



Reframing Canada's Global Engagement: Ten Strategic Choices for Decision-Makers

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FOREWORD

The last decade has witnessed political, technological, demographic, ecological, and economic developments that, in combination, are creating an international environment more challenging to Canada's interests and values than at any time since 1945.

Canada's foreign policy has not yet systematically addressed these challenges and risks. Instead, the approach has been one of continuity and *ad hocism*. Canada has failed to adapt, continuing to navigate a much more uncertain world with assumptions and policy frameworks better suited to the early 1990s. There are also lessons to be drawn from our failures to secure a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Aside from the realm of multilateral trade, which has seen concerted effort and success, successive Canadian governments have devoted insufficient strategic attention or political capital to crafting and implementing a 21st century foreign policy. Canada has reacted case-by-case to particular developments – such as the worsening of relations between the United States and China – without a broader strategic approach to maximizing Canadian interests over the longer term.

We recognise the difficulties of engaging strategically with foreign policy in the current circumstances. Minority governments often focus primarily on domestic policy issues. Moreover, since its re-election in October 2019, the current government has faced successive crises: the downing of an airliner over Tehran that killed many Canadians, anti-pipeline protests and rail blockades by and in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation, ongoing trade differences with the US despite the renegotiation of NAFTA, Canada's ongoing dispute with China over the arbitrary detention of two Canadians, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. These have demanded swift reactions and limited the possibilities of more considered strategic thinking. There are also analysts who would argue that the world is currently too unpredictable to chart a clear course and that Canada should instead "hedge its bets" and keep its options open.

However, we believe the current approach is unsustainable. While outside events, as former UK Prime Minister Harold Macmillan once noted, are always a key driver of governments' actions, there is no skirting the need for strategic thinking. Indeed, short of a strategic framework based on a clear articulation of interests and values, and a rigorous assessment of global trends, "events" become more difficult to situate and manage. Canada therefore needs to systematically re-evaluate its global engagement for the 2020s and beyond. This is all the more urgent in light of the dramatic changes likely to come in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis whose profound effects were still emerging as this report was finalized. We should no longer assume that the world will unfold positively for Canadian interests or values.

The ten strategic questions set out below are based on a dialogue among a group of Canadian international policy experts who, while representing different professional backgrounds and political alignments, commonly acknowledge the instability of the current moment and the imperative of articulating the choices Canada confronts. While not every group member necessarily agrees with each specific point in this document, they all endorse and support its key thrusts. "Ten Strategic Choices" is accompanied by a more in-depth diagnostic of key trends and the risks they pose to Canadian interests and values, **which can be found here**. Our dialogue was aimed not at recommending a single course of action for Canada, but rather at identifying a range of key strategic choices Canadian governments will need to make in order to advance the security and prosperity of Canadians and to contribute to shaping the world around us in the years ahead.

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Robert Greenhill and **Jennifer Welsh**

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A NEW GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR CANADA

Canada's last International Policy Statement, framed in the wake of 9/11, is almost two decades old. During this time, the world has evolved in fundamental ways that unsettle many of the assumptions Canadian policymakers and citizens have operated with for more than half a century, and which call into question some of the traditional approaches and tools for advancing Canada's interests and values.

The security and prosperity of Canadians heavily depends on the broader global context. For much of the post-1945 period, that context has been generally favourable to Canada's core interests. It has also enabled us, at certain moments, to project some of our most treasured political values, such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Our country benefitted materially from a particular global economic structure that allowed us to develop our domestic market, and increasingly tap into international ones; from a set of security relationships and institutions that largely protected us from the existential threats that engulfed us in 1914, and again in 1939; and from a set of multilateral organizations and forums that amplified our voice – at times well beyond what our relative standing would have predicted. Indeed, the global political environment has been so relatively positive and co-operative that at times we have taken it for granted. Today, we do so at our peril.

