BALSILLIE SCHOOL
OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Rules vs. Rivalry

2023 Global Trends Report

An Anthology of Briefing Notes by Graduate Fellows at the Balsillie School of International Affairs

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The Foreign Policy Research and Foresight Division at Global Affairs Canada is proud to support and be associated with the Graduate Fellowship Program/Young Thinkers on Global Trends Initiative. The challenges facing Canada today are unprecedented and truly global. Tackling those challenges requires fresh ideas and engagement with new generations of thinkers, researchers, and activists to help create opportunities for a sustainable future. We would like to thank the students and professors of the Balsillie School of International Affairs for their time, effort and commitment throughout the year to make this initiative successful. The results of their work, which has been encapsulated in this anthology, will help inform the work of Global Affairs Canada as it relates to foreign policy, trade and international development.

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Contents

Introduction 1

Geopolitics and Climate

Challenging Assumptions: Repositioning Canada in the Multilateral Order 5
Joseph De Sapio, Larissa Prata Varella, Alan Sovran and Oshish Ungras

Climatizing Canadian Security: Reframing Security for an Uncertain Future 11
Nidhu Jagoda, Logan Smith, Francis Grenier and István Kéry

Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Economics, Trade, Regional and Cyber Security 17
Kankshi Amin, Drake Kindred, Fahd Shah and Ty Sorensen

Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Sustained and Sustainable Middle Power Cooperation 23
Benjamin Khan, Anthony Samuels and Jacklyn Yee

Technology

COVID-19 Consumer Trends and GAC's Role in the Digital Economic Recovery 31
Benedikt Beck, Shawn O'Connor, Natalie Playford and Ayla Rath

Medtech and the Future: Canada as a Global Leader in Advancing Health Care and Innovation 37
Oliver Campbell, Chelsea Sidloski and Natalie Suzor

Combatting Disinformation: Confronting Digital Authoritarianism and Strengthening Democracy 43
Brandon Dickson, Zahra Ludin and Emily Miller

Canada's Foreign Policy Objective: Combatting the Pillars of Digital Authoritarianism 49
Aleyna Aygor, Mehnaz Hossain, Shalin Nayak and Temi Reju

Shaping Responsible AI Governance and GAC's Role in Regulating Lethal Autonomous Weapons 55
Sascha Simon, Jacob Storto-Ahearn, Fathima Bushra Zaheer and Nermeen Zia Islam

International Assistance

Queering Canadian Development Policy 63
Anya Johnson Poon, Chloé Currie and Shaza Ahmed

Canada's International Assistance and the Disability-Food Insecurity-Conflict Nexus 69
Laura Manners, Saya Soma, Alma Stafa and Sarah Thoutenhoofd

Global Skills Mobility Partnerships: An Opportunity for Canada 77
Zainab Al-Jaiashi, Ruth Farkas, Rena Harrison and Luke Lustig-Bruce

Projecting Canadian Social Values in Managing International Refugee Crises 83
Yaseen Abdulhai, Suha Osman and Mackenzie White

Introduction

Imagine for a moment that the rules-based international order — an order based on international laws and norms — is a boxer. Let's call them "Rules." Their opponent is an alternative order, one rooted in balance-of-power politics and rivalry. Let's call them "Rivalry." Rules and Rivalry have been locked in a sparring match since the former was founded at the end of the Second World War.

At the risk of over-simplifying nearly eight decades of world affairs, the two have been fairly evenly matched. From the mid-1940s to the mid-1970s, the bipolarity of the Cold War defined international relations, and Rivalry held the upper hand. But the period of détente between the United States and the Soviet Union opened a space for the proliferation of international standards across a wide range of global issues, a process that was accelerated in the 1990s, when the United States was the undisputed world hegemon. For a time, it looked like Rules might strike a definitive knockout punch.

As we now know, while Rivalry might have been against the ropes, they were hardly down-and-out. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the Global War on Terror led to a systemic weakening of international human rights standards, while the global financial crisis of 2008 and Asia's rise as an economic challenger to the West have caused Rules to stumble. Rules has been further beat up by Brexit and a weakening of the European integration project, former US President Trump's "America First" doctrine, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Russia's brazen and illegal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

How many more blows can a battered-and-bruised Rules take before they must take a knee? These days, it's a question that is frequently on the minds of many pundits and scholars.

Canada has often been described as a country that "punches above its weight" in the international arena. Indeed, over the course of the last 75 years and more, Canada has contributed a great deal to the international system. Notable examples include brokering the resolution to the 1957 Suez Canal Crisis, leading the process that culminated in the drafting and coming into force of the 1997 Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, and being a lead proponent of the 1998 Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court. This list is hardly exhaustive.

Canada's victories have generally come when Rules has been winning the match, not Rivalry. Can Canada still make a difference internationally when Rules is punch drunk? We at the Balsillie School of International Affairs believe the answer is yes, but perhaps a qualified yes. No matter how agile a fighter Canada might be, it will never be in the same weight class as the great powers. When disputes arise — whether they be in the realms of environment, human rights, trade or security — Canada will never be in a position, metaphorically speaking, to strike a body blow to the United States, China or Russia.

To survive in a world in which "might makes right," Canada will need to be a smart and resilient pugilist. It will need to be nimble on its feet. It will need to pick its battles carefully. And when it strikes — always above the belt — it will need to make it count. To do this well will require bold and innovative thinking.

Rules vs. Rivalry is the final product of the 2021–2022 Young Thinkers/Graduate Fellowship program, a professional development program that the Balsillie School runs in collaboration with Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The anthology consists of 13 briefs and is divided into three sections. *Section 1: Geopolitics and Climate*

includes four briefs that explore ways in which Canada can adapt its foreign policy for a multilateral system in flux, prepare for climate disasters, and engage with the Indo-Pacific. *Section 2: Technology* contains five briefs focused on strategies and initiatives to navigate the governance challenges of the digital age, including in the realms of trade, global health, the promotion of democracy and international humanitarian law. *Section 3: International Assistance* consists of four briefs that propose ways in which Canada's international aid can become more inclusive and intersectional, specifically in the areas of disability rights, sexual orientation and gender identity programming, labour mobility for health care workers, and responding to situations of mass displacement.

This anthology is the sixth published by the BSIA. It is the product of the tireless work of so many people, people without whom the program would not be possible.

On behalf everyone at the BSIA, we would like to give heartfelt thanks to the many GAC officials who served as discussants for the briefing notes, and whose feedback was absolutely invaluable. It has been a true pleasure to work with all of you. Special thanks are in order for colleagues in the Foreign Policy Bureau — specifically to John Kotsopoulos — for coordinating the program on behalf of GAC. The program is the success that it is because of you.

We would also like to thank the many BSIA faculty, fellows, and Ph.D. students who mentored the teams throughout the program.

Thank you to our copy editor, Nicole Langlois, and graphic designer, Melodie Wakefield, for their work in getting this anthology to press. We are deeply grateful for your help.

Last but not least, we would like to congratulate the students in the Master of Arts in Global Governance program and the Master of International Public Policy program for producing such high-quality and thought-provoking briefs. You have proposed serious recommendations worthy of serious consideration. That is no small accomplishment.

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Director, BSIA

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Geopolitics and Climate

Challenging Assumptions: Repositioning Canada in the Multilateral Order

Joseph De Sapio, Larissa Prata Varella, Alan Sovran and Oshish Ungras

Issue

By the mid-twenty-first century, Canada may no longer be able to rely on the strength of multilateral institutions in their current form to advance its interests and achieve its goals.

Context

Multilateralism, the international rules-based system, diplomatic practices, and institutional instruments by which Canada advances its interests in concert with other actors, is undergoing a crisis caused by repeated failures in dealing with COVID-19, climate change, and conflicts driven by the resurgence of Great Power geopolitics demonstrate that international cooperation relies on increasingly fragile and unpredictable foundations. The volatility of a changing multilateral system will severely curtail Canada's ability to achieve its strategic interests. In addition, Canada's own capacity shortcomings and our allies' perceptions of our contributions threaten to undermine our reliance on the multilateral system. The challenges of a highly dynamic international environment, including forces of global illiberalism and digital mis/disinformation, combined with static assumptions about Canada's international influence and position, create risk for Canada. If Canada is to successfully reposition itself, there is an urgent requirement for a deliberate and systematic adaptation to account for new strategic realities.

Background

Given its limited abilities to unilaterally exert or project political, economic or military power, Canada requires stability from the rules-based multilateral order. Canada has used strategic multilateralism to advance its security, social, and economic interests in cooperation with compatible nations. While there are no easy or straightforward solutions, adapting to any disruption of the traditional order will require challenging the underlying assumptions about Canada's role in the multilateral order and repositioning Canadian capacities in order to better reflect changing global realities (Canada 2021; Greenspon 2010).

The multilateral order is currently facing faltering U.S. leadership, which potentially threatens international cooperation and peace, and introduces worrying uncertainty into the international system. For Canada, intimately linked and allied to the U.S. across trade, defence, political and cultural sectors, any disruption in U.S. behaviours will significantly impact Canadian interests both domestically and internationally. Globally, the uncertainty and unreliability of American leadership have already allowed other powers to take advantage of this apparent lapse: China may threaten Taiwan; Russia has invaded Ukraine; and the U.S., distracted both at home and abroad, may lack the political will for pushback.

This cannot be overstated, as the mechanisms central to maintaining predictability and order including shaping and constraining the behaviour of major players – security alliances such as NATO, economic instruments such as the WTO and IMF and even the UN and WHO – have been substantially weakened by the steady rise of authoritarianism and digital mis/disinformation, even within the US political process (Kraft 2017; Abramowitz et al. 2018). The digital era is inflaming global illiberalism through the polarization and the distortion of information, and the pervasive spread of false narratives which embolden the rise of autocracy. As technology further divides societies, the digital age requires that states not only vigilantly respond, but take preventative action to mitigate the impacts these threats pose (Colomina et al. 2021). Therefore, digital mis/disinformation and global illiberalism represent twin hydras that have the potential to undermine faith in multilateral solutions and democracy. In short, the multilateral system of 2050 will look different from that of 2020, and Canada must be prepared to engage with new assumptions and perceptions about its behaviour and objectives.

Challenging Assumptions

Changing Perceptions

Despite a historical self-image as a nation of peacekeepers, both external and domestic perceptions of Canada's global influence have changed in the last decade (Matheson 2020; Buck 2022). Domestically, a recent poll by the Angus Reid Institute indicates that half (49%) of Canadians believe that Canada's reputation has worsened over the last decade and a third (33%) believe it has stayed the same, while only 14% think that it has improved (Angus Reid Institute 2022). This self-perception of Canada's declining reputation on the international stage reveals that at home, Canada's presence is seen as weakening abroad in the face of events spanning the last decade. Additionally, although in the past Canada has made a name for itself with Canadian values driven by real action, currently, there are rising concerns about the translation of policy and discourse to practice. Put simply, Canada likes to promise action, but often does not follow through on its commitments in a concrete fashion.

International perceptions of Canada's role and contributions around the world are little better, as Canada is perceived as having a largely reactive foreign policy, one particularly shaped by deep integration with, and often, dependence upon, Washington's leadership (Mank 2019). Canada's feminist foreign policy and values-based approaches have also been criticized for having unclear goals (Matheson 2020; Buck 2022). Canada has not had an integrated foreign policy review since 2005, nor a national security policy review since 2006, and this failure to clearly articulate Canadian interests and priorities impacts the seriousness with which Canada is perceived and engaged on the global stage (Buck 2022).

Canada's allies, and its citizens, expect Canada to meet its commitments. For instance, to support defence obligations, Canada could increase its contributions to meet NATO's 2% funding level; or, to sustain its environmental objectives, could implement its carbon-cutting requirements under the Paris Agreement. There is also concern that Canada may even lack the diplomatic capacity and wider government expertise to effectively advance Canadian interests. Many key positions at Global Affairs Canada are filled with temporary staff, and policies to support the promotion and retention of diplomats have been criticized for not reflecting the value of their knowledge or their international networks (Buck 2022). This deficient diplomatic capacity combined with a lack of coherent messaging between departments, and a predominantly risk-averse position on international affairs, contribute to Canada's failure to identify and maintain priority partnerships and project an image of reliability in international arenas.

Leveraging Canada's strengths

The potential instability of a changing multilateral system presents an opportunity for Canada to effectively draw on two of its enduring, foundational core strengths: its democratic institutions and its trustworthiness.

In the face of rising global illiberalism and authoritarianism, Canada's democratic stability – based on transparency and accountability – is an asset that can be brought to the multilateral system (Buck 2022; Petrou 2022). Although COVID-19 heightened polarization and political destabilization globally, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's democracy index report, Canada rose to fifth place in 2020, which was attributed to a robust engagement in politics among Canadians (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2021). Canada could more effectively leverage this attribute in its efforts to legitimize and strengthen multilateral institutions and foster credible responses to future international crises and challenges.

Canada's own historical experience also positions it for international leadership. Being itself a product of colonialism, Canada enjoys a "trust factor" with international partners that brings legitimacy and authenticity to its global values and interests' agenda. In this sense, Canada continues to be able to act as an 'honest broker' in facilitating or helping to create conditions to mend faltered relationships. Also, Canada draws on its own experience and ability to learn, including the new awareness of its own failure in the treatment and respect of its Indigenous peoples. This open recognition and approach to addressing these failures is, in the view of many, an act of leadership which strengthens Canada's voice and influence for example, on issues of human rights. Finally, Canada's diversity and its policy of inclusivity allow it to create a rapport with different like-minded nations, thus strengthening its range of relationships and improving its leverage to advance Canadian interests in the international arena (Greenspon 2010; Devlen 2022).

Recommendations

To position Canada effectively in a dynamic global environment, two interrelated sets of recommendations are presented below. Considering the rapid changes taking place in the international arena, the recommendations presented in this policy brief are applicable to more general trends. They are designed to enable Canada to move from a reactive to proactive international posture and to reinforce Canada's ability to engage, shape, influence and lead:

I. Strengthening the Foundations

1. **Establishing an Integrated International Policy Framework:** Canada should develop a practical, purposeful, comprehensive whole of government framework that brings clarity to Canada's international objectives and priorities, based on inclusivity and engagement of all levels of government, civil society and private sector; articulates these objectives to Canadians and international partners in a transparent and accountable way and aligns to the instruments and means to ensure they are achievable. GAC can engage with and coordinate with the relevant federal departments such as DND, NRCAN, IRCC, and FIN, to participate in collaboration with the private sector, with the intent of creating a national dialogue about defining Canada's strategic interests.

2. **Creating Capacities to Support Multilateral Solutions:** Canada should invest deliberately and urgently to enable it to take an active leadership role by increasing its capacities to project political, military, or social power in its interest areas. In terms of defence, for instance, increasing DND funding is key to building capacities to deal with twenty-first-century threats to Canada: climate realities require strengthened monitoring of the Arctic, including the Northwest Passage, while Russian aggression in Europe necessitates bolstering Canada's defence contribution to meet NATO's 2% requirement to more effectively support our Eastern European allies. Bilaterally, settling the Northern Warning System issue with the United States would improve our image as a legitimate partner in matters of continental defence, which suffered as a result of the F-35 and BMD debates. GAC may act as a liaison with other nations to target and resolve these challenges, including through the Arctic Council, NATO, or bilateral US-Canada summits. By additionally addressing excess temporary and high-turnover diplomatic staffing, and otherwise demonstrating consistency and attentiveness to these relationships, these actions ensure that Canada will have the ability to fulfil its bilateral and multilateral commitments.

II. Aligning Our Actions with Our Strengths

3. **Combating Global Illiberalism - Investing in Diversified Development and Diplomatic Efforts:** Canada should further develop and maintain strategic partnerships with developing countries to foster and ensure that their support of the rules-based multilateral system can adequately align with their economic and security interests and resource requirements in the long-term. GAC should leverage Canada's strength as a trusted, democratically stable partner by using targeted development investments to forge closer ties with developing countries with the aim of strengthening their democratic processes and increasing their stake in multilateral institutions and a rules-based international order. This will require a deliberate strategy; investment in predictable long-term relationships; capacity building programmes in democratic governance, security sector, justice and building resilient civil society and private sector.

4. **Combating Digital Mis/Disinformation and Cybersecurity Threats:** Shoring up Canada's democratic institutions and resilience in the face of cyber threats is key, there we should bolster our resilience against digital age threats by enhancing Canadian understanding of, and creating partnerships to combat digital mis/disinformation and cyber-based menaces. This will require collaboration well beyond the traditional players. GAC will need to work even more closely with CSE, CSIS, PSC, DCI as well as with FIN, PCH, as well as non-governmental stakeholders, particularly civil society and social media platform owners and operators to create a broad and inclusive approach. This represents an opportunity to strengthen multilateralism by exploiting and reinforcing existing relationships to combat cyber-based threats.

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Climatizing Canadian Security: Reframing Security for an Uncertain Future

Nidhu Jagoda, Logan Smith, Francis Grenier and István Kéry

Issue

A conventional security framework and approach is no longer sufficient for Canada to establish climate security domestically, or internationally.

Background

The impacts of climate change penetrate political, economic, and social spheres and threaten human security by multiplying existing or creating new strains on human life (Huntjens and Nachbar 2021). Transnational security professionals are increasingly recognizing the impacts of unmediated climate change, and, as a result, new security practices are evolving (Oels 2012). American security practitioners labelled climate change a "threat multiplier" or "accelerant of instability" implying climate change would exacerbate other drivers of insecurity (Werrell and Femia, 2015). However, reports by both the US Department of Defense and CNA Corporation still only categorized climate change as an *environmental* risk (Werrell and Femia, 2015). This conventional and one-dimensional framing raises concerns that the threat of climate change to security "may lead states to resort to "old" responses that are defensive and isolationist rather than collaborative" (Huntjens and Nachbar 2021). Such a response to climate change is problematic because it cannot be mitigated by a single state, let alone militarily (Huntjens and Nachbar 2021). Yet, security actors, including the UN Security Council, continue to adopt this framing leaving global military actors to grapple with the impacts of climate change and factor them into military planning (Huntjens and Nachbar 2021). This framing is inadequate because it securitizes climate change and only frames climate change as compounding conventional security concerns. Therefore, in considering the implications of closer integration of climate change and security policies, it is recommended Canada "climatize" its security framework, rather than securitize climate change.

