## Major Strategic Goals

### 2018–2021

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Engaged Excellence

Director’s Introduction

Independent, International, and Interdisciplinary

The 2018–2021 PRIO strategy is designed to shape the course of PRIO’s mission to produce research for a more peaceful world, a goal of increasing significance. Fostered by a collaborative, supportive, and innovative research environment, PRIO research is internationally renowned for its high quality and its global relevance. As a private, non-profit academic foundation, PRIO is formally independent of government and private-sector interests. Guarding institutional independence and providing a critical voice remain core strategic values, granting PRIO full discretion over which projects, funders, and partners to engage with. Based in Oslo, the institute is international in both scope and orientation. PRIO has an internationally composed staff and a large global network of partners, enabling the organization to successfully carry out major international research collaboration efforts. PRIO research is also interdisciplinary, reflecting the need to employ various analytical approaches and modes of inquiry to understand and respond to complex social phenomena like peace, conflict and insecurity. The interdisciplinary breadth at PRIO is key to the institution’s success.

Responsive

When states are unable to provide security for their citizens, existing social, environmental, and economic vulnerabilities are multiplied. This contributes to the growing number of people migrating. PRIO’s current strategy responds to the historically ambitious United Nations 2030 Agenda, which lays out 17 global sustainable development goals (SDGs), including SDG 16 to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies. The evidence clearly suggests that fulfilling SDG 16 will enable the global community to more easily meet the other sustainable develop-

PRIO Director Henrik Urdal
ment goals; if we fail to drastically reduce conflict and improve governance, our ability to achieve this ambitious agenda seriously dwindles. Conflict areas systematically perform worse than stable and peaceful countries on the indicators that most directly reflect human well-being and development, such as poor health, poverty, inadequate education, lack of clean water, gender disparities, and other social inequalities. PRIO aims to contribute towards realizing SDG 16 through high-quality, relevant and accessible research.

Engaged Excellence

PRIO is positioned to provide exceptionally high-quality knowledge; we not only strive for excellence in our scientific and applied work, we also approach research agendas with a strong sense of purpose. Participating in or monitoring peace processes, engaging in dialogue and reconciliation initiatives, training and supervising mediators, collaborating with researchers in conflict areas, attending to gendered aspects of conflict, contributing to institutional capacity building, and providing evidence-based input to policy processes all rely on solid expertise and unwavering commitment. Our academic research provides a solid foundation for engaging in processes that, at different levels, can lead to real change and improvement in people’s lives.

This strategy will strengthen a research agenda that brings us closer to a world in which peace is the norm, and violence the exception.

Henrik Urdal

PRIO Director
Be an incubator for innovative peace research

We are facing a rapidly changing world, with ever more complex security challenges driven by technological change, weakened international norms, and states and societies turning further away from international cooperation and looking increasingly inward. Knowledge that can make a difference – that can respond to new challenges and shape the way we build peaceful relations between nations, groups, and individuals – requires ingenuity, versatility, and a diversity of scientific approaches.

PRIO aims to:

▪ Become a world leader in developing innovative research programs that respond to the most pressing issues of our time;
▪ Acquire significant sources of long-term and flexible funding that can allow for sustained, deepened research efforts; and
▪ Build on our existing strategic partnerships to instigate and support joint research initiatives.

Produce academic research of the highest international quality

Academic publishing forms the backbone of how PRIO produces knowledge, and the institute has a long history of generating publications of high international academic quality. PRIO has consistently cultivated a publication and communication culture that stimulates international publishing in top outlets. As a result, PRIO has earned a reputation for being a highly productive research environment that stimulates excellence and innovation. The proliferation of low-quality and predatory publication channels represents a particular and current challenge. PRIO discourages dissemination in such outlets.

We aim to:

▪ Continue producing cutting-edge research of the highest international quality;
Further develop and strengthen how we train young scholars to write about and publish their work, nurturing the development of analytical rigor and academic writing skills; and

Reinforce our commitment to bring top-quality research to the international community through maintaining the high standards of our two journals, *Journal of Peace Research* and *Security Dialogue*.

### 3. Remain an international leader in open science and transparency

At the very heart of good scientific practice is transparency – including making research results, data, and methods available for other researchers to build on. Historically, PRIO has been at the forefront of data sharing by making data produced by the institute available to the public.

For the current strategy period, PRIO aims to:

- Ensure that all articles published by PRIO researchers are made available to the public via the PRIO website;
- Actively use our journals to further the work on open science, including engaging publishers in providing open access to low-income academic institutions in the global South; and
- Continue to promote open data within the limits of what is ethically, methodologically and legally feasible.
Strengthen investment in human resources at PRIO

Investing in human resources is crucial to our sustained success. We believe that we can nurture an attractive work environment by continuing to develop a sound organizational culture fostering both collegial collaboration and a spirit of friendly competition that reflects the entrepreneurship of PRIO’s operational model. At PRIO, diversity is acknowledged as an asset, and gender sensitivity is considered integral to recruitment and human resource development. PRIO has endorsed the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and aims to live up to these standards.