Key Global Trends

While there a number of dramatic changes to the global landscape that analysts have identified, our participants isolated six core developments that present both opportunities for Canada and significant risks to Canadians' security and prosperity:

- **A global power shift**, in which economic and political power between Western and non-Western states is being rebalanced, most notably as a result of economic growth in Asia and the changing nature of US leadership, and in which the density and importance of interactions among countries of the Global South are increasing.
- **The retreat of democracy**, in light of both reversals in political participation, freedom and rule of law in new or fledgling democracies, and the challenges to established democracies emerging from rising inequality and dissatisfaction with what existing institutions are delivering.
- **A fracturing multilateral system**, due to major powers' conflicting interests, lack of leadership from key players both regionally and globally, particular weaknesses of institutional enforcement and design, and continued under-representation of key states and non-state actors.
- **An intensification of catastrophic risks**, particularly through accelerating climate change, the weakening of systems to manage the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction, and the rise of lethal pandemics.
- **A digital transformation**, which, despite tremendous benefits, has produced a digital arms race between market-driven models developed in the United States and government-linked models emerging from China, as well as generated risks to critical infrastructure and core democratic rights and freedoms.
- **The changing nature of conflict**, in which the prospect of great power war is greater than at any time since the end of the Cold War, and in which civil wars are both longer in duration and particularly lethal for civilians - generating unprecedented levels of forced migration and leading to huge reversals in development gains.[†]

[†] For an elaboration of the trends identified by our participants, see Robert Greenhill and Jennifer Welsh, *Reframing Canada's Global Engagement: A Diagnostic of Key Trends and Sources of Influence*, August 2020.

A NEW GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR CANADA

Existing institutions and strategies can no longer fully insulate Canadians from these emerging, intensifying, and – in some cases – returning threats. Moreover, Canada can no longer rely on the protection of a world power, which it enjoyed historically from the United Kingdom and more recently from the United States. Although American leadership of the post-1945 international order has been waning for some time, this process has accelerated under President Trump and is likely to continue – in substance if not in form – under any subsequent US administration. The evolution in the global posture of the United States, and its responses to shifts in the international balance of power, have profound consequences for Canada, both in our bilateral relationship and in the pursuit of our global objectives.

The Case for International Engagement

The foreign policy experts we assembled agreed that a set of fundamental Canadian realities make our security and prosperity dependent on constructive international engagement:

- With only 2% of the world's GDP, an economy heavily based on exports, and a relatively small manufacturing base, **Canada relies on technology, trade, investment and skills to grow its economy**. Our prosperity is fundamentally affected by economic events beyond our borders, as the 2008 financial crisis and the recent oil price collapse starkly illustrate;
- With only 0.5% of the world's population, **Canada's political system** – most notably our pluralism and particular brand of constitutional democracy – **faces profound threats in the absence of like-minded partners** that nurture the same political values and engage in collaborative and trust-based forms of cooperation;
- Given the size and geography of our territory and foreseeable levels of defence spending, as well as the transnational nature of contemporary threats, Canada cannot secure its borders or population on its own. **The security of Canadians entails international cooperation**;
- **Certain global problems** – such as climate change and pandemics – **and opportunities** – such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the creation of a trading system supportive of both human rights and economic development, the development and distribution of critical technologies such as vaccines and green innovations, and good digital governance – **can only be addressed or realized through collective action**. Given that Canada is not a major power, it has an interest in ensuring that any rules guiding these forms of coordinated action reflect the concerns of the many rather than the powerful few, minimize the capacity of the strong to coerce the weak, and have fair, transparent, and rules-based mechanisms for resolving disputes;
- **Canada's population includes many citizens born outside the country** who retain their transnational ties. As a result, Canadians' interest in, and connection to, global developments is significant and growing;
- Finally, **Canadians expect Canada to stand up for certain things in the world**. Our country has a long-standing commitment to human rights, to addressing injustice, and to providing safe haven and opportunities to those fleeing violence and persecution. These values cannot be dismissed as 'nostalgic' in a world that is seemingly more polarized and hostile. Nor are these Canadian values necessarily contrary to Canada's core interests of security and prosperity, as is often claimed, but rather frequently complementary to such interests. Above all, they are important to Canadians in their own right when we consider Canada's role in the world.