Defining Climatization

Climate change should be seen as a frame of reference rather than a single issue to address. Developing security literature suggests climatization frameworks are the more appropriate formulation for domestic and international security policies moving forward. Global climate governance extends beyond the international climate regime and climate change becomes the frame of reference through which other policy issues are mediated and hierarchized (Aykut and Maertens 2021). Utilizing current security literature, climatization can be conceptualized as involving a transformation of existing security practices (Huntjens and Nachbar 2021). Relevant issues, actors, and institutions are framed in relation to climate change and are addressed by expanding the jurisdiction of climate governance networks and institutions (Aykut and Maertens 2021). New methods and practices, taken from climate research, are introduced into existing security policies and logistics. Former action to address climate change through conventional security frameworks has organically initiated the climatization transformation, but climatization is a process, not an end state (Aykut and Maertens 2021). The homogenizing force of climatization

processes develops a "climate logic" where actors in the policy field will increasingly rely on the same way of reasoning and functioning, which can foster more cooperative security practices (Aykut and Maertens 2021). Taking conscious action to change the frame of reference of security and develop a climate logic will only further prepare Canada to anticipate, and adapt to, an uncertain future.

Implications of Climatizing the Security Framework

The following four sections are potential implications for climatizing the Canadian security framework. Though each of the implications presents possible pitfalls, the advantages of reframing the security framework present meaningful opportunities and encourage resilient action moving forward.

1. Climatization Broadens Arctic Security Concerns

Military escalation in the Arctic is concerning due to increased traffic and the breakdown of collaborative scientific endeavours and governance. Recent NATO exercises in the Arctic and increasing sanctions on Russia contribute to the hostile geo-politicization of the Arctic (Lawrence 2022a). Although military build-up in the Arctic is not new, recent confrontation and division between Canada, NATO, and Russia is quickly suffocating the Arctic's collaborative atmosphere. The Canadian government cannot let go of its North Atlantic commitments, but it can no less assume that national security endeavours do not interfere with its other mandates. Scientific research, search and rescue best practices, sustainable development goals, and reconciliation all depend on depoliticized governance (Goodman et al. 2021).

Collaboration between competitors in areas of key mutual interest may become necessary as northern climate change increases the insecurity of livelihoods, costs of infrastructure, and environmental complications to SAR (Burn 2019). Thus, crucial collaboration with Arctic neighbours through non-military channels may decrease as grievances and sanctions between NATO and Russia become entrenched and path-dependent (Huebert 2019, 89; Drezner 2021; Lawrence 2022b). Meeting commitments and realizing 'global Arctic leadership' (Government of Canada 2019) requires governance that looks past a binary of conflict-or-cooperation.

Climatization offers a relevant scope of security that can enhance Canadian priorities, adaptability to climate fluctuations, and offer alternative channels to competitors and allies alike.

2. Creates Priority for Adaptability Planning for Indigenous and Inuit Security

Inuit and Indigenous rights, access to healthcare, food security, traditional practices, and mobility in the Arctic are all being threatened by climate change. While the risks to communities are contextually-dependent, there are noteworthy vulnerabilities common across multiple cases:

- Infrastructure failures impede sewage and water treatment services and interrupt energy generation and distribution to essential structures like runways, harbours, roads, and schools
- Food insecurity resulting from wildlife population disruptions, and unstable permafrost and ice cover that are necessary for winter subsistence hunting (Berner, Brubaker, Revitch, Kreummel, Tcheripanoff, Bell 2016)
- Rapidly accelerating glacial melt increases access to Arctic waterways, which could raise the interests of foreign governments, corporations, and researchers. This can potentially affect Inuit and Indigenous self-determining rights and further harm their way of life
- Coastal erosion will require some communities to be relocated, which presents further complexity when considering the precedent of forced resettlement in Canada's history (Dalby 2021)

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommends that all levels of government, and all regions, begin developing adaptability strategies (IPCC 2022). Collaboration is needed between Inuit and Indigenous communities and organizations, like the Inuit Circumpolar Council and Assembly of First Nations, and each level of government to create equitable adaptability plans that address their vulnerabilities. Careful preparation and consultation are needed to inform decision-makers on how to provide administrative and logistical support (Watt-Cloutier 2018). Canada's reputation as a global leader in climate action depends on the action it takes to assist Inuit and Indigenous people in the Arctic.

3. Addressing Preparedness and Response Needs with Non-Military Security Actors

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are currently the de facto emergency response organization in Canada for addressing large-scale natural disasters and emergencies at the federal and provincial/territorial levels. Between 2010 and 2020, the CAF participated in 31 domestic emergency response missions and has seen an increasing trend in the frequency and duration of operations (DND 2022). They have assisted with mitigating intense flooding, wildfire evacuation, potable water deliveries, and vaccine distribution. The CAF is positioned as the best option for short-term natural disaster and emergency relief given its superior technical and logistical capabilities and readily deployable personnel (Kikkert 2021). However, defence analysts have concerns about the continued and increased reliance on CAF as climate change effects amplify the scale of disasters across Canada (Leuprecht & Kasurak 2020). Additionally, the CAF is only positioned to support response and recovery needs, which is too reactive and limited. To address these limitations, a more climatized security strategy should be adopted. Specifically, a non-military disaster workforce (NMDW) should be developed to assist in response and recovery, but also to address further mitigation, preparedness, and prevention needs.

4. Increased and Transformed Litigation Battles

Canada should anticipate increasing future climate litigation, as there is increasing momentum of international climate cases being leveraged by civil society against fossil fuel industries and governments alike. Upwards of 1000 cases globally have been filed since 2015, a number rising sharply as climate change becomes a central issue in global politics (Burger and Metzger 2021). Cases raised against the Global North cite constitutional and human rights concerns, challenges over the adequacy of implemented measures, and failure to act in line with shared global climate goals and commitments, all of which may implicate Canada and its future prosperity (Setzer and Higham 2021). Youth and Indigenous communities are two emerging groups that are increasingly employing climate litigation against the government citing the infringement of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

While Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is not involved with climate litigation, climate lawsuits have direct implications on their ongoing multilateral and bilateral commitments. While Canada should be cognizant of rising climate litigation trends globally, a climatized lens would inform a more proactive and cross-disciplinary approach. There are gaps in Canada's climate and environmental policy and programming that should be addressed as part of the strategy to contend with ongoing and future climate litigation. Rather than perceiving climate litigation as an isolated risk, it can instead inform redressing these systemic and institutional gaps and reinforce an equitable rules-based international system.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Innovate novel depoliticized methods to pursue mandates:** With securitization increasing among NATO allies, other essential mandates risk losing out. The capacity to adapt to changing political and climate developments requires managing security dilemmas by affording greater political capital to Arctic institutions and relationships and innovating new depoliticized means to harmonize Arctic security. Canada should lean on its strong institutional capacity, and continue to rely on multilateralism to realize global Arctic leadership.

2. **Co-Develop Inuit and Indigenous Adaptability Plan:** Collaboration between Inuit and Indigenous people in the Arctic and all levels of government is needed to co-create an adaptability plan that addresses the current and anticipated risks in the Arctic resulting from climate change. GAC should pursue existing knowledge transfer and decision-making forums in co-developing localized and context-specific pathways for affected communities.

3. **Develop Non-Military Disaster Workforce (NMDW)**: Investment from each level of Canadian government is needed for a disaster management workforce that can act as a command and control for national, provincial, and local emergency response teams. A NMDW could act as a network hub across Canada by providing communication, training and exercise opportunities. The NMDW will prioritize response, recovery, mitigation, and disaster preparedness and prevention.

4. **Proactively address root concerns in climate litigation**: The rising trend of strategic litigation against the government for climate inaction or delayed action presents a potential pitfall for Canada. However, it also presents a unique window of information into the gap areas in Canada's climate and environmental policy and programming. GAC should actively work with other agencies to better align their ongoing climate work to their bilateral and multilateral commitments.

5. **Promote cross-agency collaboration:** GAC should pioneer forward-looking policy, based on scenario-planning practices and non-forensic analysis. The 2017 Department of National Defense security policy on reframing and climatizing Canadian security policy (DND 2017), could be internationalized, complementing other GAC-DND partnerships, such as the NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence.

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Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Economics, Trade, Regional and Cyber Security

Kankshi Amin, Drake Kindred, Fahd Shah and Ty Sorensen

Issue

The Indo-Pacific region is rapidly growing, both economically and in influence. This transformation requires Canada to strategize its Indo-Pacific policies using an economics and security perspective that will capture key opportunities and address critical regional issues.

Background

The Indo-Pacific remains the fastest growing economic region globally. It is on track to undergo a massive wealth transformation through the creation of new trade and investment opportunities. Current projections show that the region's total GDP will surpass that of the rest of the world by 2030. Furthermore, by 2030 it is projected to account for 60 percent of global growth, and 90 percent of new consumers being integrated into the global markets (Kucharski 2020). The geopolitical climate of the Indo-Pacific is contentious given the involvement of many states and their varying national interests. These tensions are reflected between American and Chinese opposing interests in creating regional partnerships, ongoing trade discrepancies, and divided security interests. Canada's role in the region should be to create its own conception of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) where it seizes opportunities to expand its connectivity with partners while remaining aligned with regional allies.

Economics and Trade

The economic and trade opportunities available to Canada in the Indo-Pacific are plentiful. Canada hosts multiple industries that can help fill demand gaps in the region. There are two major trade agreements that encompass the Indo-Pacific: The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic

Partnership (RCEP). Canada is currently a member of the CPTPP. Canada should tap into its domestic industries and see how it fits into the larger market that the Indo-Pacific provides (Nagy 2021).

In terms of trade, Canada must maintain its key provisions in its trade agreements and protect local industries while conducting trade negotiations (CCC 2022). Pursuing trade liberalization should be prioritized without sacrificing domestic markets, and trade should be protected through non-tariff barriers. It is also important to recognize the demand gaps that exist in the Indo-Pacific to have a strategic advantage in the region through trade links. The energy sector is the fastest-growing sector given energy trends and demand globally. It is projected that the Indo-Pacific region will account for more than 60 percent of global energy demand by 2040 and requires upwards of US$1 trillion in energy infrastructure annually (Kucharski 2020). The major economies in the Indo-Pacific such as Japan, India, China and South Korea are reliant on energy imports for up to 80 percent of their needs (Kucharski 2020). Canada hosts a flourishing energy sector and can build strategic ties to fill these demand gaps.

Energy Sector

Canada is a world leader in energy production and technological innovation. It has large critical earth mineral industries that are essential for clean and renewable energy sources, along with large oil and gas reserves that fill in gaps where renewable energy sources cannot. Canada's energy exports reflect these capabilities, whether it be the clean fuel sector, mined clean energy materials, oil, gas or energy technology (Natural Resources Canada 2021). Canada also produces numerous minerals used in energy generation, electric car batteries, infrastructure and technology (ibid.). Collaborative energy initiatives with several Indo-Pacific countries, including South Korea, China and India, are already in place (Kucharski 2020), putting Canada in a prime position for energy export expansion. Canada also has the capacity to spur innovation in the energy sector while supplying the raw materials, putting it in an optimal strategic position.

Partnership with ASEAN and India

Trade agreements with regional partners such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India will provide new and enhanced market opportunities for Canadian goods and services while strengthening Canada's position in the Indo-Pacific. A joint study conducted by Canada and ASEAN has previously projected that a Canada-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA) could increase Canada's exports to ASEAN countries by US$2.67 billion while adding US$2.54 billion to Canada's GDP (Government of Canada 2021). Canada and ASEAN's decision to proceed with negotiations for an FTA in November 2021 therefore presents an excellent opportunity for Canada to expand its regional influence via an increase of exports to the bloc. There is a specific opportunity for Canada's clean technology industries as ASEAN countries' growing demand for cleantech is coupled with a lack of local industry expertise (Côté 2019). Canada is positioned to meet these needs as the GDP of its clean energy sector is projected to grow by 58 percent in the next decade while its exports in clean technology are growing at an annual rate of 9.7 percent, three times faster than all other product exports (Clean Energy Canada 2021; Sawyer 2020). A trade deal could provide opportunities for Canada to meet ASEAN countries' growing demand for solar power, medium and micro-scale hydro power, water quality and wastewater management infrastructure, and energy efficiency technologies as Canadian firms have significant expertise in these areas (Côté 2019). Thus, it is of great importance that clean technology is a central component of any FTA signed between Canada and ASEAN.

Canada can further reinforce its position within the region by strengthening its relationship with India via an increase in bilateral trade. While trade between the two countries is already significant, it can increase via the ratification of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) currently being negotiated between the two states. The finalization of a CEPA could provide an opportunity for Canada to supply products and services in the renewable energy sector as India has committed itself to sourcing 50 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2030 (Safi 2016). Large uranium stores, nuclear technological expertise, a previous nuclear cooperation agreement and nuclear trading relationship with India (World Nuclear Association 2021), may allow Canada to provide India's growing nuclear power sector with the goods and services required for its expansion. Canadian expertise and Indian demand for other forms of renewable energy such as wind, solar and hydroelectricity, as well as clean technology sectors such as water treatment and emissions reduction technology, provide further opportunities for Canadian firms (Papara 2021). Thus, Canada should further strengthen its Indian market access for Canadian firms by ensuring that clean technology is a central component of a final CEPA.

Security and Stability

Canada needs an innovative strategy to meaningfully engage with Indo-Pacific states. Creating diverse partnerships and stabilizing ties in emerging areas of security will solidify Canada's unique role within the region.

Engaging in Diverse Security Partnerships

Using a FOIP strategy centred on multilateral and bilateral connections will give Canada the flexibility to promote the interests it shares with allies and partners while engaging in opportunities to strengthen diverse Indo-Pacific connections. Canada is traditionally strong in promoting multilateral engagement within Asia through a variety of regional forums including ASEAN and APEC (Miller 2021). Canada has also previously engaged bilaterally with key partners such as Japan on peacekeeping and development projects to foster stability (Welch 2019, 450). Canada must maximize engagement in these

relationships along with using its traditional strengths in diplomacy and conflict reduction or risk being locked out of the region's economic, diplomatic and security benefits (Nagy 2021). Doing so will require strengthening engagement mechanisms by coordinating with Indo-Pacific partners on economic diversification and order-building. Such actions will create a united and connected region that may remain resilient against any potential insecurity while ensuring Canada's influence is embedded in the Indo-Pacific for the future.

Expanding Cyber Connections

Traditionally, Canadian security interests have been projected through innovation and critical connections. To expand on these qualities, cyber security should be an ideal area of expansion to protect our institutions as well as those that bind us with Indo-Pacific partners. Canada has an opportunity to help Indo-Pacific partners bolster their cyber infrastructure to ensure the internet is open and secure (Nachiappan 2022). India and Japan have both expressed a willingness to cooperate with Canada on several security related initiatives including cyber security. Japan and Canada have agreed that cooperation in security is a key next step following the signing of the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement in 2018. Meanwhile India and Canada agreed in 2018 to coordinate on cyber security initiatives at bilateral and multilateral forums. Given the mutual interest in cooperation on cyber security initiatives with India, as well as a recognition of similar threats, expanding cyber coordination with India should be a priority. Growing these ties through a bilateral agreement with India would allow for security threats to be dealt with in a timely manner while boosting economic connectivity and technology sharing (Shull 2019, 5). Similarly, given Canada and Japan's willingness to collaborate on security and defense problems, cyber security would be a logical new dimension to Canada-Japan bilateral relations (Pontbriand 2016). By strengthening bilateral cyber security coordination with Japan and India, Canada will be able to coordinate much more effectively on security and development initiatives using a Free and Open Internet. These cooperative cyber steps will maximize Canada's regional connectivity and optimize engagement in promoting security within the Indo-Pacific.

Understanding the Cultural Context

The AUKUS deal between Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom in 2021 has caused some friction in the Indo-Pacific region. Many countries in the region are concerned about the increased Anglosphere presence, especially through the increased presence of nuclear submarines (Pant and Kamath 2021). Therefore, having a non-proliferation approach for Canada in their energy trade is key. Many countries in the region are concerned about an arms race occurring within their waters and the potential consequences (Sobarini 2021). They want to promote safety and security and avoid furthering the tensions with China in its power projection race with non-regional players. Canada must be mindful of the current geopolitical environment in the region and work with countries in the region. This insecurity is furthered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine since Russia has close ties with major actors in the Indo-pacific region such as China (Hill 2022). Understanding the geopolitical, historical and cultural perspectives within the region can help Canada make an informed decision about its role.

It is important to acknowledge Canada should not overstep in the region by imposing its core beliefs as there are already systems and partnerships in place. In this case, Canada would benefit by emphasizing regional security within the Indo-Pacific region with like-minded allies. Due to the insecurity caused by the AUKUS pact, working with countries within the region can increase security while mitigating concerns about the increased Anglosphere presence. Canada should support countries that may feel insecure about the growing tensions between Washington and Beijing. Working with like-minded countries in the region such as Japan and India can help to build security. For this reason, Canada's Indo-pacific strategy should resonate with aspects of Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy in the fact that it should work to build partners in the region through beneficial partnerships. Canada should join Indonesia and other ASEAN countries in their aim to help ease the growing tensions and promote cooperation within the region (Weatherbee 2019). Through this strategy, Canada can promote connectivity and inclusivity as well as empowering like-minded middle powers in the region through strategic partnerships with Canada to help build up countries economically and socially.

Recommendations

1. **Adopt a Free and Open Indo-Pacific approach that focuses on diverse partnerships and regional connectivity to promote a secure, rules-based order.** By promoting both bilateral and multilateral partnerships with actors that have divergent national interests, Canada is reinforcing the stability it needs to engage in the region for the long term. This approach to FOIP will allow Canada to engage with a diverse range of Indo-Pacific actors while remaining in solidarity with the values that bind its allies and key partners together.

2. **Pursue bilateral agreements with like-minded partners to decrease economic reliance on China and build economic security within the region through energy investments and infrastructure.** Energy demand is projected to be the fastest growing in the Indo-Pacific region, and there is currently a dependence on energy imports. Canada should take a bilateral approach to building energy infrastructure, investment and energy collaboration networks in the region with India.

3. **Engage with key partners on cyber security.** India has previously agreed to collaborate with Canada on expanding cyber capabilities while Japan wishes to expand Canadian security collaboration. Canada should utilize its cyber capabilities to expand bilateral relations and security ties with both countries. This will not only expand economic linkages and technology sharing but also promote cohesive action and connectivity against online threats.