In order to be the most attractive workplace in our field, PRIO aims to:

▪ Create an inclusive environment for all our staff members, whether they are at PRIO for short or long periods of their careers;
▪ Provide the best support possible from a lean but effective support staff;
▪ Focus on tailored recruitments with transparent procedures;
▪ Actively invest in developing academic, professional and leadership skills throughout the organization; and
▪ Implement technology and digital literacy training to enable and empower all staff members to take full advantage of available and emerging technologies.

Develop and follow best practices in our use of technology

PRIO is committed to using the best of what technology has to offer in achieving our purpose. We believe that affording our staff a great deal of freedom, trust and responsibility is crucial for allowing innovative uses of technology to emerge. With increased use of technology, however, comes increased complexity, dependency on that technology, and requirements for security and compliance. To address these challenges, PRIO aims to formulate and follow best prac-
tices that will allow for innovative uses of technology while avoiding undesired consequences of that use. By pairing industry standards and norms with user needs and new possibilities, these best practices will seek to pair robust information security and secure personal data handling with efficiency and user-friendliness.

We aim to:

- Further develop our information security practices;
- Implement modern, user-friendly user identity solutions for all PRIO staff;
- Develop and make use of tools that help PRIO staff save time on day-to-day operations;
- Better organize and promote the IT services and choices that are available to PRIO staff; and
- Define and implement best practices for our IT infrastructure, for our intranet, and for related services.

Ensure healthy finances

While non-profit, PRIO as an independent research institute must maintain a healthy financial situation.

In the current strategy period, PRIO aims to maintain its financial health by:

- Enabling adequate streams of income;
- Ensuring a cost-effective operation; and
- Managing assets to yield positive returns.

The organization must flexibly cater to moderate growth, facilitated by an organic expansion of its funding base to new sources, including additional international funders as well as private sector partners. Fundamental in this regard is the culture of ethical awareness, with respect to management of equity capital, funding sources, and the independence of research conclusions and their dissemination. Finally, a significant portion of the funding should be long term, providing financial predictability as well as the ability to deliver research-based outputs of both a basic and an applied nature.
PRIO wants to change the way the world understands and talks about peace. Building on our high-quality research, PRIO holds an important societal responsibility for widely communicating the insights this research provides. Research is crucial for an informed debate, and our researchers disseminate their research through various publication channels, high-quality conferences and seminars, the media, and through dialogue with policymakers.

To make our research more readily accessible to various stakeholders, we also aim to:

- Further enable and encourage PRIO researchers to proactively communicate their research in a way that shapes the public agenda;
- Develop PRIO’s web and social media presence, both in new and proven ways; and
- Continue to strengthen our visibility in the public debate, not only internationally, but particularly in the Norwegian context.

Public trust in research appears to be decreasing. This makes high-quality and policy-relevant research, and opportunities to provide policy input, all the more important. PRIO takes pride in providing policy input that is academically rigorous and evidence-based. It is important that all products of PRIO research, whether basic or applied, are subject to the same high standards of quality assurance. It is equally important to strengthen our partnerships and presence in arenas highly relevant to both Norwegian and international policymaking.

During this strategy period, we further aim to:

- Reinforce the quality assurance mechanisms for all PRIO research products;
- Expand our research-policy partnerships and
dialogue platforms to also include the private sector;
- Develop and professionalize our capacity to take on evaluation assignments; and
- Systematically track the impact of our research on policy development.

9 Contribute to high-quality teaching and training

The links between research, teaching and training are becoming increasingly important to ensure societal impact. PRIO offers high-quality interdisciplinary teaching, as is evidenced by the large number of applicants to our Summer School and the collaborative Research School on Peace and Conflict, along with the students’ positive feedback on the quality and relevance of our courses.

PRIO aims to:

- Extend our engagement in systematic PhD training beyond the current timeframe of the Research School;
- Remain engaged in interdisciplinary MA training in Peace and Conflict;
- Further develop the PRIO MA program; and
- Establish high-quality training courses in international conflict mediation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding targeted at policymakers and practitioners.
Non-profit research institute founded in 1959

Independent foundation with headquarters in Oslo

International staff of about 100 people who represent different academic backgrounds and expertise

Financed on project basis with funding from national research councils, government ministries, international organizations, foundations, corporations and individuals

Nurtures international partnerships, on project basis as well as with our programme for PRIIO Global Fellows, the Peace Research Endowment (New York), and the PRIIO Cyprus Centre (branch office in Nicosia)

Publishes findings in major international journals and with the leading publishing houses

Engages actively in teaching and training, including the hosting of a Research School in Peace and Conflict (for PhD scholars) in collaboration with Norwegian partners

Communicates and engages on various arenas, such as with international academic networks, multilateral organizations, governmental agencies and civil society actors

Collects and maintains statistical data on peace and conflict, and serves as a data hub for researchers worldwide

Owns and houses two internationally renowned academic journals: Journal of Peace Research and Security Dialogue

www.prio.org