THE IMPERATIVE FOR STRATEGIC CLARITY

For all of these reasons, Canada cannot afford to retreat inward, be paralysed by stasis, or rely on a foreign policy developed in fundamentally different times. In fact, this would encourage outcomes contrary to what Canadians need and want. Our history, combined with the magnitude and speed of transformation in the global context, suggest that more proactive international engagement is essential to advancing Canadians' security, prosperity, and core values. In order to achieve it, a fundamental re-evaluation of our past and existing strategies is urgent and overdue.

The consensus among our participants was that some of Canada's traditional approaches to its international policy remained too narrow and were unlikely to confront the shifting perspectives on, and effects of, power across the global landscape, to address the most serious risks to our interests and values, or to leverage opportunities to proactively shape our future, as opposed to merely responding to successive crises.

In order to advance Canadian security and prosperity for the longer term, Canadians, led by our government, need to address ten difficult but crucial questions about our country's global engagement. These are not the only questions that decision-makers must confront about the changing global landscape and Canada's place within it, but we believe they are central to the issues of our time.

The answers to each of these questions will indicate which risks to our security and prosperity we ultimately deem most important. They also carry important implications for where we invest money, time, and political capital, and where we seek to develop expertise and skills in various sectors of Canadian society. Above all, the answers will clarify what kind of international actor Canada aspires to be in 2020, and in the decades to come.

It should come as no surprise that there was no clear consensus among participants on the answer to each of these questions. They touch foundational and, in some cases, contentious issues. But all participants agreed that these are choices our country must face in order to develop a more strategic and effective approach to engaging beyond our borders.

1. Is it in Canada's core national interest to increase its international role and impact?

No one would question that major developments are taking place internationally that could have a significant impact on Canada.

The key strategic questions that follow are twofold: can we meaningfully influence these developments and, if so, is it in our best interests to try? Some might argue that, realistically, Canada can have little effect on international issues and that even striving for impact could end up hurting our national interests. At this moment of renewed great power competition, instability, and uncertainty, the best strategy for Canada is to keep its head 'below the parapet', 'wait and see', and avoid openly choosing one 'side' or staking out clear positions. In other words, constructive ambiguity is the best policy. This was similar to the policy of Prime Minister Mackenzie King in the inter-war period, and the view of some commentators today. Others would argue that Canada has historically demonstrated its ability to have global influence when it invests its resources appropriately and sustains its efforts. Our prosperity, security and values are too connected with global developments for us to be content with pro-forma participation.

The country needs to decide how much its national interest is served in helping to shape a more secure, prosperous and sustainable world. Is Canadian interest best served by letting other countries determine the international context which our country will face in the years to come? This is largely the situation today.

2. Should Canada surge its international engagement to reduce the chance of post-COVID global setbacks and potential systemic collapse?

Every few decades, a crisis shakes the world, creating the potential for systemic change and for significant advances or setbacks in the way that societies interact and cooperate. In only six months, COVID-19 has already triggered massive social dislocation, the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, and exacerbated geopolitical tension, notably between China and the United States. While much appears to have changed, the pandemic has in some cases exposed and amplified many of the trends our participants had initially identified. We know from past experience that crises do not automatically lead to productive innovation or to better solutions to global problems much depends on the specific manner in which leaders respond.

