace. He asked Czech communities in the United States and Canada to join the democratic world in the struggle and launched a campaign for the creation of Czechoslovakia founded on humanism. During World War I, Vojtěch Preissig created numerous war posters and postcards as well as the flag for Czechoslovak units in North America. Approximately forty thousand Czech and Slovak compatriots from the US and Canada fought for freedom and democracy in Europe during World War I. In 1931, Vojtěch Preissig left the United States and returned to Czechoslovakia. He received well-deserved credit for his work for the country and artistic achievements. His war designs were included in prestigious art collections around the world.

After the Nazi invasion into the Czech lands in 1939, Preissig again lent his artistic talent to the service of democracy, humanism and liberation of his homeland, this time as an active member of the resistance against Nazism in occupied Prague. Together with his daughter Irena Bernášková, he published one of the most important journals of the resistance “V boj” (Into Battle). In 1940, both he and his daughter were arrested by the Gestapo. Vojtěch Preissig died on June 11, 1944 in the Dachau concentration camp. His daughter was executed on August 26, 1942.



DENMARK

Khalid Mahmood Mithu, 2014

Painting

Contributed by Denmark's Embassy to
Canada

Text Within the Painting:

"We show human, collegial and professional respect to all colleagues irrespective of gender, religion, race and designation at work."

"We treat our colleagues as we would like them to treat ourselves. We acknowledge that all members of staff are equally important for the performance of the Embassy."

"We practice teamwork and state of the art professionalism. We practise cultural and human understanding and accept differences."

"We create a congenial working environment with open, impartial and trusting behaviour."

"We carry on motivating each other and we are open to make and receive comments, as constructive inputs to how we work and cooperate."

"We provide high-quality and timely services to all. We are pro-active, reliable, and respectful in our communication."

"We readily and fully cooperate and share knowledge and information with our colleagues."

DENMARK

The painting chosen by the Danish Embassy in Ottawa was made by the renowned Bangladeshi artist and national award-winning director, Khalid Mahmood Mithu in 2014. The text integrated into the painting represents the values and code of conduct at the Danish Embassy in Bangladesh, the previous ambassadorial posting of Ambassador Hanne Fugl Eskjaer.

It is essential for all Danish embassies worldwide that we contribute actively to the peace, security, and prosperity in our host country and internationally. We build bridges of understanding and trustful relationships with our partners. Moreover, we do so based on the mutual respect and acceptance of differences among colleagues.

We believe that an important starting point is human relations and dialogue as, in essence, these are the foundation for peace. One of the essential tools to ensure a solid foundation for our diplomatic work is a clear compass of values. In different countries, these values are uniquely expressed because they are developed by staff to benefit the staff. Colleagues developed the code of conduct through different means, one of them being art. During a team-building session focused on Danish Embassy values, Khalid Mahmood Mithu made this painting while teaching painting techniques and talking about such values. Khalid Mahmood Mithu contributed as an artist and a person to tackling complex topics respectfully, enhancing peaceful interactions, and searching for solutions.

Khalid Mahmood Mithu died in a tragic accident in 2016 and is missed by many.

ESTONIA



Maarit Murka

in collaboration with The Estonian Lithographic Center

Contributed by Estonia's Embassy to Canada

ESTONIA

“Maarit Murka (1981) is a hyperrealist who comes from the younger Estonian contemporary artists generation. The themes for Murka’s works come from life itself: urban living, collective histories, the everyday and the political climate. In Maarit Murka works, where her emphasis on social criticism has shifted on different subjects, she dives instead into the human psyche, considering its essences through study of the Freudian subconscious. It is through explorations among this range of different subjects, while remaining true to hyperrealism in style, that Murka has painted herself into the history of Estonian contemporary art.”

as per <https://murka.ee/murka>, June 2022

HUNGARY



The Tree of Knowledge

István Madarassy, 1997

Sculpture

Contributed by Hungary's Embassy to Canada

HUNGARY

István Madarassy is a Kossuth prize-winning goldsmith-sculptor. Between 1968 and 1973 he studied at the Hungarian College of Applied Arts. He has been exhibiting since 1974. Since 1987, he has been a member of the DunapART Art Society, and since 1991 of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (Salzburg). His small sculptures and reliefs, as well as his large-scale sculptures, mainly deal with religious themes. He lives in Budapest.

“The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (Genesis 2:9)

Among the four primal elements (fire-water-earth-air), the “Tree”—the Tree of Life—is part of the earth. From the Bible, we know the tree of knowledge with apples as an ancient symbol. The Tree symbolizes the resulting, the permanent, the static and the stability, which are also the conditions of peace, certainty and prosperity.