4. **4Respect the cultural differences and the current geopolitical environment in the Indo-Pacific region to make Canada's involvement more meaningful.** Respecting cultural differences and acknowledging the current geopolitical environment within the region can help Canada make a meaningful and positive impact. Canada's involvement should be careful to not impose Western values in the region. Increasing the anglosphere presence within the region is bound to cause some insecurity and therefore working with regional allies to promote safety and security is incredibly important.

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Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Sustained and Sustainable Middle Power Cooperation

Benjamin Khan, Anthony Samuels and Jacklyn Yee

Issue

Canada has not historically held a stable, sustainable commitment to security in the Indo-Pacific and must now rebalance its current portfolio of resources and policies to reflect the interests and security of partners in the region.

Background

A focus on engagement with Japan and South Korea offers a dual opportunity to improve Canadian relationships with two of the largest economies in the Indo-Pacific and contribute to South Korea-Japan cooperation, thus bolstering regional stability while also providing a gateway for greater Canadian involvement in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole. Strengthening Canada's relationships with Japan and South Korea also addresses two main points in the *Minister of Foreign Affairs Mandate Letter*: (1) launching a comprehensive Indo-Pacific Strategy to deepen diplomatic and defence partnerships; and (2) strengthening Canada's relationship with the United States (Government of Canada 2021). Deeper engagement beginning with these regional middle powers will signal a long-term commitment to the Indo-Pacific, while representing a more inclusive and less confrontational approach amidst rising tensions between regional great powers China and the United States.

Commitment to Regional Diplomacy

We believe that Canada should prioritize relations with Japan and South Korea in order to become more involved in the region and make larger contributions. This can be done through addressing cooperative diplomacy, critical mineral supply chains and naval procurement. Focusing on these key issues also aligns with the department plan of Global Affairs Canada for 2022-23, more specifically addressing the listed core responsibilities. As stated, Global Affairs Canada has been given the responsibility to "coordinate the development and launch of an integrated, whole-of-government Indo-Pacific Strategy that will deepen Canada's diplomatic, economic and defence partnerships and international assistance in the region". Through deepening relationships with Japan and South Korea, Canada would not only show its sincerity to recommit to the region, but would be fulfilling their mandates and responsibilities as well. Rebuilding these relationships from a security perspective will be necessary, as in the past Canada has been for the most part involved in the region for economic purposes (Manicom, Palomar, and Choi 2015).

Japan and South Korea have had an unstable and complicated relationship since the early 1900s which stems from a history of colonialism and war (BBC 2019). To address historical grievances Japan issued an apology in 2015 and promised to pay €7.9M in reconciliation (BBC 2019), however these grievances cannot easily be solved with money and words. Tensions between the two countries have spoiled a prime opportunity, for themselves and the region, as they are otherwise natural allies with shared interests; cooperation between them would be highly valuable to regional security. These tensions have also negatively impacted intelligence sharing initiatives, which makes both countries, as well as surrounding

regions, more vulnerable to threats from North Korea (Manyin 2015). The General Secretary of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) almost fell apart in 2019 (Sneider and Park 2021). Japan's and South Korea's leaders have not held a bilateral summit since 2015 and have only allowed tensions to continue to rise (Sneider and Park 2021). Tensions flared in 2018 when a South Korean destroyer locked in on a Japanese patrol plane and continued to escalate in 2019 when Japan placed export controls on South Korea (Sneider and Park 2021). Lastly, during the G7 Summit in 2021 in England, a formal meeting between the Japanese Prime Minister and South Korean President failed, and a sideline meeting could not be organized either (Sneider and Park 2021).

Although there are serious tensions between the two nations, it is wrong to view the situation between Japan and South Korea as hopeless. With Yoon Seok-youl's recent presidential victory in South Korea, there is renewed optimism for a more cooperative relationship between Japan and South Korea that Canada can help facilitate through bilateral agreements. President Yoon has stated plans to increase South Korea's efforts to recover bilateral relations with Japan (Cha and Kim 2022). This is a great opportunity for Canada to reinsert itself back into the Indo-Pacific by helping facilitate the recovery of the two nations' relationship while increasing its presence and support through critical mineral supply chains and naval procurement.

Critical Mineral Supply Chains

Rare earth elements (REEs) and critical minerals are essential for the manufacture of high-tech products, especially in the aerospace, clean energy, communications, and defence industries. As the world shifts to a low-carbon and highly digitalized economy, this also means that global demand for the critical resources is only expected to increase in the coming decades. Control over these supply chains is set to become "a powerful currency in the evolving green economy" (Zinck 2022). Rare earths, however, are overwhelmingly mined by and processed in China. According to a CSIS report in 2020, "Beijing exploited its relatively low-cost labour force and lax environmental laws to gain a competitive edge in the global market", producing approximately 90% of rare earth metals, alloys, and permanent magnets in 2019.

Following a maritime incident with Japan near the contested Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in 2010, China signaled its willingness to weaponize its global rare earth dominance as a political tool by restricting their exports to Japan for two months. This has become a cause for great concern in other industrialized economies, such as the US and South Korea–who rely on China for nearly all of their rare earth imports (China is the top supplier for 13 of the 35 minerals identified as critical to US national security: Fife 2019; U.S. Department of Energy 2021). As China's own economy and demand for electric vehicles, defence technologies, and consumer goods grows, however, so will its domestic consumption of rare earths. This becomes especially critical as its carbon emission targets become more ambitious, in line with its commitment to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

But despite their name, rare earths are not that rare. Canada is host to an estimated 14M tons of rare earth oxides, advanced stage mineral projects, and began shipping concentrate from its mine in the Northwest Territories earlier this year (NRCAN 2022). Canada was also welcomed to the 'Trilateral EU-US-Japan Conference on Critical Minerals' along with Australia in 2021. With its entry into these annual collaborative supply chain talks, which have since been renamed 'Conference on Critical Materials and Minerals', Canada stands to deepen ties with key partners and signal a long-term commitment to shared values of upholding a free, open, and inclusive global economy. Mining projects have been hindered by high investment costs and environmental concerns in other countries particularly because rare earths are expensive to extract sustainably. The consequences for unregulated mining practices can be observed in the major rare earth mining region of Jiangxi in China. With high levels of wastewater contamination due to the high levels of pollutants released during the extraction process and false reports on the extent of erosion control, the human and ecological impacts are immense (Standaert 2019).

Canada, however, has a reputation of environmental responsibility and the resource potential to develop its domestic capacity. Canadian policymakers should capitalize on this opportunity to position Canada as an environmental leader and a serious global player in the industry to leverage agreements with South Korea and Japan while helping to diversify these critical supply chains more broadly. In doing so, Canada can position itself as a responsible and reliable supplier of these minerals, both for the support of green and defence technologies domestically, and to promote an open, sustainable, and more resource-secure Indo-Pacific.

Naval Procurement

Canada's engagement with the Indo-Pacific region has recently been defined largely by the pursuit of economic interests, while Canada's commitment to preserving Indo-Pacific security and fostering closer security ties with Indo-Pacific partners has been sporadic and lacking. In order to demonstrate to South Korea and Japan that Canada intends to make serious contributions to maintaining a secure Indo-Pacific, more hard security resources must be committed to the region. Recent developments, such as Canada's contribution to sanctions enforcement of North Korea (Operation NEON) and the navigation of Canadian vessels through the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait in support of international law, suggest that Canada is ready to enhance its role in maintaining Indo-Pacific security. However, Canada's available naval forces are insufficient to contribute meaningfully to regional security issues, and current domestic strategies of naval procurement have been ineffective at updating and expanding the Canadian navy. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has provided additional impetus for Canada to expand the scope of its military spending and review current policies of naval procurement.

Canada's current naval procurement policy as outlined in the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS) is intended to provide for the updating and replacing of Canadian naval forces domestically, through contractors Irving Shipbuilding and Lockheed Martin operating out of shipyards in Vancouver and Halifax. The appeal of this domestic procurement strategy is its impact on the domestic economy as it provides employment and contributes to the national GDP (Public Services and Procurement Canada 2022). Despite these economic benefits, the strategy has suffered from ever increasing costs and extensive delays. These have been further exacerbated by supply chain issues and inflation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the Office of the Auditor General filed a report detailing how the NSS's slow delivery of naval vessels has the potential to cause gaps in Canadian naval capabilities, as old ships are retired before new vessels become operational (Office of the Auditor General 2021). The skyrocketing costs of certain vessel procurements has also reduced public and political support for the NSS.

Canada has the opportunity to address its floundering naval procurement plan while at the same time strengthening its economic and security ties with Indo-Pacific partners South Korea and Japan. Both Pacific countries possess highly advanced and competitive shipbuilding industries that have not suffered from the same setbacks as Canada's NSS and could be ready suppliers in potential naval procurement deals. South Korean firms have shown interest in increasing their market share of Canada's defence industry and can offer some of the most advanced destroyers and frigates in the world (Manicom, Palomar, and Choi 2015). In addition, Japan is a leader in submarine technology. Its recently launched diesel-electric Taigei-class submarine is the first submarine designed to be powered by lithium-ion batteries (Takahashi 2022). More immediately available to Canada is Japan's Soryu-class submarine, which would represent a significant upgrade on Canada's current fleet. Canadian companies have much to offer in return, including aircraft, radar, and unmanned combat systems, as well as light armoured vehicles (LAVs) (Manicom, Palomar, and Choi 2015). Global Affairs Canada should take caution to open up the defence procurement market equally to other potential partners as well. However, existing free trade agreements between Canada and both South Korea (CKFTA) and Japan (CPTPP) can help facilitate bilateral procurement deals as well as joint weapons systems development agreements (Global Affairs Canada 2021). The expanded market for Canada's defence products would make the most of Canadian comparative advantages, increasing economic efficiency and mitigating the loss of the NSS's economic value. All three countries would also be reducing their traditional reliance on American suppliers and markets through greater procurement cooperation with each other.

Global Affairs Canada can partner with the Department of National Defence and the Department of Public Services and Procurement to pursue a diplomatically strategic naval procurement policy that will modernize Canada's navy in a more effective and timely way than the NSS, while directly contributing to closer ties between Canada, South Korea, and Japan. At the same time, Canada would be demonstrating its commitment to Indo-Pacific security through an enhanced naval capacity provided for by regional partners.

Recommendations

1. **Broaden and deepen Canada's security relationships with both South Korea and Japan.**
2. **Subsidize research and development projects that facilitate environmentally responsible rare earth mining/processing practices.**
3. **Begin policy and trade negotiations with South Korea and Japan to facilitate a sustainable, reliable supply of rare earths.**
4. **Shift away from domestic naval procurement policies in favour of foreign procurement, specifically bilateral agreements with Indo-Pacific partners Japan and South Korea.**

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Technology

COVID-19 Consumer Trends and GAC's Role in the Digital Economic Recovery

Benedikt Beck, Shawn O'Connor, Natalie Playford and Ayla Rath

Issue

To capitalize on the digital economic trends emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada must advance an inclusive and multilateral policy framework for e-commerce and digital trade to create an equitable pandemic recovery.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on consumer behaviours; none more so than the accelerated and broad adoption of e-commerce. E-commerce is the trade of goods and services vis-à-vis online platforms, and the transfer of money and data involved in such transactions (Shopify 2021). Through lockdowns and work-from-home mandates, consumers have grown comfortable with online marketplaces and become accustomed to digital providers. Unlike other consumer shifts in mobility, savings or home-nesting, which are proving transitory, the e-commerce shift is expected to prevail in a post-pandemic world. In 2020, e-commerce sales increased from 15.8 percent to 23.3 percent of global sales whereas global non-digital output fell by 4.3 percent (UNCTAD 2021; von Abrams 2021). Albeit not a new trend, COVID-19 accelerated pre-pandemic adoption trends of digital commerce by five-to-ten years (Remes *et al* 2021).

A Resilient Recovery

Pandemic economic trends showed that consumers with access to online platforms could circumvent location-based supply-chain problems as digitalized firms could re-route production and delivery channels. Data-driven digital economic actors in all retail sectors proved more capable of managing complex trade flows and supply-chain disruptions. In addition, they demonstrated the ability to efficiently connect the global supply and demand of goods and services. In Canada, while the economy shrank by 5 percent in 2020, digitally-platformed firms grew by 3.5 percent (CBC News 2021). The benefit is more pronounced in small-and-medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who can expand beyond location constraints. For example, 63 percent of digitalized SMEs export compared to 12 percent of non-digital SMEs (OECD 2021).

Digital platforms generate network effects that lower transaction costs for both consumers and producers (Zhu and Lansiti 2019). The digital economy therefore offers Canada the best avenue for an inclusive and efficient economic recovery from the pandemic. For every 10 percent increase in digital exports, there is a 1 to 1.5 percent increase in GDP growth (Industry Strategy Council 2020).

Despite the Digital Adoption Program (CDAP) and an increased demand for digital services, Canada lags behind its OECD partners as less than 25 percent of SMEs employ an e-commerce platform (BDC 2021). If Canadian businesses fall behind consumer trends, they could potentially be squeezed out of e-commerce markets before they even enter.

According to a 2021 Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) report, over 60 percent of Canadian business owners are hesitant to trust their proprietary data with online commercial platforms. Canada's Digital Charter was established to build "trust in the digital world" and promote a transparent framework ensuring that data is being protected. However, Ottawa has yet to declare how they will protect Canadian firms' proprietary data, which is essential for next-generation firms, when operating in foreign online markets. GAC can supplement cross-border data safeguards by helping train Canadian professionals to navigate international e-markets.

Canadian firms also struggle to find relevance in foreign markets as only 3 percent of digitally-enabled SMEs can be found on international e-commerce platforms. Likewise, large Canadian firms struggle to compete with international counterparts given adverse cost factors in courier and transport services sectors (Standing Committee on International Trade 2018). There is no foreign exchange insurance, targeted intelligence or marketing consortium provided by GAC to help scale-up Canadian distributors into foreign online markets.

Canada's Place in the Digital Economy

Canada has sought to modernize domestic systems over the past decade in preparation for the future digital economy. The Digital Privacy Act was passed in 2015 to amend the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act to include online privacy safeguards (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2015). In 2018, Canada launched its National Intellectual Property (IP) Strategy (CIPO 2018). The 2020 Digital Charter Implementation Act introduced regulations on data governance and CDAP encouraged SMEs to adopt online business models. Nonetheless, these domestic initiatives have not evolved into a consorted international digital strategy as Canadian firms continue to fall behind international competitors.

The digital market is dominated by China (52.1 percent), the U.S. (19 percent), and Europe (11.7 percent), while Canada only accounts for 1.3 percent of online transactions (von Abrams 2021). Despite its small digital presence, Canada has proven effective at protecting "made-in Canada" digital trade norms like copyright liabilities, as noted in the annexes of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Yet, this only protects Canadian policies in the national jurisdiction and does little to promote values enshrined in the Digital Charter abroad.

Plurilateral progress through the WTO negotiations on the trade-related aspects of e-commerce and Trade in Services Agreements have stalled as states seek to maintain regulatory flexibility in the novel digital economy. Canada has relied on bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements (RTAs) to advance its digital economic values. This includes agreements with Chile, the Republic of Korea, CETA, CPTPP and CUSMA. Yet, these agreements are inconsistent, focus on *old school* issues like custom duties and paperless trading, and fail to harmonize on issues like data governance, IP, data localization and privacy rights.

Canada's decision to seek accension into the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) with Chile, New Zealand and Singapore is a promising first step to address emergent and more pressing digital-economic regulatory concerns like digital security, fintech, inclusion and digital-product non-discrimination. DEPA should be used as a baseline for current RTA negotiations with the UK, India and ASEAN to promote digital interoperability and future digital economy harmonization.

Inclusion and the Digital Divide

In theory, the digital economy should be more inclusive due to lower transaction costs and its ability to overcome geographic constraints – offering economic development potential for developing countries. The problem is that generating rules on cross-border e-commerce that are fair for both advanced and developing economies has proven difficult, given the disparity in technological access to online markets.

Many developing countries are unable to capitalize on new e-commerce opportunities as they lack infrastructure, such as affordable network services, reliable bandwidth and adequate malware or privacy protection. Beyond improving basic digital literacy, higher digital connectivity via accessible ICT infrastructure can increase the participation of SMEs in developing countries within both forward and backward linking supply-chains. SMEs in developing countries with a website have an 8 percent higher share of international trade (WTO 2018).

Canada can promote inclusive development in these countries while also capitalizing on untapped e-commerce markets. In the first half of 2020, Jumia, an African e-commerce platform reported a 50 percent increase in daily transactions, while Mercado Libre, the Latin American equivalent, doubled its sales (UNCTAD 2021).

The lack of ICT infrastructural capacity in developing economies inhibits full realization of the developmental potential of the digital economic revolution. Foreign direct investment in ICT infrastructure in Africa and Latin America would go a long way in supporting economic development goals while facilitating future market opportunities for Canadian consumers and firms. These ICT investments should specifically target rural regions in order for the benefits to be primarily realized by women in accordance with GAC's International Feminist Assistance Policy (IFAP).

Canada must also close the digital gender and Indigenous divides in its own jurisdiction. Women entrepreneurs earn 58 percent less than men who run similar businesses on e-commerce platforms (Paypal 2018). Additionally, surveys indicate women entrepreneurs are 0.8 times more likely to sell their products and services internationally but lack the same financing opportunities to 'go global' (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2019). Canada's Playbook for Gender Equality in the Digital Age and promotion of gender parity provisions in plurilateral and bilateral trade negotiations are welcomed but need to transpire into redlined issues for future agreements and services regulations. Closing this digital gender divide could unlock $88.2 billion for the Canadian economy (PayPal 2018).

Indigenous communities also face significant barriers online despite being nine times more likely to operate through e-commerce markets due to remote locales. Canada has proven effective affirming Section 35 of the Constitution Act by including dedicated Indigenous general exceptions, like that in CUSMA. Yet, GAC Indigenous Working Groups (IWGs) fail to address digital economic issues including international exposure. For example, there are over 50,000 Indigenous SMEs operating online, but only 24 percent of them engage in digital cross-border trade (RBC 2021)

The digital revolution accelerated by the pandemic provides an opportunity to modernize Canada's economy in a manner consistent with GAC's Ministerial Mandate. Through the right foreign and trade policies, Canada can strengthen its middle class by facilitating digital trade opportunities. Furthermore, GAC can ensure the digital economy is inclusive by removing barriers for marginalized groups and providing development opportunities abroad.