The sheer scale and depth of COVID-19's impact, which we are still experiencing, combined with the lacklustre efforts at global cooperation thus far, suggest that the demand for many states to 'step up' will intensify. The first strategic question is whether it is in Canada's national interest to surge its international engagement for a limited time (possibly two-to-three years) to address the worst international implications of COVID-19. Arguments against doing so are that Canada is stretched with record unemployment, the greatest deficit since WWII, and the ongoing pandemic to fight. Arguments in favour are that such a surge could significantly ameliorate human misery, decrease future costs and risks, and, perhaps most fundamentally although most difficult to quantify, reduce the potential of systemic collapse. The effects of political and economic crisis in the 1920s and 30s, including the rise of fascism and crumbling of the League of Nations system, suggest that the potential for major breakdowns in the global trading, collective security and sustainable development systems cannot be dismissed lightly.

A decision regarding a 'COVID-19 surge' is distinct from the previous question whether Canada should aspire to increasing its role and impact in the long-term. Decision-makers could opt for an increase in Canada's impact over time without committing to a surge, or vice-versa. Yet, the answers to Question 1 and 2 have important implications for Canada's level of strategic ambition and the allocation of valuable resources - public and private - and political capital. They would also require investment in efforts to engage in more direct dialogue with Canadians about our country's contemporary global role.

3. How should Canada adapt to the changing nature of US leadership?

Our participants agreed that Canada's historic partnership with the United States has been profoundly transformed by both international power shifts and their related dynamics, and by US domestic politics. Whatever the outcome of the 2020 election, the relationship between our two countries is unlikely to revert to the form it took in the decades after 1945 or the early post-Cold War period. Is it realistic, or even possible, to rebuild our traditional strategy of using our sway in Washington to influence international issues – leveraging the 'power of proximity' to collaborate with the United States, and harnessing its power to address global issues affecting both countries? To what degree should Canada focus on risk mitigation, defensively seeking to minimize the possibility that developments within the US, or its international actions, negatively impact our economic and political interests? Or, should we be more prepared to partner with not only traditional allies but also new players to protect interests, values and institutions that matter to us and try to persuade the US to remain an active contributor to collaborative global problem-solving?

This latter position, which implies a more autonomous foreign policy, has of course long been debated in this country, and there are many adherents and detractors. But we believe it requires fresh attention and debate as a possible strategic option for the next decade, given both long-term trends and current geopolitical realities. In any such strategic assessment, however, it is crucial to take the 'long view', rather than focus on any particular administration. Even if the US share of financial support for global action is (and will be) declining in relative terms, its political and intellectual leadership potential will remain significant.

4. Should Canada significantly toughen its posture towards China?

Participants agreed that, given China's central position in addressing global challenges in the foreseeable future, Canada would ideally engage in more active cooperation. But the last half decade has revealed with even greater clarity how difficult it is to reconcile that cooperation with Canada's traditional support for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law – values which China has flouted not only in relation to the Uighur minority and in Hong Kong, but also through its growing suppression of political freedom within Chinese society and its development of a widespread surveillance and social monitoring infrastructure. Moreover, China's own international posture, in both political and economic diplomacy, has hardened. Its objectives within particular multilateral settings can be contrary to those of Canada, and its detention of two Canadian citizens has triggered increasing concerns about how it wields its power.

The key strategic question for Canada is therefore whether its stance toward China over the last 30 years is still viable: increased economic and other engagement with the expectation of gradual economic opening and continued progress on human rights and other reforms. If not, should Canada consider China primarily as a strategic competitor, where there are areas of conflicting interest but still considerable room for ongoing cooperation, or as a potential strategic adversary, which represents a significant threat to our interests and values? As a related question, we must consider whether the best approach is for Canada to have its own strategic posture towards China, or whether it should be a shared approach, developed consciously among a number of other liberal democratic countries, whether in Europe or Asia. Answering this question is among the most challenging immediate tasks for Canadian foreign policy. However, it requires Canadian policymakers to remember that the current picture is not static but evolving. Not only are there crucial developments within China that will affect its global role, but on-going responses, and in some cases resistance, by other states to the exercise of Chinese power that could affect its future choices and actions.