NETHERLANDS



The Man with Two Hats

Henk Visch, 2000

Public Statue in Ottawa, Canada

Photo by Richard Turcotte, via Veterans Affairs Canada

Contributed by Netherlands' Embassy to Canada

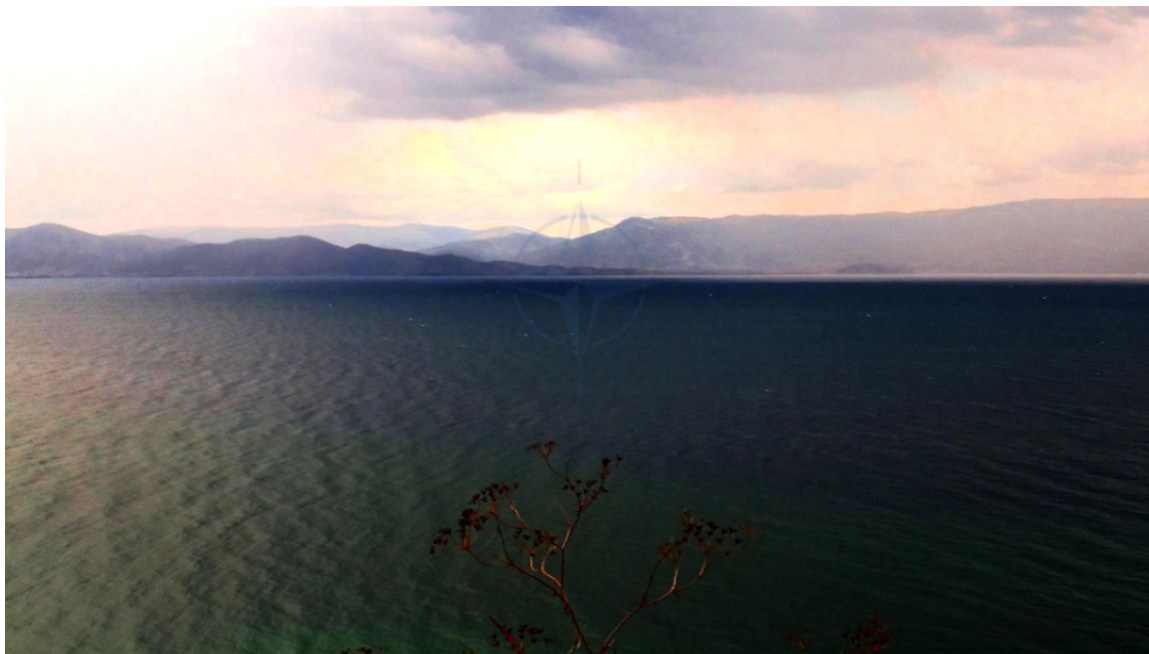
NETHERLANDS

The Man with Two Hats monument, located in Dow's Lake in Ottawa Commissioners Park, is a bronze statue replica of *De man met de twee hoeden*, erected in Apeldoorn on May 2, 2000. The statue in Commissioner's park was unveiled by Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands in May 2002.

The two identical monuments are a tribute to the connection between Canada and the Netherlands, forged when Canadian soldiers liberated the Dutch people. Canadian soldiers spent significant time in Apeldoorn after the war ended while waiting to be repatriated, further solidifying the bond between the two nations. Soldiers and civilians became friends and family, establishing lasting ties. The two hats symbolize war and peace, repression and freedom, life and death, and sadness and joy.

The sculpture was conceptualized and created by Henk Visch, a Dutch sculptor who has exhibited work across Europe and Asia with a portfolio of work spanning over 40 years.

NORTH MACEDONIA



Safe Harbour

Branka Ivanovska-Blazhevskaja

Photograph

Contributed by North Macedonia's Embassy to Canada

NORTH MACEDONIA

The photo depicts the waters of Ohrid Lake, North Macedonia, representing a recurring water flow — no matter what challenges it faces, keeping invaluable treasures safe in our hearts to be cherished forever.

It is a driving force in everything it does, and, perhaps more importantly, it keeps going.

The author has been a freelance photographer of landscape photography for many years. She is very passionate about searching for spotlights in her own country.

NORWAY



**War sailors 1939-1945: Ingvald Wahl /
Krigsseileren 1939-1945: Ingvald Wahl**

Ross Kolby

Painting

Contributed by Norway's Embassy to Canada

NORWAY

Hundreds of thousands of war sailors operated allied merchant ships during World War II. With their lives at stake, these sailors ensured that crucial supplies, materials, and troops could be shipped across the world's oceans, making an invaluable contribution to the allied victory. Nova Scotia was the hub for thousands of Norwegian sailors during the war. They found respite between the treacherous trans-Atlantic convoys and received training at Camp Norway in Lunenburg. This close collaboration is an essential component of the strong bond between Norway and Canada today.