Recommendations

1. **Canada should promote its Digital IP Strategy through its accension into DEPA:** Although DEPA provides Canada with an opportunity to participate in the development of global norms on digital non-discrimination, e-payments and emergent technology standards, it is silent on IP and cybersecurity. Canada's Digital IP Strategy is unique amongst DEPA members and can be the cornerstone for developing IP hard and soft laws for next generational issues like data governance, trade secrets, competition law and Indigenous peoples' knowledge and culture. More importantly, by advancing Canadian digital norms abroad, Canadian firms will be more likely to explore foreign digital markets.

2. **Establish a sales and marketing consortium under the mandate of the Trade Commissioner Service.** GAC should cooperate with the BDC and Export Development Canada (EDC) to engage in direct consultation with SMEs as a means of increasing the exposure of Canadian firms abroad. Canadian SMEs occupy a small slice of global online retail space and have not capitalized on the potential of digital trade exports. A consortium will help provide technical expertise, intelligence on foreign sale opportunities and the infrastructure financing needed by Canadian digital firms to penetrate emerging e-commerce

markets and broaden international sales potential. This is in line with the recommendations of the Information Technology Association of Canada and would significantly increase the international exposure of Canadian firms, and especially SMEs.

3. **Canada should eliminate digital participation barriers for women, Indigenous peoples, people of colour, members of the LGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups**. These groups are underrepresented in online marketplaces and constitute untapped value potential. The Trade Commissioner Service should work through the CDAP with other government departments to target businesses run by the aforementioned groups and finance their online training, ICT and overseas advertising. This could be done by emulating GAC's IWGs for other marginalized demographics. Canada should advance provisions on gender, race and sex non-discrimination in future trade agreements, as it did in the recent WTO Joint Statement Initiative for Services Domestic Regulation (WTO 2022). This would strengthen RTA chapter-specific reservations, exceptions and exclusions pertinent to marginalized groups in Canada; and therefore, encourage greater commercial participation by these groups.

4. **Canada should invest in ICT infrastructure in developing countries to build integrated online market networks.** Investing in ICT infrastructure can benefit rural communities in the developing world and improve electronic literacy while making global e-commerce markets more accessible. By expanding bandwidth and general access to online markets, Canadians could tap into $400 billion of potential future value in developing markets (von Abrams 2021). GAC should prioritize ICT investments that promote access to Canadian markets and benefit women entrepreneurs in accordance with FIAP.

5. **Canada should promote global interoperability on data, privacy and emergent technology national frameworks in its future WTO Concept Papers.** With WTO negotiations on the trade-related aspects of e-commerce stymied, Canada should use its WTO concept papers to establish interoperability between divergent national e-commerce frameworks. It is imperative for businesses and consumers to benefit from consumer trade. Canada should advocate for a 'passport-system', common in e-payment and electronic document trade provisions, for data flows, technological innovation and copyright protections. Canada's unique position between American, Asian and European digital trade regimes means it can be a galvanizing force for harmonization at the WTO and through the Osaka Track.

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Medtech and the Future: Canada as a Global Leader in Advancing Health Care and Innovation

Oliver Campbell, Chelsea Sidloski and Natalie Suzor

Issue

The Canadian medtech sector faces many barriers that have pushed both Canadian and international investors to seek opportunities elsewhere, affecting Canada's ability to effectively foster innovation, benefit from significant opportunities such as succeeding in foreign markets and attracting foreign capital, and becoming a global leader in technology innovation and healthcare advancement.

Background

There is a great opportunity for Canada to foster its world-class innovation and expand its economic, political and social potential by strategically investing in the medical technology (medtech) sector (OPTIMUS 2017). Medical technology can be defined as "the application of science to develop solutions to health problems or issues such as the prevention or delay of onset of diseases or the promotion and monitoring of good health" (Tulchinsky and Varavikova 2014). An international tech strategy, which should include a long-term framework to guide R&D, manufacturing and commercialization, would position Canadian medtech companies to better succeed in foreign markets and attract foreign capital (Fraser 2022).

The medtech sector is a competitive and growing industry valued at $456 billion and has contributed immense value to health care and improved the lives of millions globally (EY Canada 2020). In 2021 alone, Canada spent $20 billion importing medical devices from other countries (Medtech Canada 2021a). Canada has the infrastructure and capacity within its post-secondary institutions (PSIs) to produce world-class science and technology innovations; however, strategic partnerships and investments are still needed to facilitate the transfer and fostering of innovation into domestic and international markets (Dooks 2021). Medtech can support Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy that invests in science, innovation, technology and partnerships to accelerate progress toward achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Government of Canada 2019a).

Why Medtech?

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed major gaps in Canada's health care sector that resulted in delays in vaccine procurement (Alin et al. 2022). Depleted stockpiles of personal protective equipment also corresponded with the unprecedented decline in surgical supplies, MRI, CT and X-ray machines (Leo 2020; Medtech Canada 2022). The high demand and low supply of medical equipment and supplies resulted in a heavy reliance on China and has created an urgent need for current and future medtech innovation (Leo 2020; Medtech Canada 2021b). The Canadian medtech industry has been acutely aware of these challenges and the impacts they could have on the health care sector.

Roadblocks Standing Between Canadian Medtech Innovation and the Global Market

Currently, Canada houses a significant amount of valuable medtech expertise and innovation; however, when it comes to driving innovation from the lab to the market, there are barriers in the way (OPTIMUS 2017). Some of the most significant barriers include long waiting periods for intellectual property (IP), new coding applications, trial periods and reimbursement processes, high costs of development and lack of funding, lack of market expertise and opportunities, high risk and short technology lifespan, and lack of sufficient access to verification and protection over IP rights (ibid.).

Protection of Intellectual Property and National Security

With Canada being a highly developed mixed-market system, a reliable and monetized system of IP through successful licensing is an important mechanism that can enhance national security (Shivakumar 2022). Without these critical structures in place, countries looking to dominate and replicate advanced technologies, such as medtech, can easily threaten Canadian IP (ibid.). These barriers have directly impacted the high risks of investing in medtech within Canada, which has significantly reduced the potential of Canadian medtech innovation, commercialization and the significant achievements of high-ranking institutions (OPTIMUS 2017).

Emerging fields of technology, such as medtech, have become key drivers of economic growth and development. This growth has also given rise to new and serious national security vulnerabilities that are emanating through a range of entry points into Canada's economy (Government of Canada 2021). Foreign multinational companies are starting to take note of Canada's higher education achievements and are profiting from the IP of Canadian university R&D programs. Canadian universities must take national security into consideration when partnering with foreign entities (Snyder 2019; Marijan 2021). A technology strategy must ensure that Canada manages the magnitude and complexity of these threats while also ensuring that the economy remains open, competitive and innovative (Government of Canada 2021). Medical devices make up a cross-sectoral industry that relies heavily on IP. For firms conducting business internationally while developing more advanced technologies and products, an effective IP strategy, especially on patents, is critical in gaining a competitive advantage in international markets (Government of Canada 2020).

Procurement Processes

Canada faces significant barriers in the procurement process that have led to medtech companies finding it increasingly difficult to get devices approved for use in domestic and international markets. Canada currently uses a model of conducting health technology assessments to inform policy makers around the introduction and diffusion of health technology. This is a lengthy process that takes over a year in a best-case scenario; in fact, many devices take several years to receive approval (MacNeil et al. 2019). By the time these assessments are completed, the priorities of policy makers have often shifted, leading to additional time needed for a medical device to be approved. In a 2016 survey of Ontario's 23 academic hospitals, 76 percent of respondents reported procurement regulations as a "major hurdle" to adopting innovations within their hospitals (Kirkwood 2019).

Moreover, the culture surrounding the adoption and implementation of new medical devices in Canada is risk-averse, focusing primarily on cost containment and not necessarily on value for money (ibid.). Focusing on short-term costs impedes innovation and does not encourage growth in the medtech sector. Other jurisdictions, such as the Netherlands and other European countries, use a value-based procurement (VBP) system that focuses on improved patient/operational outcomes and savings to the larger healthcare sector (Medtech Canada 2021c). Although it involves more upfront costs, there is evidence that it provides long-term savings for governments and healthcare providers (ibid.).

Opportunities

Knowledge Mobilization

Canadian PSIs graduate a significant number of professionals each year who could support innovation. In terms of share of PSI graduates among the working-age population, Canada has the highest proportion of workers who have completed post-secondary education among nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (55.2 percent). There are more qualified engineers in the labour force in Canada than in

any other G7 country, and Canada is first in the G7 for higher-education sector R&D performance (Government of Canada 2019). Thus, it is essential that the IP produced in Canada's universities is not only protected but also harnessed to economically benefit from it.

The process through which the benefits of university teaching and research is spread to society is known as "knowledge mobilization" and includes not only generating new patents and licensing revenue, but also providing new technologies and research-based solutions to SMEs (Universities Canada 2017, 2). Research shows that there is a positive interaction between innovation and exports: as firms export more, they also tend to innovate more (De Fuentes, Niosi and Peerally 2020). Supporting growth of operations abroad and trade outside of Canada spurs innovation, in turn granting companies increased capacity to integrate themselves into international markets. Global Affairs Canada (GAC) has much to gain by creating a tech strategy that is innovation-focused. This would lead to significant return on the investments the Trade Commissioner Service is making in international business partnerships.

In-licensing, Non-dilutive Funding and Technology Transfer Offices

Canada has the capacity and initiative to further develop and foster Canadian innovation through in-licensing, which is "the process of creating a contract that allows another firm to provide capital to the development and commercialization process, while taking on the majority of the financial responsibility" (Two Labs 2018). In-licensing has proven to be very successful for tech start-ups which have significantly supported Canadian innovation (Government of Canada 2022). In-licensing can provide a steppingstone for medtech start-ups to break into the global market while ensuring individual ownership and captivating the intrinsic market knowledge of Canadian tech firms (NIBUSINESS 2021).

The benefits that in-licensing provides include significant reduction in the time and cost of development, lower risk, longer technology lifespan, a means to meet the market standard and the freedom to operate with consistent ownership of IP (Hickey, Barrow and Harris 2018). In-licensing can be best complemented by non-dilutive funding that "does not require any equity stakes or ownership in a company" (Two Labs 2018). A provision of non-dilutive matching grants by the Federal Government of Canada for Canadian firms willing to provide in-licensing can add great value to GAC's mandate of providing an essential foundation to leverage Canadian innovation to the next level.

In-licensing processes can also be strengthened by Canadian university tech transfer offices (TTOs) and tech incubators. TTOs and tech incubators have the capacity to ensure quality IP and act as channels between medtech innovation and international markets (University of Waterloo 2022). They also play a major role in negotiating challenging and time-consuming IP agreements (MacNeil et al. 2019). The goal of technology transfer is not only to commercialize academic IP but to also build the innovative capacities of PSIs, SMEs and entrepreneurs by facilitating collaborative ventures (Standing Committee on Industry, Science, and Technology 2017). TTOs are situated at the crossroads between innovative capacity, untapped economic potential and concerns for national security.

Advancing Regulatory Frameworks

Global Affairs Canada has the opportunity to make Canada's regulatory environment for the medtech sector significantly more efficient by facilitating the adoption of international best practices, demonstrating that Canada is a place where innovative products can thrive in an already competitive industry. By making it easier to access more international markets and by adopting international best practices, Canada can further demonstrate to investors and innovators that it is a hospitable environment for medical device innovators (Health and Biosciences 2018).

International regulatory cooperation has several benefits, especially greater economic and administrative efficiency (OECD 2021). A regulatory framework that recognizes other international standards will not only make it easier for Canadian medical device producers to expand their markets outside Canada, but will save the medtech sector hundreds of thousands of dollars and will have an even larger impact on new and start-up medtech companies (Health Canada 2019). Pooling intelligence with other regulatory partners will help alleviate backlogs from domestic regulators, helping the federal government reach greater administrative efficiency.

Recommendations

1. **The Trade Commissioner Service should create a knowledge mobilization hub that connects Canadian university R&D programs and Canadian post-secondary graduates with Canadian businesses that are active in Brazil, China, India, Israel and South Korea to share best practices.** These key markets are the focus of the Canadian International Innovation Program. As participating companies seek to develop new or improved products, services or processes and seek to collaborate on R&D projects with foreign partners, Canadian companies can seek the technical guidance of Canadian R&D programs. This university-industry partnership also presents an opportunity for Canadian university programs to learn how to better align their innovations with these key markets, which would eventually lead to easier commercialization and market integration.

2. **In collaboration with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and Health Canada, GAC should support in-licensing of domestic medtech devices by providing non-dilutive matching grants to Canadian firms that are willing to provide in-licensing. This will further develop innovation and minimize existing barriers that prevent the commercialization of Canadian medtech.** Through a cross-department investment and joint pilot project, funding could be drawn from multiple sources while allowing each party to have a stake in medtech development, resulting in an increased commitment to success. Funding could be equal or prorated based on budget capacity ensuring that costs are evenly shared. GAC and ISED should start by leveraging the existing Canadian TTOs to provide both verification and protection of IP, while sustainably fostering and driving world-class innovation into the global market. This strategy could complement and strategically feed into GAC's mandate of fostering innovation by creating a foundational starting point for Canadian innovation and expertise to be leveraged into both domestic and international markets.

3. **By working with Health Canada, GAC should promote procurement best practices that are both safe and economically sound by streamlining its procurement process and supporting the adoption of value-based procurement (VBP), which is already being used in countries with successful medical device sectors.** VBP is lengthier to regulate because it involves longer trial periods, but also assesses best value for health outcomes and increased quality of life (Medtech Canada 2021c). Over time, Canada's health sector can reduce costs by avoiding potential costly medical procedures. By adopting VBP, the approval process needs to be completed only once, saving time and money. GAC can facilitate partnerships between Health Canada and other international health agencies that recognize VBP assessments from other countries, which can expedite the approval process in Canada. While efforts are already being made through federally funded organizations such as CAN Health, local procurement is still a significant barrier to medtech companies. A coordinated approach to VBP can be an initiative led by the federal government.

4. **GAC should build on existing international partnerships and bilateral relations to expand the Medical Device Single Audit Program (MDSAP) membership to more countries.** Canada is already a member of the MDSAP, which allows for international cooperation in the medical device sector and is spearheaded by the Government of Canada. Currently, approval in Canada gives medical device companies access to only four markets outside of Canada: Australia, Brazil, Japan and the United States (British Standards Institution 2022). Other key economic partners that Canada should look to include are the European Union, China, India, Israel, Mexico and South Korea.

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Combatting Disinformation: Confronting Digital Authoritarianism and Strengthening Democracy

Brandon Dickson, Zahra Ludin and Emily Miller

Issue

Foreign digital authoritarian (DA) actors have increasingly used disinformation tools on social media that threaten democracies by targeting democratic tools including political participation, public deliberation, and fair elections.

Background

Framework

Combatting disinformation requires a human rights-based approach (HRBA). An HRBA is a conceptual framework underpinned by:

- participation and inclusion
- accountability, transparency and inclusion
- non-discrimination and equality
- empowerment
- links to human rights (ENNHRI 2020).

An HRBA aims to empower rights-holders and build the capacity of duty-bearers and responsibility-holders to respect, protect, promote and fulfill human rights (ibid.; Global Affairs Canada 2017). An HRBA is important as it informs Canada's international response by prioritizing Canadian values in combatting disinformation.

Authoritarian Regimes and the Disinformation Threat

Digital authoritarianism is the use of digital technology by leaders with authoritarian tendencies to surveil, repress and manipulate domestic and foreign populations to their own advantage (Polyakova and Meserole 2019). The emergence of digital technology has provided an opportunity for authoritarian regimes to exploit technology to quell opposition and preserve political control. The tools used by DA regimes include technologies such as surveillance, censorship and social control, which are exported internationally to advance the aims of the DA (Yayboke and Brannen 2020). Many of these technologies serve dual purposes: DA regimes can use them as a tool of repression whereas democratic regimes can use them for electoral information. For instance, the Chinese government collects data on citizens through their use of social media (Bartholomew 2020) while in Canada, social media is considered a valuable tool for citizens to access information about when, where and how to vote (Elections Canada 2020).

The two most dominant perpetrators of DA are China and Russia, but their strategic playbooks are significantly different. For example, China has developed an impressive legal and technical infrastructure for censorship and surveillance, whereas Russia has combined disinformation technology alongside a repressive legal regime. Russia's

DA model appeals to lower-income governments that lack China's economic and human capital capacities and centralized governments, as its disinformation technology is low-tech and low-cost (Polyakova and Meserole 2019; Morgus 2019). Moreover, Russia's model is appealing to those countries with similar legal frameworks (Morgus 2019). Russia has proven its ability to manipulate foreign populations through disinformation campaigns and interference in elections and referendums, as evidenced in the 2016 US presidential election and the 2020 EU referendum (Thompson 2020; Tenove 2020; Tworek and Tenove 2019).

Disinformation involves the "intentionally false or deceptive communication tactics that actors use to advance their political or economics aims" (Tenove 2020). Both domestic, foreign, state and non-state actors promote disinformation, as evidenced in the 2016 US election with Russian actors, US political candidates, journalists, and citizens promoting disinformation (ibid.). Disinformation campaigns pose a threat to:

- Elections, where false information may be spread about where, when, and how to vote;
- Competition among political candidates, where false information may be spread about candidates;
- Political deliberation, where citizens may
    - have reduced opportunities to contribute to or encounter diverse views in political discourse, given the lack of quality information available due to the promotion of bots, fake accounts, and so forth that flood communication platforms,
    - encounter disrespectful deliberation that targets social groups, or promotes false claims, conspiracy theories that prompt moral dislike toward electoral candidates or public officials,
- Democratic institutions, such as journalists, news media and institutions of expertise, where the dissemination of false information crowds out and devalues these institutions' contributions to public discourse and overwhelms users with conflicting information, having the potential effects of decreasing trust in these institutions.

Disinformation campaigns impacted the information environment during elections in 24 countries in 2019 (Freedom House 2019). The emergence of the internet and the decline of traditional media has structurally transformed the information sharing environment, expanding public discourse to include more diverse and dynamic opinions that previously had been mitigated by traditional media infrastructure (Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics 2018). Digital media has become an essential source of political information (Jungherr and Schroeder 2021), but the structure and patterns of online communication pose challenges to the health of democracy (McKay and Tenove 2021). For example, social media's platform algorithms dictate the discoverability of content, arrange the content in newsfeeds, and disseminate micro-targeted lists of trending topics (ibid.). Elements of digital media, such as the diversity and anonymity of users and the ability to micro-target users are exploited to promote disinformation (ibid.). The Department of Foreign Affairs has been tasked with responding to foreign interference in democratic processes and advancing support for democracy through defending the right to freedom of expression (Office of the Prime Minister 2021) and this includes addressing the threat of disinformation.