5. Should Canada seek to radically reform multilateral institutions and processes?

There was widespread agreement among our participants that key parts of the multilateral system are creaking and, in some areas, in danger of becoming obsolete. Others, particularly at the regional level, are arguably becoming more relevant, with untapped possibilities for Canadian engagement. The key strategic question for Canada is whether it wishes to be a 'system maintainer' or a 'system innovator'. Will it focus on improving the existing system while preserving the global web of rules and institutions that have served Canadian interests so well? Or, will it proactively seek to ensure that multilateralism reflects emerging power relationships and global challenges, including through the creation of new structures and processes outside of the current multilateral framework?

Investing in maintenance of the existing system may preserve Canada's traditional sources of influence, but at the cost of too many institutions that continue to weaken or – at worst – become dysfunctional. On the other hand, although proactively supporting reform could improve the effectiveness of the traditional institutional framework, it has implications for our own standing within it and the nature of the partners we will most closely work with. More specifically, by collaborating with non-Western states to reform and innovate, Canada might risk opposition from other Western powers wanting to support the status quo. In addition, answering these questions demands that Canada move beyond traditional debates about how much to reform existing institutions and processes, to clarifying what goals it is actually seeking through multilateral mechanisms, both globally and regionally. Multilateralism is ultimately a means and cannot substitute for a clear articulation of the ends we want to achieve.

6. What leadership role should Canada play in shifting digital governance from authoritarian or corporatist models, and toward a democratic, citizen-focused model?

A related strategic question is whether Canada should play a more proactive role in shaping emerging global governance regimes. For example, participants agreed that there is a narrow window of opportunity for Canada to influence and set policy on digital governance and artificial intelligence (AI) as well as related digital issues such as competition policy, digital taxation, content moderation and data privacy regimes.

The first digital strategic choice is whether Canada in its domestic policy remains a de facto member of the US firm-centric data bloc, whether it creates domestic governance that more closely mirrors the individual-centric GDPR (EU) data bloc, or whether it actively works towards bridging the divides between the three data blocs (China, US and EU). The second strategic question is how actively Canada leads a process to shape digital governance globally. This could include: a universalized ethical framework for algorithms and AI; a new forum for global coordination to overcome the geographic balkanization of data governance; a new global regime to address tax arbitrage by digital multinationals; and an international institution to shape global standards, regulations, and policies across the platform economy (e.g. a Digital Stability Board). Leadership in this space could lead to better outcomes and position Canada favourably in an important new field but would demand sustained leadership and a willingness to withstand considerable pressure from government and industry actors with massive vested interests.

7. As a country with strong interests in Asia, should Canada make a major commitment to greater relevance within this region?

Our group of experts agreed that Canada's adjustment to the global power shift requires a posture towards Asia that looks beyond China's re-emergence as a great power. More specifically, cooperation with India, the world's largest democracy and a growing economic power, will be crucial to advancing our interests in the decades ahead. But what kind of relationship should Canada aim to build with India by 2030, given the significant domestic and regional challenges the latter faces, and what will be required to achieve it?

In addition, participants also recognised the importance of other parts of Asia – including successful democracies such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan – and of certain sub-regions, such as South-East Asia. Indeed, an acknowledgement by other Asian states of over-reliance on China has provided the impetus for forging new partnerships on a number of macro and micro issues. This reality opens up opportunities for Canada.

At the same time, a number of further questions arise. The first set of questions arising in relation to the Asian region is whether our engagement will be primarily commercial, or whether will it also extend to political, cultural, scientific, and security cooperation? Second, will we pursue our interests primarily through existing multilateral institutions, or will we proactively increase our participation in key regional organizations, or create new and more formal institutional arrangements with key states? How do we engage in important fora where we are not members, but where the centre of power is shifting – much in the same way that China and other states have promoted their interests in the Arctic Council? Third, should Canada foster the notion of an Indo-Pacific region? And finally, what domestic investments should Canada make, including in its universities, to develop the expertise we will need to engage effectively with Asia in the coming decades?

8. Is Canada ready to increase its commitment to preventing crises, particularly with respect to climate change and conflict?