On the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, these heroes were honoured with the project *Krigsseileren 1939-1945*. Kolby's work portrays Ingvald Wahl: a Norwegian sailor veteran who sailed in convoys throughout the war.

Kolby was born in 1970 in Baerum on the outskirts of Oslo, Norway.

Kolby's paintings are often political, reference classical art and historical events, and debate contemporary topics. Kolby also works extensively with portraits and has for 12 years focused them on WWII as a theme. In 2022, Kolby was commissioned by the Special Forces Club to paint Queen Elizabeth II, which came to be the last portrait she personally engaged in. His paintings are found in the permanent collection of Norway's Crown Regalia Museum, Norway's Resistance Museum, the Norwegian War Academy, the Norwegian Naval Museum, and the Norwegian Ambassador's residence in London.

PORTUGAL



Mundo

João Louro, 2017

Printed screen and metallic support

Contributed by Portugal's Embassy to Canada

PORTUGAL

João Louro was born in 1963 in Lisbon, where he lives and works. He studied architecture at the University of Lisbon and painting at the Ar.Co School of Visual Arts. João Louro's work encompasses painting, sculpture, photography, and video.

João Louro's work descends from minimal and conceptual art, with particular attention to avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century. It draws out a topography of time, with references that are personal but mainly they are generational. With regular recourse to language as a source, as well as the written word, he seeks a review of the image in contemporary culture starts from a set of representations and symbols from the collective visual universe.

Minimalism, conceptualism, pop culture, structuralism and post-structuralism, authors such as Walter Benjamin, Guy Debord, Georges Bataille, Blanchot, and artists like Donald Judd and the ever-present Duchamp form the reference universe for Louro.

He was the Portuguese representative at the Venice Biennale of 2015.

SLOVAKIA



The Bare-chested Man in Front of the Occupier's Tank

Ladislav Bielik, 1968

Photograph

Contributed by Slovakia's Embassy to Canada

SLOVAKIA

©Ladislav Bielik, Muž s odhalenou hrud'ou pred okupačným tankom, 21.8.1968, Bratislava /

©Ladislav Bielik, The Bare-chested Man in Front of the Occupier's Tank, August 21, 1968,

Bratislava.

SPAIN



Dues Mans / Two Hands

Antoni Tàpies, 1975

Painting

Contributed by Spain's Embassy to Canada

SPAIN

Antoni Tàpies painted *Dues Mans* (in English, *Two Hands*) in 1975, and now it is part of the collection of Art of the Embassy of Spain in Canada. It is a highly symbolic painting: the two hands are the artist's handprints, representing freedom, openness, and connection between both sides of the Atlantic. That is the unity and cohesion of NATO ratified in the Madrid Summit of 2022.

Throughout the four black crosses, Tàpies refers to universal and shared values which apply North, South, East, and West. NATO embodies the transatlantic link based on individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Antoni Tàpies was born on December 13, 1923, in Barcelona. The Spanish Civil War disrupted his adolescence, with a severe illness that lasted two years. Tàpies devoted himself exclusively to art in the mid-1940s, essentially self-taught as a painter.

Tàpies's early work was influenced by the art of Max Ernst, Paul Klee, and Joan Miró and by Eastern philosophy. However, he soon developed a recognizable personal style related to *matérialisme* (matter art), or Art Informel, a movement that focused on art-making materials. The approach resulted in textural richness, but its more important aim was to explore the transformative qualities of matter. As a result, Tàpies freely adopted bits of detritus, earth, and stone—mediums that evoke solidity and mass—in his large-scale works. In the early 1980s, he continued diversifying his mediums, producing his first ceramic sculptures and designing sets for the theatre.

Tàpies died on February 6, 2012, in Barcelona.

ABOUT US

OUR MISSION AND MANDATE

The NATO Association of Canada is a charitable NGO dedicated to informing Canadians about the value of security and the importance of NATO. We provide a forum for Canadians to learn about and discuss issues relating to Canadian foreign policy, international security and collective defense. We strive to educate the public through our online publication platforms that provide in-depth analysis of current affairs and public policy. To engage Canadians, the NAOC hosts a variety of conferences, seminars and roundtables throughout the year, often in partnership with other entities. To support our activities, we welcome donations especially for youth engagement and empowerment activities.



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