International Disinformation and the Threat to Democracy

The disinformation threat is on full display in Eastern Europe right now. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has seen the role of disinformation and DAs come to the forefront as Russia looks to use disinformation to weaken Ukraine and prevent its allies from intervening in the name of eroding democracy (Aylward and Brown 2022).

The most recent Freedom House Report shows that in the regions of Central Europe and Asia, only 20 percent of states are consolidated democracies, leaving four of every five states as currently authoritarian regimes, or as fragile democracies, which are more likely to see their democracy compromised. Given that many of these states, as well as other Canadian allies, have upcoming elections (Council of Europe n.d.), an action plan for combatting misinformation is going to be crucial, not just now but in the future, if Canada is to continue to support Canadian allies and Canadian interests in protecting democracy internationally.

Canada's two recent federal elections in 2019 (Bridgman et al. 2020) and 2022 (Bridgman et al. 2022) have shown some success in limiting the impact of disinformation campaigns on elections through targeted intervention and education campaigns promoting positive engagement practices

with media throughout the entire election period. Like many other states, Canada grappled with the challenge of addressing disinformation in the 2019 and 2022 elections. This required balancing the right to freedom of speech with cautioning citizens about some forms of digital information without portraying it as inherently dangerous (ibid.). Other solutions have begun to emerge out of the private sector. Big tech companies such as Microsoft are currently developing artificial intelligence programs that can flag posts, or entire accounts, as misinformation (Trivedi et al. 2021). Concerns have been raised about the fallibility of such technology and the threats it poses if used against the interests of free speech by DA regimes.

Recent research has shown that when individuals perceive others to have been influenced by disinformation, their satisfaction with democracy declines (Nisbet, Mortenson and Li 2021). The 2016 US election is not just a case study, but demonstrates a lack of trust in electoral systems and a renewed cynicism internationally toward the validity of democracy (McKay and Tenove 2021). With people spending more time online during the pandemic, DA actors took advantage of social media to spread misinformation, expanding their reach and increasing the vulnerability of users online (Butcher 2021). The expanded reach of DA regimes has resulted in an avenue for further international division as DA regimes seek to increase their power and reach (Springer and Özdemir 2022).

Given Canada's chairship of the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC) for 2022, Canada has an opportunity to be a shaper of international agendas. Canada's participation in the FOC allows for a Canadian response to international human rights abuses committed by DA regimes. The recent re-election of Prime Minister Trudeau saw a reaffirmation of the central role the digital world will take in government strategy; ensuring freedom and human rights is a cornerstone of this strategy (Government of Canada 2021). Canada's commitment to implementing the digital charter demonstrates the Canadian government's recognition of the value of democratic interests being protected online and must be expanded to Canada's international interests.

Public Perception and Disinformation

Some researchers disregard disinformation, insisting there is a lack of empirical finding to support the public perception of disinformation as a threat (Jungherr and Schroeder 2021). These researchers contend it is "moral panic" that the public perceives in the digital content they consume. However, the public fear of disinformation should be understood for its role in creating a society that is susceptible to misinformation and mistrust. If the fear of disinformation is unfounded yet pervasive, it is a symptom of a core problem within the society (Nisbet, Mortenson and Li 2021). The dismissal of the public's fear of disinformation will feed into the already growing mistrust in governments and democratic institutions (Lee 2022). This requires addressing some of the challenges states may face when tackling the issue of disinformation. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic, research showed that only around 1.1–1.8 percent of URLs on Twitter were linked to domains of purveyors of disinformation (Jungherr and Schroeder 2021). Evidently, empirical research does not have a far-reaching impact on the public the way disinformation does, making disinformation a greater threat than some researchers are willing to recognize.

Digital space is understood as a decentralized public space open to anyone with internet access, which therefore leads to the unfiltered and unregulated publication of content from around the world at unparalleled speed, and at much cheaper rates. As a result, digital technology makes the sharing of targeted and curated content possible by players such as powerful private media agents, state-owned media outlets, politicians with affiliations or stakeholders as well as a platform for citizens to become active political participants beyond the polling stations (Luo, Cai and Cui 2021). The digital space has quickly become a nexus where both information and disinformation flow. The Canadian government must maintain and restore the citizens' trust in the government and domestic democratic institutions.

Some of the key players that share this digital space are large social media companies such as Google, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which have unique roles in facilitating global communication of ideas and movements. However, they have largely been unregulated by states, including when they have directly undermined the capacity of the state to govern (Kelly et al. 2017; CADSI 2019). Members of the public, researchers, investigative journalists and the average citizen do not always have the tools and expertise to continuously decipher between information and disinformation, given the rate at which the information market is expanding. The government must assume the role of mediator and regulator to increase the transparency and accountability of information online.

While the Canadian government has launched programs such as the Digital Citizen Initiative, aimed at building citizens' resilience, civil literacy and critical thinking against disinformation (Canadian Heritage 2022), some of the larger salient actors in the digital world have yet to be regulated at a federal level at scales which can impact their interaction with average citizens. Further challenges facing the Canadian government include the immense cost burden for the Canadian government in combatting the fast and easy proliferation of misinformation. Moreover, as Canada looks to respond to disinformation a delicate balance must be reached as restrictive policies may violate media freedoms and incur unintended consequences, potentially even increasing opportunities for disinformation (Tenove 2020; Bellemare and Ho 2020).

Recommendations

1. **Leveraging its position as chair of the FOC, Canada should facilitate the establishment of a multistakeholder, multinational research centre housed within the FOC.** An independent research institute would bridge the gaps between policy makers, industry and civil society to enable greater research on the measurement of the effects of disinformation and the impact of interventions across countries. In collaboration with industry, media, civil society and researchers, Canada should aim to develop data-sharing rules and acquire access to the data from digital platforms to increase the accountability and transparency of governance. Research should focus on social, paid and algorithmic amplification of information online and the internal governance of digital platforms to better understand how foreign actors exploit the structure of the digital information environment to promote disinformation.

2. **Building on the success of Canada's Digital Citizen Initiative, Canada should partner with like-minded governments, academics and education sectors to expand digital literacy education internationally.** The Digital Citizen Initiative, in cooperation with GAC, has shown great success domestically at promoting media literacy skills. The promotion and exporting of such a program internationally would limit the impact of misinformation campaigns around the world. A program to support foreign governments would be more cost effective and limit the resources required to stop misinformation campaigns, thereby making the program more accessible. It is an opportunity for Canada to champion its role as a global leader of human rights. It is important that these campaigns maintain public trust and focus on identifying disinformation without sowing fear of information found on the internet.

3. **Following international best practice, the Canadian government should adopt a more systems-based approach instead of a content-based model in order to establish a transparent digital ecosystem in which users are just as informed regarding harmful digital activities as governments are of the harmful practices of large tech companies.** Canada can adopt the European Union's approach to tackling the issue of disinformation arising from the digital industry. The European Union has adopted the Code of Practice on Disinformation, which is a voluntary agreement wherein online platforms, social networks, advertisers and advertising agencies self-regulate their practices by disclosing information about the origins of information, its method of production and distribution, as well as the traceability and sponsors of the information. This would allow citizens to interpret and disseminate the information with more confidence. Moreover, the Code of Practice encourages diversity in content in order for citizens to have access to "free and independent media" to make informed decisions for themselves.

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Canada's Foreign Policy Objective: Combatting the Pillars of Digital Authoritarianism

Aleyna Aygor, Mehnaz Hossain, Shalin Nayak and Temi Reju

Issue

Digital authoritarianism (DA) constitutes the expansive misuse of digital tools by authoritarian regimes in ways that directly threaten the democratic fabric of Canadian society and that of its strategic allies.

Background

Some of the key avenues for DA have manifested through heightened surveillance, access to sensitive data, the intentional spread of disinformation (Cebul and Pinckney 2021) and the denial of basic human rights online (Dragu and Lupu 2021).

The literature suggests that the greater the development of these technologies, the greater the incentive for their misuse by governments. Further concerns about the misuse of these technologies point to their use in controlling political dissidents living outside an authoritarian regime's borders, interference in the democratic political processes of other states and the potential adoption of these techniques within democracies (Polyakova and Meserole 2019).

Even liberal democratic nations such as Canada are not immune to the draw of DA. Many of the digital tools used by authoritarian leaders are also developed and sold by tech companies in the West. As technologies become more advanced, the hybrid use nature of this technology is co-opted by authoritarian regimes.

While DA poses a threat to human rights and foundational principles of democratic and open societies, it also raises additional concerns for Canada since digital foreign interference (FI) directed at democratic institutions and processes can threaten Canada's national security. Within the current securitization realm, we see DA as manifesting in three main ways: foreign electoral interference and espionage, transnational repression and disinformation. These areas of concern all involve some level of state and non-state interference within a sovereign Canada.

Pillars of DA

Foreign "Electoral" Interference

As elections increasingly move online, the threat of interference by state and non-state actors to reach their immediate, medium or long-term goals have increased. FI poses an emerging threat to Canada's democratic process (Carvin 2021). Canada's CSIS Act defines FI as "activities within or relating to Canada that are detrimental to the interests of Canada and are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person" (Government of Canada 1985). These activities can include undermining trust in Canada's democracy, institutions, social cohesiveness, national security and the trust toward the rules-based international order. Canada's close ties to the United States, its status as a NATO and Five Eyes member, and its socio-economic power makes it an attractive target

(CSIS 2021). Current geopolitical tensions, especially after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, presents an intensifying FI threat (Carbert 2020).

Canada's Election Modernization Act makes combatting FI one of its priorities. The creation of the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force brings together actors from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the RCMP to assess and respond to these FI threats. Canada is party to the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), a G7 initiative to identify, prevent and respond to threats against G7 democracies and the Five-Country Ministerial. GAC houses the RRM's G7 RRM Coordination Unit that oversees information exchange and analysis (Government of Canada 2019). The Five-Country Ministerial brings together the Five Eyes, an intelligence alliance between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, to share transnational safety and security concerns (Public Safety Canada 2021). Canada also took part in the 2021 Summit for Democracy hosted by the United States where it supported the Export Control and Human Rights Initiative and was a part of the Surveillance Principles Initiative.

With a looming FI threat to elections and Canada's democratic foundations, Canada must follow its Five Eyes partners and create multilateral digital governance frameworks and crack down on Chinese and Russian exports to combat possible FI such as the recent decision it took to ban Huawei from Canada's 5G network.

Disinformation

Disinformation in a digital era utilizes digital tools to intentionally manipulate, degrade public deliberation, undermine norms, and weaken trust in public institutions within opposing states (Cyber Centre 2022; Tenove et al. 2018; Yayboke and Brannen 2020). The spread of false information poses a unique threat to democratic countries, specifically when autocratic regimes use disinformation as a political weapon to further their strategic agendas by undermining the political process in other countries (ibid.). Some of the commonly used disinformation techniques include claims of fake news, data scandals and inaccurate information to restrict and manipulate the knowledge available to citizens in digital form (Tenove et al. 2018). This form of digital deception often weaponizes social media to impose certain ideologies and views on citizens around the world, resulting in DA (Jones 2022).

While digital techniques are widely used by non-state actors, such as terrorist groups and extremist social movements, state actors such as China or Russia pose a particular risk to Canadian democracy. They have access to resources that can cause harm on a larger scale and therefore, the ability to broadcast long-lasting propaganda and disinformation campaigns in multiple languages (Tenove et al. 2018). This pillar emphasizes that disinformation campaigns can be harmful to democracy beyond electoral interference, by also contributing to the violation of the rules-based international order.

The Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (2022) already offers guidance and resources related to disinformation on its website, and the federal government has launched a digital charter to protect the nation against disinformation that can undermine the integrity of elections and democratic institutions. During this launch, Prime Minister Trudeau discussed the role social media platforms play in countering disinformation and announced that such platforms will be held accountable with the digital charter. These measures suggest that Canada recognizes that disinformation is a major threat to democracy and must ensure that foreign actors do not disrupt the country's democratic process through the spread of disinformation on cyber space.

Transnational Repression

Finally, in committing transnational repression, foreign states effectively manipulate individuals and information in Canada, which threatens our democratic institutions and national sovereignty. Authoritarian states apply transnational repression techniques designed to intimidate, persecute, or coerce citizens living abroad. The proliferation of digital technology has provided these governments with new tools to suppress cross-border opposition. Common digital transnational repression tactics include hacking and phishing, account takeovers, troll and bot campaigns on social media, online threats, and disinformation campaigns.

These techniques are typically used against activists, human rights defenders or dissidents from other countries living in exile in Canada (Al-Jizawi et al. 2022). There is little to no support for individuals who are subject to transnational repression, and women are disproportionately targeted by this kind of harassment. Victims have

also reported that authorities and law enforcement in Canada are not equipped to address the issues posed by transnational repression (ibid.).

Breach of privacy is a major risk of transnational repression, not only for those subject to state harassment, intimidation or repression, but also other Canadians whose privacy may be infringed upon by these foreign state actors. Canada's Privacy Act protects individuals from the unlawful collection or use of personal information by the Canadian government, however, Canada does not have a policy framework that addresses transnational repression from foreign governments. The lack of a coordinated response to transnational repression jeopardizes Canada's status as a safe haven for vulnerable people, and Canada's cyber security may also be compromised by the same digital tools that authoritarian states use to oppress its citizens living abroad. In collaboration with GAC, Public Safety Canada and CSIS, Canada must actively work to reduce opportunities for states to engage in transnational repression and provide resources to support victims of transnational repression in Canada.

Models of DA

China and Russia are the most salient actors involved in developing and supplying the tools needed for governments to engage in DA. The Chinese model is based on strong partnerships between the state and the Chinese technology sector. Historically, this sector has supplied telecommunications hardware, advanced facial-recognition technology, and data analytics tools to a variety of governments with poor human rights records. Chinese technology companies are actively shaping the politics and policies of surveillance and monitoring technologies through forming high-level relationships with domestic governments and telecommunications firms (Cave et al. 2019).

The Russian approach differs from the Chinese model and can be thought of as an ad hoc strategy that leverages technical, legal and administrative measures to monitor populations and suppress free access to the internet. Russia has also invested significant resources in information manipulation, which has been strategically deployed to destabilize and increase polarization in Western democracies. Russia's low-tech and low-cost model could be easier to replicate and more globally adaptable as emerging authoritarian regimes seek greater control over their populations (Polyakova and Meserole 2019).

The confluence of state and non-state actors involved in exporting DA poses a unique challenge for policy makers as mitigating this threat may require significant coordination between the public and private sectors.

Recommendations

1. **Disincentivize trade partners from exporting Chinese and Russian DA technology.** Chinese DA technology is already being disseminated and used by strategic Canadian trade partners. As a two-pronged approach to combatting DA, Canada must both tighten export regulations of these technologies and prevent partners from exporting undemocratic technology by including conditionalities and clauses within trade agreements and relationships.

2. **Initiate the creation of a Five Eyes Digital Authoritarianism Protocol (DAP).** To reconfirm its commitment to digital governance and security, Canada should take initiative to propose the creation of a Five Eyes DAP to create a multilateral agreement on what constitutes DA, reframe laws regarding DA and create agreements on how to combat DA and FI, thus building on the existing framework of the Five Eyes Alliance. A DAP can also set a precedent for combatting transnational repression by providing training for Canadian security agencies on how to respond to transnational repression. A DAP can also stipulate the provision of funding and resources to support victims of transnational repression.

3. **Form public-private partnerships and investment in digital development to build digital infrastructure that serves as an affirmative alternative to the Chinese DA model.** Utilizing the competitiveness of the Canadian private digital technology sector, technological infrastructure based on the principles of data transparency and responsible artificial intelligence must be built out through public-private joint initiatives at a global level. Investment in digital development globally can address the technological demand for artificial intelligence and surveillance technologies and serve as a viable alternative to the Chinese DA model.

4. **Expand the scope of restrictions in Canada's State Immunity Act to include transnational repression.** Canada's legislation provides certain exceptions to the principle of state immunity as long as it is

consistent with the trends of restricting the scope of state immunity within the country. There is already an established precedent for criminalizing this type of foreign imposition as Canada has made similar provisions in the past. In 2012, the State Immunity Act was amended to allow foreign actors who committed or supported acts of terrorism in Canada to be subject to punishment under sections 83.02, 83.04, 83.18 and 83.23 of the Criminal Code. Adding transnational repression to the scope of restrictions for state immunity would allow both the Canadian government and victims of transnational repression to pursue legal action against their perpetrators.

5. **Develop a strategy to cultivate trust in democratic institutions in order to counter the spread of disinformation on cyber space**. The process of rebuilding trust in public institutions and civic discourse cannot be achieved exclusively by providing resources on how to identify inaccurate, false or unsustainable information. While offering cyber education is essential to building societal resilience to disinformation, providing credible information and finding ways to become more transparent with citizens on government communications will increase public resilience to disinformation. The Canadian government is already planning to establish a digital policy task force to position Canada as a digital economy leader and thus this proposed strategy to cultivate trust in democratic institutions and push back on authoritarianism can be part of this task force. Such an approach requires collaboration between relevant departments and agencies such as GAC, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Public Safety Canada, the Department of Justice, the Department of Canadian Heritage and stakeholder participation from other experts. The development of this strategy under the digital policy task force would serve as a fact-checking mechanism and help build institutional trust.

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Shaping Responsible AI Governance and GAC's Role in Regulating Lethal Autonomous Weapons

Sascha Simon, Jacob Storto-Ahearn, Fathima Bushra Zaheer and Nermeen Zia Islam

Issue

The advent of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) introduces severe and novel risks to human rights and in conflict, which must be addressed through international AI governance. Canada can kickstart the normative process of ensuring meaningful human control is maintained in remotely-controlled and autonomous weapons, to limit their uncontrolled proliferation and usage to safeguard human rights.

Background

What are LAWS?

LAWS are autonomous military systems that reduce and delegate the decision to kill to an algorithm trained through machine learning. This makes it possible for LAWS to complete an entire targeting cycle—selecting, tracking and engaging a target—without any human intervention (Sauer 2020). Enabling this degree of autonomy in a weapon's "critical functions" ("Views of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)" n.d.) has raised concerns about the ethical and technical threats created by LAWS and the risks they pose to human rights globally. There is a growing international movement to restrict the use of LAWS, primarily represented through the organization *Campaign to Stop Killer Robots* – consisting of 160 NGOs ("Killer Robots: Growing Support for a Ban" 2020).