Prevention is always preferable, in theory, to reacting when crisis dynamics are well underway. The savings in resources and human suffering can be enormous. This principle is true whether addressing one of the oldest issues of international affairs—conflict—or one of the newest—climate change. However, it is not where the public and political attention tends to be nor is it where Canada has most recently invested the bulk of its foreign policy resources. Canada's actual commitments – despite public pronouncements – still tack decidedly towards reaction and response. Indeed, many of Canada's 'peer countries' in the OECD have made much greater commitments to conflict prevention through the tools like development assistance or mediation.

While armed conflict is changing in scope and lethality, Canada is still largely removed from its immediate effects. This is particularly true for the most prominent form of conflict, civil war, which has over the past decades become increasingly protracted and internationalized. Nonetheless, the broader negative impacts of conflict – most notably forced displacement and reversals of economic development – have implications for us and our closest allies, and test whether our stated resolve to increase global prosperity and security is deep and genuine. Despite countless regional and international agreements designed to prevent, de-escalate and respond to conflict, there is rarely the political will to discuss, let alone take action to address the underlying dynamics that so often fuel contemporary political violence or open armed conflict. In short, words are not followed up with action. The key question for Canada is whether its international contribution to the management of instability and conflict will primarily be reactive – for example, through participation in de-escalation, peace operations, or humanitarian assistance – or whether it will also invest significantly and strategically – over the long term - in efforts to prevent instability and potential conflict by addressing its deeper drivers, including intensifying levels of economic inequality around the world. The answer to this question has important implications for how the Canadian government will approach official development assistance, preventive diplomacy, and conflict management and resolution – either bilaterally or multilaterally - in the years ahead. But it also has relevance for how a broader set of Canadian actors, including in the private and non-profit sectors, understand and pursue their relationships with other societies exhibiting high risks of conflict and instability.

The scope and effects of climate change, like conflict, are best addressed pre-emptively. Moreover, the scientific evidence, combined with real-world events, suggest that the window for effective action is narrowing. A critical question is whether Canada – through a combination of domestic and international action – is acting robustly enough to address the particular risks of accelerating climate change, its own role in contributing to environmental degradation, strategies for adaptation, and the influence it can bring on other countries to do their part. The challenges of climate change and conflict also intersect in some of the most fragile regions of the world. Climate change is a major, growing source of instability, and may exacerbate the potential for conflict, or even state collapse, in several societies of the Global South, including the populous Sahel region.

9. Should democracy support become a more central pillar of Canada's foreign policy?

Our country has long asserted that democracy is one of our core political values. What is less clear is what concrete effect this rhetorical commitment has, or should have, on our global posture or specific foreign policy activities – in both the traditional three “d’s” (diplomacy, defence, and development) and beyond. The consensus among our participants was that democracy is experiencing deep challenges from within and without – with some global actors exploiting weaknesses in democratic states – and that relationships within the traditional ‘West’ are fraying. The key strategic question is whether Canada should actively seek to strengthen and deepen the alliance among fellow democracies and pro-actively support democratic consolidation internationally, or whether it should adopt a more pluralist posture that entails a succession of partnerships with countries ‘of all stripes’ on issues of common concern.

Opting for the former approach requires renewed thinking about the specific conditions in which Canada can make a difference, while minimizing political and economic risks. Democracy support should operate today with different assumptions from those of the early 1990s at the end of the Cold War, and it should extend beyond traditional tools of development policy to include innovative political and diplomatic approaches to strengthening democratic fundamentals in countries of various levels of economic development. Elevating democracy support as a core pillar would also entail clarifying areas of concentration. Should Canada proactively focus on Western, consolidated democracies, encouraging mutual support and assistance to help one another respond more effectively to citizens’ needs and aspirations, and to external threats? Or, should it engage a broader spectrum of democratic countries, including, for example, fledgling democracies where targeted assistance could potentially help to prevent backsliding?

A related question is whether effective democratic governance should become a more prominent objective in Canada’s development policy, and what concrete changes in capabilities and programming this would require—such as stepping up support to inclusive governance, human rights, anti-corruption, and the rule of law in development programming, and enhancing the importance of democratic governance in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy more broadly. It could also necessitate rethinking when and how Canada ‘graduates’ countries from international assistance, as many countries requiring assistance in governance are so-called middle-income countries, beyond the focus for traditional poverty reduction support.



10. Must Canada strengthen and orient foreign policy processes and capabilities in Ottawa to be fit-for-purpose to address global engagement challenges of the 21st century?

The consensus among our participants was that Canada's global engagement was spread thinly across many institutions, issues, and relationships. While Canada is a G7 country, with a global presence and stature, this does not imply it should not prioritize (with some consistency) particular issues or relationships. Our country's impact has been diminished by a lack of explicit regional strategies, and limited engagement of Canadian stakeholders beyond pro-forma consultations. Impact in today's crowded and complex world requires clear strategies aligned with national interests, sustained over time, and supported by the full range of Canadian actors.

The first strategic question is whether there are structural changes within government that are required to better position Canada for effective global engagement. This could include reforms to enhance the responsiveness and expertise of Global Affairs Canada, reviewing the role of the Foreign and Defence Policy Secretariat in the Privy Council Office, reconsidering how the House of Commons and Senate participate in long-term strategizing about Canada's global role and responding to international issues, considering the creation of new mechanisms such as a Foreign Policy Advisory Committee, and rethinking how the many other ministries with deep connections to international affairs participate in and shape our country's global engagement. The second and related strategic choice is whether the Canadian government should build more explicit, ongoing roles for other Canadian actors in the development and implementation of Canada's global engagement strategy. Provincial governments, cities, civil society, universities, the private sector, specific diaspora communities, and thinktanks could all make major and more structured contributions.

The final strategic choice is whether Canada should focus on building up particular areas of capability and interest, which would require much deeper and sustained investment. Canada has had sought-after domains of deep expertise in the past, particularly in the domain of peacekeeping. There is a broad array of possible areas for potential world-class expertise, from democratic governance and the rule of law; to human rights and gender equality; to niche military and security sector capabilities; to the advancement of the women, peace and security agenda; to oceans and fishery management; to artificial intelligence. Despite the clear theoretical advantages of such an approach, governments have had difficulty making strategic choices for investment based on foreign policy priorities, let alone sustaining them across governments and over time.

CONCLUSION

Canada is facing the most challenging global context in generations. The foreign policy experts assembled here believe that continued complacency about our country's ability to advance its security and prosperity is a luxury we can no longer afford. Many countries, around the world, are grappling with how to manage the new configuration of global power in order to maintain their security, how to protect their most cherished values, and how to advance – or at least sustain – living standards, both within and beyond their borders. Canada must do the same. By addressing these 10 questions, governments and other key actors can start to craft a more strategic approach to realizing an effective and meaningful global role for Canada. The answers are not an end, but only a beginning. They must be backed up by long-term and focused investments and deep expertise, and extend beyond the mandate given by any single election. Above all, they must generate not a foreign policy for Canada's government, but a platform for Canadians' global engagement.

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Global Canada is a non-partisan not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing Canada's global impact. The impetus for "Reframing Canada's Global Engagement" arose from a gathering of globally-engaged Canadian leaders co-organized by Global Canada and the Canadian International Council in October, 2019 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Canada exercising its own voice for the first time at the Paris Peace conference and the 50th anniversary of Lester B. Pearson's report "Partners in Development" that played a seminal role in modern international development. Participants at this anniversary event agreed that it was critical for Canada to rekindle its global ambition, starting with a clear-sighted understanding of today's international context and its implications for Canadians' well-being.

This publication and its companion text *Reframing Canada's Global Engagement: Key Trends and Sources of Influence* are the first results. There will be more to come in the months ahead.





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