However, the lack of existing regulation through a robust norms-based, political and legal framework affords Canada the opportunity to start a process leading towards the regulation of LAWS in military applications, while forging new—and strengthening existing—multilateral partnerships with like-minded governments and civil society organizations to protect human rights. Through Canada's influential role in negotiating the 1997 Ottawa Treaty, it has established credibility in regulating military technologies along humanitarian lines (Maslen and Herby 1998). Pursuing a similar political strategy in advancing the global effort on LAWS, Canada must spearhead the international governance of this AI technology, while upholding a commitment to human rights and democratic values.

Who is using LAWS?

LAWS have been used by several governments in active conflict. Azerbaijan used Israeli-supplied IAI Harpy drones against Armenia in 2020, which allowed autonomous drones to recognize targets and attack them, an ability that is described as fully autonomous by the weapon's manufacturer (*Stopping Killer Robots* 2020). Additionally, Israel has exported these drones to a growing list of countries including the United Arab Emirates, Chile, China, India, South Korea, and Turkey, many of which are now developing and exporting their own comparable systems (ibid). During Libya's civil war in 2020, a small swarm of Turkish Kargu-2 drones attacked soldiers without requiring data connectivity between the

operator and the munition, displaying a 'fire, forget and find' capability, the first incident capturing the attention of many international media outlets (UN. Panel of Experts Established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1973, 2021). Former Secretary of Defense of the U.S, Mark Esper, notes that Chinese manufacturer Ziyan has advertised a fully autonomous system, the Blowfish A3 helicopter drone, which has reportedly been exported to the Middle East (Sayler 2021).

Canada's Stance on LAWS

Canada was among the first group of countries to sign the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) when it opened for signature in 1981 (Global Affairs Canada 2017). The CCW is now the only international forum where LAWS are subject to negotiation (ibid). In December 2019, the federal government announced its position towards a potential ban on such systems for the first time through a ministerial mandate letter. Therein, the Prime Minister's office advised the Minister of Foreign Affairs to "advance international efforts to ban the development and use of fully autonomous weapons systems" ("ARCHIVED - Minister of Foreign Affairs Mandate Letter" n.d.).

Risks posed by LAWS

The risks posed by LAWS can be categorized into technical and ethical threats. Starting with the former, the most consequential risk is that of LAWS' proliferation, which is virtually guaranteed to happen in an exponential and uncontrollable manner once the technology becomes widely (financially) accessible (Horowitz and Fuhrmann 2017). LAWS are likely to spread through "technology diffusion", which is the omnidirectional spread from countless points of origins, brought about by dual-usage—the concept of using civilian hardware and technology (for example, self-driving vehicles or recreational drones) for military applications (Sauer 2020). The necessary hardware is commercially available and the software that enables autonomy can simply be copied and pasted. This allows for extremely easy co-option and access to previously inaccessible military capabilities, even to non-state actors. The intensity of how inexpensive remotely-controlled drones are, and their use in Ukraine, is a forbearer of what is to come, once they can fly and fight autonomously. Due to the superhuman speed of algorithmic decision-making, and their deliberately unpredictable design, LAWS usage will lead to significant and unintentional outcomes, accidents and perhaps irrevocable escalations in conflicts (Horowitz 2019). The massive cost reduction and significantly lowered physical risks to the user pose immensely strong incentives to drive the development and proliferation of LAWS forward (Sauer 2020). These operational benefits would not just fuel their diffusion globally, but also lower the threshold to use violence in times of conflict.

The ethical risks are focused on how LAWS can be (mis) used. LAWS enable select targeting of groups via a range of identifiers such as race, gender, ethnicity or any other pseudo-scientifically defined category (Wyatt 2020). While contemporary facial recognition technology sustains this, the algorithms and AI system underpinning LAWS remain brittle; they function along very narrow parameters on which they have been trained. Furthermore, computer systems inevitably have bugs and errors, adversaries may actively try to counter and interfere with LAWS and the complexity of reality surpasses any training simulation's parameters (Scharre 2016; Borrie 2016). Thus, mistakes and accidents are inevitable, and it is impossible for LAWS to adhere to principles of proportionality (AI cannot understand context), distinction (AI cannot reliably distinguish between civilian and combatant) and accountability (a machine cannot be held accountable) all foundational aspects of the Geneva Conventions (Scharre 2016)

International and Domestic Engagement Opportunities

Developing an international governance framework for the use and misuse of LAWS requires a multifaceted and interdisciplinary approach with international and domestic partners. The approach would ultimately position Canada as a global strategic partner and determine how, along with other global leaders, to best harness resources and expertise on the rules-based international stage.

International Governance Structures

The CCW serves as the only global forum to consult on LAWS. In November 2017, the CCW established the Group of Governmental Experts on Autonomous Weapon Systems to discuss the legal, ethical and technological dimensions of LAWS (*The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons – UNODA,* n.d.).

In addition to the CCW, AI, Defense and Economic forums have been identified as sites for engagement. For AI and defense, NATO's call for the *AI Partnership for Defense*, launched in September 2020, is a key forum for discussing the use of LAWS among allied nations in a military context ("AI Partnership for Defense Is a Step in the Right Direction – But Will Face Challenges" 2020). Canada can also engage further with NATO. The NATO Artificial Intelligence Strategy's principle of responsibility and accountability for AI technologies (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2022) can be built upon to advance the criticality of human control over LAWS' usage. These are key military forums to discuss the ethical and responsible use of LAWS among allied nations and work toward ensuring meaningful human control over their use. Both these forums enable Canada to engage with international partners and develop more coherent and ethical military-civil standards regarding the use of LAWS.

In 2020, the LAWS industry generated $11.56 billion (Allied Market Research 2021). By 2030, it is projected to reach $30.16 billion, with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.4% between 2021 and 2030 (Ibid). The economic dimension of LAWS in the AI space is set to grow significantly and therefore Canada should position itself in relevant forums to protect human rights in the face of rapid economic expansion of LAWS. The economic forum that Canada should engage with to this end is the US-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC). The TTC's commitment to safeguarding human rights in the face of rapidly emerging AI technologies is particularly exemplified in working group six, which is dedicated to the "misuse of technology threatening security and human rights" ("Digital in the EU-US Trade and Technology Council | Shaping Europe's Digital Future." n.d.) Engagement with the TTC is a pathway where Canada can foster discussion on the ethical and responsible use of AI, which is directly linked to LAWS and therefore must be considered. A particular focus ought to be on the dual-use aspects of civilian technology to limit unfettered development and proliferation of AI technology.

Domestic Engagement Opportunities

Nationally, there are significant opportunities for interdepartmental partnerships. There are two key dimensions for engagement: military and security. GAC must partner with National Defense Canada, the Canadian Armed Forces and Canadian Security Intelligence Services to develop key military, security, and defense strategies that can provide insights for the ethical and responsible use of LAWS and ensure human responsibility over their use. This can remedy the gap in understanding and approach when it comes to LAWS. For example, National Defense, in their policy document "Strong, Secure, Engaged," states the importance of "appropriate human involvement" in military operations that use lethal force capabilities (Canadian Armed Forces and National Defense 2017). However, this is not defined and there is opportunity to do so.

Recommendations

1. **Canada shall further build and strengthen their international rules-based approach in all relevant global forums, namely the** AI Partnership for Defense **with the United States and the** United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons **with global partners.** The consensus-based model of the CCW poses strict limitations on creating binding legal instruments around the ethical use of LAWS. However, the unique role of the CCW in providing broad representation of expertise—through the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE)—and a venue to place state parties in conversation with one another on the issue is invaluable. We, therefore, recognize the global importance of the CCW as the epicenter of the global discussion on LAWS and strongly believe that Canada should continue to actively participate in this forum going forward.

2. **Canada should open parallel pathways to work alongside the CCW, taking advantage of the broad consensus within it and circumventing its procedural deadlock, without abandoning the UN CCW framework. Canada should host a summit with like-minded states among the CCW's state parties (a majority) to consult on a way forward on the international regulation of LAWS with a coalition of the willing and based on the GGE recommendations.** Canada can field the credibility it gained by starting the process that led to the Ottawa Treaty to do the same with LAWS now. During the CCW consultations on anti-personnel mines in the 1990s when the procedure was stuck and the result inadequate, Canada took initiative to host a meeting with those states willing to go ahead with a ban

amongst themselves. Canada is uniquely placed to leverage its (past) position to do so again, and it is in Canada's interest to pursue a similar path and break the current deadlock.

3. **Canada should unilaterally declare a positive self-obligation to never field or develop LAWS without meaningful human control over the decision to kill, and to use that statement to begin a global norm building process with the end goal of having some, rather than no, limitation on the use of LAWS.** Canada should aim to influence like-minded states to declare the same or a similar self-obligation to kickstart the normative process of establishing meaningful human control over LAWS, meaning that a human shall always be involved in the critical functions of a (lethal) targeting cycle (selecting and engaging the target). This would prevent Canada and other states from being deadlocked in endless theoretical and philosophical discussions pertaining to the legal definition of autonomy, automation and LAWS, and instead apply a functionalist approach of norm building. The establishment of a legally binding instrument, such as a treaty, is a long-term goal that should not be used as a starting point or a requirement before *any* other action can be taken.

4. **Global Affairs Canada should appoint a special envoy tasked with attending, co-signing, and presenting the Canadian perspective at all relevant military and defense forums, including convening and chairing the aforementioned special summit**. This envoy should work with national security agencies such as National Defense Canada, the Canadian Armed Forces and Canadian Security Intelligence Services, as well as relevant industries to develop a coherent national strategy that encompasses military, security, and defense considerations and that defines and states the necessity of ethical, responsible and human-centered use of LAWS. This should be done in tandem with a unitary positive self-obligation as a component of the Canadian strategy to project a strong national position and build and diffuse norms with like-minded states.

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International Assistance

Queering Canadian Development Policy

Anya Johnson Poon, Chloé Currie and Shaza Ahmed

Issue

Canada should mirror its domestic progress on support and inclusion based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) in its international assistance policy, to combat the marginalization of LGBTQ2I+ individuals globally, and look for opportunities to lead the advancement of human rights, protection and inclusion of LGBTQ2I+ individuals and communities internationally.

Background

A World Hostile to LGBTQ2I+ Rights

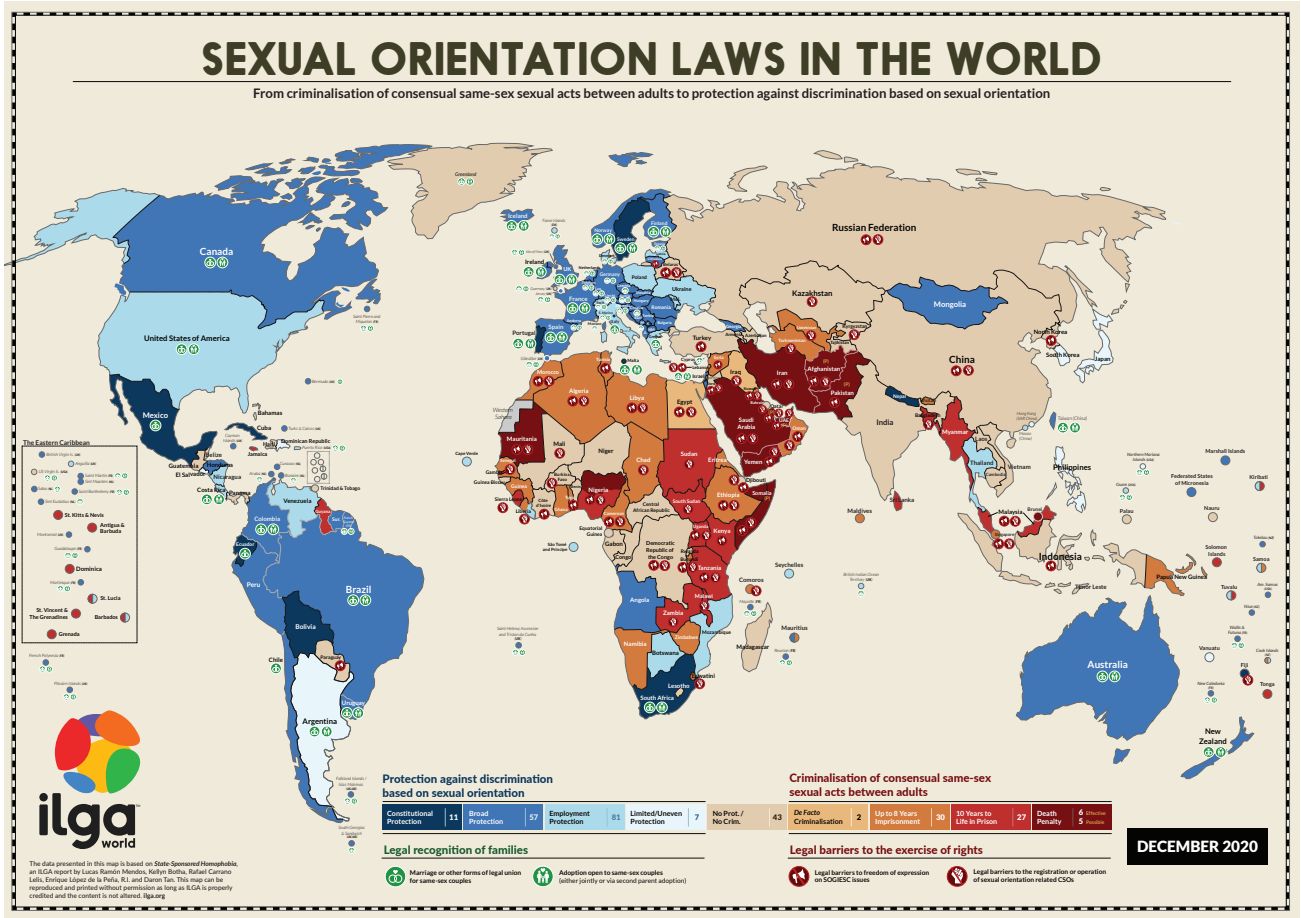
Homophobia and transphobia are pervasive throughout much of the Global South, especially in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This discrimination is seen both socially and legally across the world, with a significant number of restrictive anti-LGBTQ2I+ laws existing in the Global South. As a result, multiple states within the Global South remain some of the most dangerous areas for LGBTQ2I+ individuals to reside. Currently, there are 124 countries with no legal penalties for consenting adults engaging in same-sex sexual activities, but 71 countries that criminalize consensual same-sex sexual activities, and 11 countries where it is punishable by death (Human Dignity Trust 2022).

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) world map [Figure 1] outlines sexual orientation laws across the globe. The map represents these laws on a scale from criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual acts between adults (indicated by the red hues) to protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation (indicated by the blue hues). This map provides a visual representation of the divide between states in the Global North and Global South with regard to LGBTQ2I+ rights and criminalization.

LGBTQ2I+ discrimination in the Global South, particularly countries on the Asian and African continents, dates back to their colonization by European powers. For example, in the mid-1800s, British colonizers created several criminal codes to be used around the world. Section 377 of the British colonial penal code criminalized all sexual acts "against the order of nature" (Human Rights Watch 2021). Currently, seven countries still uphold Section 377 within their penal code: Bangladesh, Jamaica, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, and Sri Lanka. Canada must work with these states to repeal Section 377 to ensure the safety of LGBTQ2I+ individuals within these hostile environments.

Discrimination against LGBTQ2I+ people does not occur solely in the Global South, but rather takes a different form in the Global North, with different discriminatory laws and practices. As a former colony and a current Western power, Canada is in the unique position to provide aid to states with restrictive LGBTQ2I+ laws in the Global South (Moreau 2017). Canada invests in multiple programs within the Global South that support LGBTQ2I+ populations. These programs highlight the Global North's influence on the Global South's domestic policies, which serves as a controversial point due to the history of colonialism impacting LGBTQ2I+ discrimination.

Figure 1: Current Sexual Orientation Laws in the World, 2020



Data source: ILGA 2020

The Plight of Isolation: The Effects of COVID-19 on LGBTQ2I+ Communities

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the violence, social disparities, criminalization, demonization, and pathologization that LGBTQ2I+ people already face (Madrigal-Borloz 2020). Lockdowns have increased the risk of violence for LGBTQ2I+ people, forcing them to stay in close proximity to disrespectful and potentially violent family members (ibid.). LGBTQ2I+ individuals who live alone are more prone to isolation and lack of support, as they are less likely to reach out for institutional support for fear of discrimination or harassment. Likewise, complicated family dynamics, including family rejection, limited access to assisted reproductive technologies and discrimination in adoption processes, result in a lack of younger generations to support aging LGBTQ2I+ people (ibid.). The lack of social and institutional recognition of different family formations impacts the ability of a chosen family to offer the same support as a biological family, leaving many LGBTQ2I+ people without the support from their biological family that their peers receive (ibid.).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated the cycles of exclusion and poverty that LGBTQ2I+ people already face. As women face increased negative social, political and economic impacts of COVID-19, so too do LGBTQ2I+ people (Al Ali 2020). The pivot to online, in COVID times, has revealed just how critical safe online spaces are for LGBTQ2I+ individuals, and highlighted the digital divide that prevents many people from accessing these spaces (World Bank Group 2020; Madrigal-Borloz

2020). Indeed they are sometimes the only queer spaces that individuals have access to, and are also pivotal in providing a space for people with disabilities to meet their social needs. Therefore, online spaces can address the intersectional needs of LGBTQ2I+ people with disabilities.

The Unbinding Nature of Global LGBTQ2I+ Rights

There is currently no binding international human rights law codifying the rights of LGBTQ2I+ individuals and communities. Even so, there are multiple normative frameworks in place to ensure the support and inclusion of LGBTQ2I+ people. For example, the Yogyakarta Principles articulate the unique rights of LGBTQ2I+ individuals across the full spectrum of human rights. Multiple states endorsed the 2007 Yogyakarta Principles document which contains recommendations to governments, intergovernmental institutions, and civil society to promote the rights of SOGIESC minorities (Human Rights Watch 2008). In 2017, Yogyakarta added ten additional principles emphasizing state and legal protections, as well as the right to bodily and mental integrity (Yogyakarta Principles Organization 2017).

There are several other international frameworks regarding the human rights of LGBTQ2I+ individuals created through the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council. These frameworks include the advocacy of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the explicit inclusion of LGBTQ2I+ rights within the UN Universal Periodic Review. In 2016, the UN established the mandate of Independent Expert on the protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, otherwise known as the IE SOGI. In short, despite their contentious nature in much of the world, there are well-defined and well-established norms for advancing the rights of LGBTQ21+ individuals and communities. Canada, through its international assistance programming, is well-placed to lead on this issue. But so much more could be done.

The Absence of Substantial SOGIESC Programming

Although Canada has been among world leaders concerning the human rights of LGBTQ2I+ people, Canada still has room to improve (Cortez, Arzinos and De la Medina Soto 2021; Global Philanthropy Project 2020). Currently, Global Affairs Canada lists 5,620 international projects, only 18 of which relate to, or even mention, LGBTQ2I+ communities (Global Affairs Canada, n.d.). This represents 0.003% of Canadian programming. Of these 18 projects, only 15 are operational (ibid.). Six of these 15 projects focus on LGBTQ2I+ people's rights and protection exclusively, while two of these projects explicitly focus on LGBTQ2I+ people and women (ibid.). Of the remaining projects, six list LGBTQ2I+ people among their targeted communities or potential beneficiaries, along with an equal emphasis on other groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, women and girls, and ethnic and religious minorities. The final project makes no mention of LGBTQ2I+ people, but still comes up in the search results when filtered for "LGBT" (ibid.). Moreover, Canada's current international assistance programming aimed at addressing support and inclusion based on SOGIESC focuses on receptive (blue) countries, whereas funding to non-receptive (red) countries only passively includes support for, and inclusion of, the LGBTQ2I+ community (Government of Canada n.d.). Canada is funding programs mainly in receptive (blue) countries; however, the threat to these communities is greatest in the red zones on the map. There is a tremendous opportunity for even more direct and targeted funding to meet LGBTQ2I+ needs.

Towards a World Less Hostile: Opportunities for Canadian Leadership

Canada is an early adopter of national measures strengthening LGBTQ2I+ rights, through the addition of the gender neutral option on passports and the criminalization of conversion therapy practices (Department of Justice Canada 2021) (Government of Canada 2019). With these advancements nationally, Canada is well placed to champion them globally. Canada can encourage and aid receptive allies to adopt these measures domestically. The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) is an intergovernmental body and mechanism "consisting of 42 member states committed to protecting the rights of LGBTI persons" (Equal Rights Coalition, n.d.). Canada is deeply involved in this organization, having previously been the state co-chair with Chile. This organization is an appropriate body for Canada to use to identify receptive allies and encourage national advancements in LGBTQ2I+ rights among those already committed to the cause. The ERC also presents an opportunity for Canada to consult civil society partners and identify areas where they may require more support through spearheading a joint task force on barriers for calls for proposals. Due

to the hostility surrounding LGBTQ2I+ rights, many governments do not recognize LGBTQ2I+ civil society partners and bar them from official registration (Outright Action International, n.d.).

Alongside advocating for these measures, Canada should substantiate its own commitment through increased LGBTQ2I+ programming. With non-receptive countries, Canada can still help LGBTQ2I+ communities indirectly through other development initiatives that simultaneously allow for expression and safe spaces. One such initiative exists in the domain of strengthened broadband and internet connectivity to allow individuals to create communities, find support, and have digital safe spaces (United Nations General Assembly 2020, 4; Lucero 2017, 117; Scheuerman, Branham, and Hamidi 2018, 1). Although a stronger broadband and internet connection is expected to benefit everyone, including LGBTQ2I+ individuals, GAC can ensure that SOGIESC minorities are able to find these digital safe spaces through continuing to work with civil society partners that already help to implement projects on the ground. These partners are well positioned to curate the spaces and direct communities to them (Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice 2019).

Another area where Canada has made progress in LGBTQ2I+ development is through the recognition and inclusion of LGBTQ2I+ rights in its guiding Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) (Global Affairs Canada 2021). As a next step, Canada needs to mainstream SOGIESC into non-LGBTQ2I+ programming to ensure compliance with the do no harm principle (Aylward and Brown 2020, 327). The gender-based analysis (GBA+) tool can be reworked to include evaluation of impacts on SOGIESC minorities (Government of Canada 2021). In addition, each community within the LGBTQ2I+ umbrella has different needs and is impacted in different ways. For example, the visibility of gay relationships subjects some men to forced anal examinations, while the invisibility of lesbian relationships prevents some couples from expressing their relationships (Human Rights Watch 2018). With transgender people, this visibility is heightened. As a result, there exists a tension between broadening the definition to be as inclusive as possible, and targeted programming. To overcome this tension, the distinct needs and impacts of sub communities within the LGBTQ2I+ umbrella should be considered in the initial stages of program design via GBA+. Moreover, Canada should assess these needs and impacts across all GAC programming, not just those focused on LGBTQ2I+ development, to ensure there is no additional harm to this already vulnerable community.

With these acts, Canada can make a significant and systematic impact towards a world less hostile to LGBTQ2I+ people. The recommendations below take into account the sensitivities surrounding LGBTQ2I+ acceptance and offer a feasible strategy to support inclusion based on SOGIESC in Canada's international assistance policy and programming.

Recommendations

1. **Re-evaluate all international assistance programming to ensure that it is LGBTQ2I+ friendly and meets the distinct needs of SOGIESC minorities.** Although GAC revamped its GBA evaluation to include intersectionality with the addition of the plus, SOGIESC minorities are not *explicitly* recognized within the analysis. GAC should also acknowledge the non-monolithic nature of the LGBTQ2I+ community; therefore, GBA+ and FIAP should include explicit evaluation measures to meet their individual community needs. In addition, officials should be trained to ensure the representation of LGBTQ2I+ needs.

2. **Substantiate Canada's commitment to LGBTQ2I+ rights through increased programming**. As it stands, Canada only has 15 operational projects that mention LGBTQ2I+ rights and fewer that explicitly target LGBTQ2I+ development. By 2025, 10% of all projects Canada funds should incorporate explicit LGBTQ2I+ development within its programming. This target should be integrated into global COVID-19 recovery, as the pandemic exacerbated the cycles of exclusion and poverty faced by LGBTQ2I+ individuals.

3. **Advocate for receptive allies (blue states) to adopt national measures such as conversion therapy bans, gender X designation on personal identification, aid for LGBTQ2I+ refugees, and work with non-receptive (red) states to repeal Section 377 laws.** Canada's leadership in LGBTQ2I+ inclusion is an opportunity to pursue these policies in its feminist international assistance policy. Promoting receptive (blue) states to adopt these policies would ensure they strengthen LGBTQ2I+ rights domestically.

Further, encouraging non-receptive (red) states to repeal Section 377 laws to significantly reduce the criminalization and prosecution of LGBTQ2I+ people in order to work towards a world less hostile.

4. **Work with the ERC on joint efforts to consult civil society partners on barriers to accessing calls for proposals.** Many LGBTQ2I+ organizations are unrecognized and unregistered in non-receptive (red) countries, so Canada cannot partner with them directly. The ERC encompasses a range of intergovernmental bodies in both blue and red states dedicated to protecting the rights of LGBTQ2I+ individuals, therefore the creation of a joint task force between GAC and the ERC would ensure programming aligns with the needs of recipient communities.

5. **Use infrastructure development in non-receptive (red) countries with LGBTQ2I+ communities in mind, such as strengthening broadband and internet connectivity to create digital safe spaces.** In many states, it is not safe for individuals to express their sexual orientation and/or gender identity for fear of descrimination and violence. COVID-19 has demonstrated that digital safe spaces are crucial to community connection and support. The digital divide between the Global North and the Global South presents an opportunity for Canada to strengthen broadband and internet connectivity and for GAC to work with civil society partners to increase access to digital safe spaces for LGBTQ2I+ individuals and communities.

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Canada's International Assistance and the Disability-Food Insecurity-Conflict Nexus

Laura Manners, Saya Soma, Alma Stafa and Sarah Thoutenhoofd

Issue

At a time of heightened global uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, Canada has an unprecedented opportunity to advance the rights of persons with disabilities through its international assistance programming, particularly with respect to the nexus of disability, food insecurity and conflict.

Background

Social protection measures for persons with disabilities have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (ESDC 2020). While persons with disabilities are already one of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in increased burdens and deeper marginalization. Nearly one billion persons with disabilities (which amounts to 15% of the world's population) have experienced and will continue to experience negative physical, economic and social impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (United Nations 2020). Moreover, disability often intersects with other vulnerable identity factors, such as gender and age. To illustrate this point, one in five women is likely to experience disability during her life, while 46% of persons over 60 years of age have a disability (United Nations 2020), and only one in five persons with significant disabilities living in the Global South has access to disability benefits (UNPRPD 2021). Moreover, aid programming that specifically targets persons with disabilities is massively underfunded. According to the OECD's Official Development Assistance (ODA) data, only 0.3% of all ODA funding was spent with the principal objective of disability inclusion in 2019 (OECD 2022).

The number of persons with disabilities is only going to grow as a result of pandemic-induced global food insecurity and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Specifically, global food insecurity has risen dramatically in the past two years, greatly affecting persons with disabilities, particularly in developing countries where food insecurity is already disproportionately high (IDRC 2021b). In addition, the international disability community faces a massive humanitarian crisis as the war in Ukraine unfolds (European Disability Forum 2022). The time for bold leadership is now.

Canadian Leadership

Historically, Canada has been a clear leader in international disability advocacy. In 1992, Canada organized and hosted the first International Conference of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities. Canada was instrumental in hosting the Mine Ban Convention in 1997, notable for being the first international arms treaty to explicitly recognise the rights of persons with disabilities (Naggi and Frigerio 2007). Both Conservative and Liberal governments have shown bipartisan support for the rights of persons with disability through initiatives such as the Muskoka Initiative on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health in 2010 and the implementation of the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) in 2017. The Government of

Canada also co-founded the Alliance of Champions for Mental Health and Wellbeing in 2018, which supports global mental health initiatives related to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Human Rights Council, and the World Health Organization (WHO) (Public Health Agency of Canada 2018). More recently, in 2021, Prime Minister Trudeau announced a ministerial mandate to provide greater assistance to persons with disabilities in developing countries (Trudeau 2021). Most recently, Canada participated in the second Global Disability Summit which highlighted Canada's renewed commitments to support local disability rights organizations in developing countries through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and advance disability inclusion in the paid and unpaid care agenda (Global Disability Summit 2022).

Still, Canada could do more. Though Canada's FIAP asserts "an approach based on human rights" and purports to take into account all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on ability, the FIAP does not include a disability lens. It is noteworthy that the FIAP does not mention the terms "disability" or "persons with disabilities" at all (Global Affairs Canada 2017). Moreover, Global Affairs Canada's initiative, the CFLI, aims to provide funding for international "small scale, high-impact" projects in over 125 countries (Global Affairs Canada 2015). Yet, despite priorities including gender equality and human rights, the CFLI does not include disability advocacy as a priority. Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) also fails to prioritize or mention disability in its new 10-year plan "Strategy 2030" (IDRC 2021a). In sum, Canada's current international assistance programs i) insufficiently acknowledge disability as a priority and ii) lack recognition and funding for persons with disabilities. But by ensuring all of Canada's international assistance includes a human rights-focused response that identifies persons with disabilities as a priority – specifically in issue areas such as food insecurity and conflict – Canada can fulfill its commitment to providing international assistance that is rights-based and inclusive.

CRPD and HRBA to Mainstream Disability

As a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Canada has an obligation to not only adopt, but mainstream a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to disability in its international assistance programming. The CRPD adopts the social model of disability conceptualization, meaning disability is not to be understood as an inherent lack of ability in individuals with impairments, but rather, a result of shortcomings in the society that fails to remove the socio-environmental barriers that disable them. To remove such barriers, the CRPD explicitly outlines key areas of concern that all States Parties must recognize and incorporate into their decision-making, four of which are particularly relevant to Canada's international assistance programming:

- Article 32 recognizes the significance of international cooperation in supporting national-level efforts to remove disabling barriers for those State Parties that may lack the capacity to do so. Accordingly, Canada must ensure that all international assistance programmes are "inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities" (CRPD, Article 32 *a*), while also increasing targeted efforts to assist developing countries' accessibility capacity-building (CRPD Article 32 *b*).
- Article 28 recognizes "the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food" and the need for State Parties to "take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability" (CRPD Article 28 1). As such, Canada's food production and nutrition-related international assistance initiatives must ensure appropriate steps are taken so persons with disabilities have full access to the initiatives' benefits.
- Article 11 recognizes that "States Parties shall take […] all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict" (CRPD Article 11). Thus, Canada's international assistance in conflict-affected areas or for conflict-affected individuals must uphold this article by establishing disability inclusive emergency responses such as establishing accessible settlements for those fleeing conflict.
- Article 31 obligates all States Parties to collect appropriately disaggregated statistical and research data in order to identify existing barriers and "formulate and implement policies" that remove such barriers.

In short, Canada should further advance disability inclusivity in the areas highlighted by the first three articles – namely, disability-related international assistance, food security, and conflict – by assisting disability-related data collection (as outlined by the fourth article) in each area and at the intersection of the three.

Canadian International Assistance and the Disability-Food Insecurity-Conflict Nexus

As mentioned above, the CRPD recognizes that, both independently and through mutual reinforcement, crises such as food insecurity and conflict act as significant barriers for persons with disabilities in developing countries to enjoy their fundamental human rights. Thus, there is a critical opportunity for Canada to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities by mainstreaming accessibility capacity-building in food security and peacebuilding international assistance initiatives.

According to the International Disability Alliance (2018), the links between disability and food insecurity are complex and bidirectional. While food insecurity can lead to disability through inadequate living conditions, malnutrition, and a lack of access to healthcare services, disability can also lead to food insecurity through a lack of employment opportunities, education, and access to social services and assistive technology (IDA 2018). Globally, approximately 2.3 billion people suffer from some form of food insecurity (UNHCR 2020). Among these populations, persons with disabilities and their households experience a greater risk of both hunger and malnutrition and face significant barriers to engaging in the food production sector (UNHCR 2020). In developing countries, persons with disabilities also often face much greater levels of stigma and discrimination, making them disproportionately vulnerable to food insecurity (IDA 2018). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the SPOON Foundation are seeking to address this by advocating to make nutrition programs, services, and policies inclusive of the nutritional needs of persons with disabilities in developing countries. However, Canada's international development efforts facilitated through the IDRC, for example, continuously fail to address the nexus of disability and food insecurity. Moreover, women and girls with disabilities in developing countries are particularly food insecure despite 79% of the agricultural workforce being made up of women and girls (Global Affairs Canada 2017). That said, there are also very few humanitarian interventions in place that work to address this discrepancy and enable women and girls with disabilities to make contributions to food security within their communities. Canada can therefore play a key role in strengthening the agency of persons with disabilities – specifically women and girls with disabilities – within the food sector in developing countries through inclusive and rights-based food security programming.

Similarly, the stigma towards persons with disabilities often results in a disproportionate impact on persons with disabilities in conflict settings (IDA 2018). Despite the disproportionate impact of conflict on persons with disabilities, their needs in humanitarian responses reflect that they are often neglected in disaster planning and response (Commonwealth of Australia 2015). During the stage of active conflict, persons with disabilities may be targets of cluster killing or simply disproportionately affected by the dangers of immediate conflict. Women and girls with disabilities are specifically labelled as "easy targets" by perpetrators of sexual violence (Ortoleva 2017). When fleeing conflict, persons with disabilities may themselves feel or be regarded by others as a burden to their caretakers or community by slowing down their migration journey (Human Rights Watch 2019). Persons with disabilities in conflict, particularly those in poverty, depend on their social network to ensure their safety and ability to flee conflict (Pisani & Grech 2017). This indicates the need for development strategies to ensure the safe evacuation of persons with disabilities which does not disproportionately jeopardize their own and their caregiver's safety. Furthermore, conflict plays a central role in the injuries or traumatic experiences contributing to individuals being made disabled. For instance, increased restrictions enacted by states to secure borders from migrants and refugees have led to migration routes escaping conflict zones becoming increasingly inaccessible for persons with disabilities. Dangerous conditions may even actively disable individuals fleeing conflict zones (Pisani & Grech 2017). Finally, the post-conflict reconstruction phase is an imperative period of opportunity to develop more inclusive standards and include persons with disabilities in the reconstruction process. This period not only allows for persons with disabilities to receive justice, but it also provides an opportunity to set up the foundation for subsequent paths of a disability inclusive society which become increasingly difficult to alter over time (Power & Close 2012).

Furthermore, the nexus of disability, food insecurity and conflict remains an elusive and largely unexplored issue. On the one hand, lack of food and rises in the price of food have been the source of many past and current conflicts around the world (World Bank Group 2010). On the other hand, conflict can cause severe disruptions to economic activities, resulting in food shortages that threaten the livelihoods of entire populations. Food insecurity and conflict are thus mutually reinforcing issues that disproportionately impact already vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities. However, a lack of data on the nexus of disability, food insecurity and conflict continues to inhibit the ability of governments to provide inclusive and human rights-based international assistance.

The February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine has intensified the global food crisis by interrupting the planting, harvesting, and exporting of Russia's and Ukraine's major crops (Tazrouti 2022). These include goods such as wheat, cereal, cooking oil, and meat. This has led to an unprecedented surge of 19.7% in global wheat prices in March 2022 and created shortages for those reliant on Russia and Ukraine's exports (Ahmed 2022). Keeping in mind that Russia and Ukraine account for approximately one third of global wheat exports, the World Bank predicts that should this conflict continue, hundreds of millions more people around the world will be pushed into poverty and malnutrition (BBC 2022). Vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities will be among those hit the hardest by these shortages, as they are already disproportionately impacted by food insecurity.

Additionally, of the estimated 2.7 million persons with disabilities living in Ukraine, many are now at significant additional risk as a result of the war (Clifford 2022). As the conflict continues, Canada must prepare for an increased number of persons being made disabled during the conflict by exposure to traumatic events and injuries that result in mental and physical disabilities. Current support systems are insufficient for persons with disabilities; as the population of persons with disabilities increases due to conflict, already-burdened support systems will begin to fail. Multiple reports have shown Russian troops actively targeting centres housing persons with disabilities (Clifford 2022). An NGO based in Ukraine, Fight for Right Ukraine, (2022) has called for the urgency to develop inclusive humanitarian responses and collaboration with refugee organizations and persons with disabilities organizations immediately. Given that critical information regarding safety and evacuation is rarely circulated in accessible formats, persons with disabilities have faced extreme difficulties fleeing active conflict zones, which has often resulted in abandonment (Clifford 2022). Despite the significant barriers persons with disabilities face, they play an instrumental role in the overall wellbeing and diversity of their communities (UN 2006). Given this, and their right to an adequate standard of living, it is imperative that Canada acknowledge persons with disabilities as rightful beneficiaries of all humanitarian intervention. Persons with disabilities are between two to four times more likely to die or be injured during emergencies or disasters than others as a result of the lack of planning and accessible assistance (Frost 2020). These deaths are preventable. Humanitarian relief and development programmes must ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind and are not the victims of non-inclusive disaster relief programs.

Recommendations

Taking into consideration the various challenges associated with the Disability-Food Insecurity-Conflict Nexus, we recommend that GAC:

1. **Mainstream disability in Canada's international assistance by developing a guidance note explicitly highlighting the interconnection of the FIAP and persons with disabilities through an HRBA.** In accordance with the Article 32 of the CRPD, Canada must ensure that its international assistance policies are "inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities" (CRPD, Article 32 *a*). A guidance note in accordance with the FIAP should be developed which i) explicitly uses the terms "disability" and "persons with disabilities" in order to increase recognition of disability in international assistance policy, ii) provides an in-depth analysis of the intersection of gender equality with disability accommodation, and iii) identifies the importance of facilitating the human rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. This guidance note should be developed using the UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (IASC 2019) and the WHO's Community-Based Rehabilitation Guideline (WHO 2010).

2. **Fund more disability-targeted initiatives through the CFLI.** GAC has committed to "supporting local disability rights organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives" (Global Disability Summit 2022). To achieve this goal while making disability more visible in Canada's international assistance operational policy framework, GAC should add "inclusivity of persons with disabilities" to the list of its "Priorities" pertaining to the selection of local initiatives to fund, as well as to the list of "Thematic Priorities" for each country's "Calls for Proposals" (Global Affairs Canada 2015). While disability inclusivity should always be considered for initiatives targeting other existing priorities - particularly those relating food security and peacebuilding in accordance with CRPD Articles 28 and 11 - explicitly including disability-related issues in the CFLI's priority policy facilitates mainstreaming of disability in Canada's international assistance.

3. **Fund research conducted in and for developing countries relating to the nexus of disability and food insecurity.** A lack of data on persons with disabilities, their needs, and the barriers they face in developing countries continues to impact Canada's ability to plan and deliver inclusive humanitarian interventions and implement the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2: Zero Hunger. Disaggregated data collection relating to the intersection of disability with other vulnerable identities and issues areas such as food insecurity is thus needed. GAC can facilitate this by funding participatory research projects in developing countries that align with the specific targets and indicators of Goal 2: Zero Hunger. These projects can be carried out in partnership with local researchers, NGOs such as SPOON and other governmental departments such as the IDRC's Climate Resilient Food Systems division. Such data collection should prioritize accessibility and allow local persons with disabilities to assist in setting critical research objectives. GAC should also ensure specific provisions for those who identify as women and/or other marginalized identities.

4. **Canada should ensure all humanitarian programs accurately identify and collect data on the number of persons with disabilities in conflict zones**. In accordance with Article 31 of the CRPD and GAC's Global Disability Summit commitments, Canada should facilitate the collection of statistical and research data to ensure more effective policies that support persons with disabilities in all international development programming. Canada may seek to cooperate with organizations such as the UNHCR to identify and register persons with disabilities in displaced peoples' settlements, such as refugee camps.

5. **Fund initiatives targeting the nexus of disability, food insecurity and conflict.** Prioritize initiatives that are already established in developing countries. Strengthen the capability of persons with disabilities to exercise greater influence over their food systems through programs such as the SPOON Foundation. Renew funding for global Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH) following the structure of Canada's Muskoka Initiative. Support persons with disabilities in active conflict zones by collaborating with Fight for Right Ukraine.

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Global Skills Mobility Partnerships: An Opportunity for Canada

Zainab Al-Jaiashi, Ruth Farkas, Rena Harrison and Luke Lustig-Bruce

Issue

The following brief explores the use of Global Skills Mobility Partnerships (GSMPs) to address Canada's trade and development goals through harnessing human capital to build capacity internationally while meeting domestic demand.

Background

The Canadian economy is experiencing shortages of labour across a variety of sectors. These shortages are particularly acute in the healthcare system, leading to increased wait times, fewer patients receiving care in a timely manner, and an overall efficiency decrease in the healthcare system. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these labour shortages with increased workloads on an understaffed health system, causing many nurses to leave the profession (Boomah, Callen and Cruz 2021).

GSMPs should be used as a solution for addressing the nursing labour shortage in Canada and could eventually be applied to shortages in other sectors. When designed properly, GSMPs can alleviate shortages in the health care system by sourcing skills internationally through migration (ibid.).

These partnerships are bilateral or multilateral agreements between states that support migrants to gain the skills and training necessary to be recognized in a receiving country. GSMPs, therefore, support the mobility and legal migration of newly trained professionals into the labour force of the host country. The programs are designed to

Global Skills Mobility Partnerships and Triple Win Models

Receiving Countries

- gain skilled workers, affordable training, and easy recruitment.

Sending Countries

- gain a greater pool of skilled workers, paid-for training, improved training and education institutions, and benefit from remittances

Migrants

- gain subsidized training, greater mobility, and appropriate skill sets

Information Source: Van de Pas and Mans 2018

allow participants to remain in Canada or return to their home country to contribute to their local labour market.

Thus, receiving countries would gain skilled workers, affordable training and easy recruitment. Sending countries would gain a greater pool of skilled workers and paid-for training, and benefit from remittances. Finally, migrants would benefit from subsidized training, greater rights and mobility, and appropriate training, with the potential to apply for permanent resident status and enjoy all associated rights thereafter.

The World Health Organization's (WHO's) Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel states that a GSMP should consider all involved stakeholders, creating a win for receiving countries, sending countries and the migrants involved (WHO 2010). Thus, Canada has the responsibility to work within the code and use it as a guideline in developing a pilot project that successfully addresses the concern of "brain drain" and labour shortages in sending countries, as well as ensuring that the rights and interests of migrants are respected.

Canada already has a framework for skills mobility within the existing Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship policy. However, the Global Talent Stream falls short of the triple win objectives that GMSPs seek to achieve. Global Affairs Canada (GAC) has an obligation to build strategic partnerships and reinforce international efforts to ensure global access to health interventions in the fight against COVID (Office of the Prime Minister 2021a). GSMPs provide an opportunity to collaborate with new and existing partners to build a more prosperous and resilient world for everyone.

Case Studies

Analysis of current successful examples of GSMPs internationally informs the key considerations on how GAC could develop labour mobility programs in Canada.

Germany's Triple Win Model

In 2013, the Federal Employment Agency and International Placement Services (ZAV) and German Association for International Cooperation (GIZ) commissioned a program for the "sustainable recruitment of nurses from a third country for employment in Germany" (GIZ 2022). They developed country partnerships with nations that have a surplus of well-trained nurses that were underutilized in local labour markets. This included Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, the Philippines and Tunisia. Through cooperation with ZAV and GIZ, the program has well-coordinated management of the labour migration process. The program has seen 4,900 nurses placed with German employers in clinics, care homes and out-patient services, with highly rated employer satisfaction (ibid.).

The program was designed with a monitoring process that verifies that all nurses in the program have high professional qualifications. The pre-employment process follows four steps:

1. Recruitment and selection of candidates
2. Language course/orientation training
3. Professional preparation
4. Offering job vacancies to preselected candidates (ibid.).

There is a further four-step process once candidates secure employment:

1. Support of departure process
2. Support of integration process
3. Support of the recognition process
4. Monitoring (ibid.).

Each of the steps in the process is clearly defined with roles and responsibilities effectively allocated. The key to building successful GSMPs is careful management and planning in each step of the process and adequate partnerships to facilitate them. This partnership successfully addresses Germany's labour needs and provides high quality training and opportunities for migrants while contributing to training capacity and partly offsetting the consequences of high unemployment rates in sending countries.

The Australia-Pacific Training Coalition

The Australia-Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) was created in 2006 with the aim of linking skill creation directly with labour mobility (Chand, Clemens and Dempster 2021). The program is funded by Australia's Agency for International Development, and partners with Pacific Island states such as Fiji, Papua New

Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to offer Australian-recognized credentials to students in member states (Clemens, Michael, Colum Graham and Stephen Howes 2015). The program provides additional training and preparation for students wishing to migrate to Australia. The APTC has taught almost 17,000 students in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing and construction (Center for Global Development n.d.).

The APTC has a dual-track model; each track results in Australian-recognized credentials following successful completion (Chand, Clemens and Dempster 2021). The first is the domestic track, which offers students in member states the chance to gain Australian credentials in accordance with employer preference, thereby enhancing skill development in sending countries and avoiding the brain drain effect that is associated with other types of skills mobility agreements. The second track is the labour mobility track, which consists of students who have expressed an intention to migrate within five years of enrolment and offers these students additional training in preparation for work abroad, including language training (Dempster and Toy 2020).

Canada-CARICOM Skills Training for the Green Economy Scholarships

The Canada-CARICOM Skills Training for the Green Economy Scholarships provide students from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states with short-term exchange opportunities at publicly funded Canadian colleges and institutes, including Concordia University and Mohawk College (EduCanada 2022).

The universities and colleges are responsible for the education and training necessary for program participants to gain the accreditation needed to join the labour force back home (ibid.). At the end of this program, students are required to return to their sending country with the new skills gained.

This scholarship was created with the intention of advancing the sustainable development of CARICOM countries while creating stronger ties with post-secondary institutions in Canada. The program is funded by GAC and Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan), a network for colleges and institutions nationally and internationally, as it aligns with their interest in advancing skills mobility partnerships internationally.

Partnerships with post-secondary institutions strengthen the skills training for the GSMP pilot project to ensure a high-quality education that meets Canadian nursing standards. These partnerships also ensure that participants receive accreditation from both the sending and receiving country, allowing them to work and gain skills from either country. Further, encouraging participants to return to the sending country after skills gained helps to alleviate brain drain.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on key takeaways from the above case studies and provide insight on how to develop robust GSMP models that benefit Canada, sending countries and migrants. In the post-COVID pandemic context, these recommendations focus on applying GSMPs targeting nursing; however, these models can and should be applied to promote training and labour mobility in other industries.

1. **GAC should commission the development of a GSMP pilot project in nursing, in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and relevant stakeholders.** The success of the Triple Win Model in Germany can be attributed to the commitment and leadership of the ZAV and GIZ in supporting the process and structure for the mobility of the migrant. The program depends on strong partnerships with relevant stakeholders to facilitate the various stages of the preparation, placement and integration of migrants in the host country. In the case of nursing, the relevant stakeholders include employers, regulatory agencies and associations, and educational institutions. The GIZ coordinates the recognition process for the qualifications acquired abroad, while the ZAV is responsible for placing the candidates. In Canada, GAC should take the lead in coordinating a pilot process between relevant federal, provincial and territorial agencies to verify qualifications through the regulatory agencies of the respective provinces. Consultation with provinces and territories is necessary to ensure the commitment of provincial regulatory agencies to any pilot program. GAC would benefit from an inter-ministerial approach. It is important to align any pilot GSMP with IRCC: failure to do so in the Australian context constrained the success of the APTC, since potential migrants were required to undergo costly in-person skills assessments.

2. **The pilot project should follow set criteria for selecting partner sending countries.** To avoid brain drain, recruitment should be from partner countries with a labour surplus. To determine the potential partnership countries, Canada should consult the Health Workforce Support and Safeguards list developed to facilitate the effectiveness of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel. This list has identified 47 countries that are facing critical health workforce shortages (WHO 2021). While there is not an explicit ban on developing GSMPs with these countries, Canada must ensure that any agreements formed will focus on the development of the sending countries. In learning from previous GSMPs, it is important to select sending countries where the language proficiency of candidates in English or French is high. This will minimize language barriers in training and integration into Canadian labour markets. Country partners to consider would be India, Morocco, the Philippines and Tunisia.

3. **GAC should partner with institutions that already have the necessary capacity and skills for building GSMPs.** In addition to support and facilitation from federal government partners such as the IRCC, the pre-employment process should be facilitated in partnership with educational institutions that already support global skills mobility such as Mohawk College, Concordia University and the CICan. CICan collaborates with colleges and institutes across the country and internationally (Current Global Projects, 2022). CICan is already a partner of the Government of Canada in implementing Canada's International Education Strategy. CICan has partnerships with educational institutions abroad and has the capacity and knowledge to develop strong partnerships for GSMPs for incoming migrants to Canada.

4. **GAC should support the development of a dual-track model.** Learning from the APTC example, GAC's pilot project should allow migrants who receive skills training through Canadian-post secondary institutions the option to return to the sending country or to remain in Canada for work. Currently, models used in CARICOM have only a short-term exchange opportunity, which is beneficial for the sending countries but does not address the goals of the host country candidates. GAC's pilot project should expand on the CARICOM partnership model by using a dual-track model for applicants. Overall, the intention is to create a model that benefits migrants by providing them the option of staying and working in Canada or returning to their home state to use their new skills. A dual-track model will benefit sending and receiving country partners through wider capacity building in skills training and education.

5. **Create relevant partnerships for a GSMP Pilot Project.** In order for this Triple Win Model to be successful, a variety of departments and other actors must be consulted in the negotiation process. Our research has highlighted shortcomings in states where consultation between health ministries and skills development departments was minimal. Moreover, legal consultations with the provinces would be required to make sure GSMPs are compatible with domestic agreements on labour mobility. The following key bodies should be consulted in developing a pilot GSMP:

- Canadian Nurses Association
- IRCC
- IRCC's Foreign Credentials Referral Office
- Provincial departments of health and regulatory bodies
- Universities and colleges (for example, Mohawk College and Concordia University)
- CICan.

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Projecting Canadian Social Values in Managing International Refugee Crises

Yaseen Abdulhai, Suha Osman and Mackenzie White

Issue

Canada could benefit from a foreign policy strategy characterized by the norms and principles which underpin Canadian social policies. For instance, social norms and principles that reinforce Canada's approach in the management of refugee crises could be strategically amplified to support international refugee crises and inform a new foreign policy strategy for Canada.

Background

Canada's approach to social policy is driven by its commitment to fundamental Canadian values of social justice, diversity, human rights, democracy, and equity (Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau 2021). Whereas these values are considered to be fairly universal across Canada's multilateral partners, Canada has demonstrated a relatively unique interpretation of these values, reflected in both domestic and foreign policy postures. Expressed in governance, values are anchored in foundational legislation throughout the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Part 1 of the Constitution Act, 1982, and have been promoted and embraced through policies of multiculturalism since 1971. Entrenching diversity, equity, anti-racism, and anti-discrimination as part of Canada's national identity supports all Canadians; especially foreign-born people who make up one-fifth of Canada's population - one of the highest ratios for industrialized Western countries (Government of Canada 2019b; Cheatham 2022; Jedwab 2011). Compassionate humanitarian policies embedded in Canada's refugee policy also illustrate Canadian commitment to support and empower vulnerable and equity deserving groups. This attitude was exemplified by welcoming of more than four thousand asylum seekers in 2020 who entered the country without authorization, unaccompanied by criminal prosecution (Cheatham 2022).

The interpretation of these values and the way in which they inform approaches to Canada's robust social policies, can be strategically emphasized and projected in Canada's multilateral interactions to: (1) reanimate Canada's role as a distinctive standard-setting power within a shifting global order and (2) demonstrate two competencies which are essential for healthy multilateral exchanges and outcomes (being relevant and having something to "bring to the table"). Canada's strength in social values and stability, by way of strong social contracts between people and government, has underpinned its relative success in areas such as education, health, and refugee policy. Given the rise of protectionist sentiments from the US and the EU, Canada has a moral obligation to lead the efforts to establish an equitable and just framework for refugees through multilateral fora, and also vitally secure the future prosperity and cultural richness of the country as a matter of national interest. The application of a standard setting approach based on inclusive social norms will also pave the way for positive relationship building and engagement with less like-minded partners, such as China, who

Canada actively trades and interacts with economically (Nagy 2021). Refugee-related challenges and opportunities are only growing exponentially and serve as a cross-cutting theme that impacts all strategic policy priorities including conflict and security, climate change, economic trade and investment, and supply chain resilience.

Characterizing the Canadian Approach to International Refugee Crises

Research indicates that Canada's approach to refugee policy is founded on principles of public engagement and participation, inter-agency and cross-sectoral collaboration, and enduring principles underpinning the Feminist International Assistance Policies (FIAP), such as gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls.

Public Engagement and Participation

Attributable to social norms embedded in Canadian foundations surrounding newcomers, government-approved Canadians participate directly in refugee crisis response through the *Private Sponsorship of Refugees* (PSR) program. The program has welcomed over 327,000 refugees since its implementation in 1979 to support Indochinese refugees and is recognized as the most successful and longest-running PSR program in the world (Ilcan, Bueno & Manuela 2020). Legitimized under the *1976 Immigration Act,* the PSR program allows private sponsors that include groups of five or more Canadian citizens or community, cultural, humanitarian, or faith-based organizations to provide substantial assistance. This program, in addition to Canada's Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR), provides meaningful social assistance through language training, employment support, education resources, the acquisition of homes, and other materials (Ilcan, Bueno & Manuela 2020). In 2017, *the Canadian Race Relations Foundation* (CRRF) highlighted that respect for human rights, freedoms and equality are the most important values to Canadians (Our Canada Report 2017, p. 6). This strong linkage between democratic values, social policy norms, and processes in Canada is embedded in the relationships between Canadians and the government, which encourage and promote the "sharing of responsibility for global crises" among Canadians as global citizens (Ilcan, Bueno, Manuela 2020). An estimated 2 million Canadians have reported being personally involved in supporting the resettlement of the 44,620 Syrian refugees who were welcomed to Canada since 2015, of which more than half were supported by the PSR program (IRCC 2020). The sustainability and high yielding results of the PSR program are attributable to "a community [of] practice, a routine action that is part of a collective commitment, a way of connecting local community actions to global politics of injustice and displacement" (Hyndman, et al. 2021).

Inter-agency and Cross-sectoral Collaboration

Internationally, Canada continues to mobilize international donors to provide humanitarian assistance for those affected by refugee crises. This leadership is exemplified through the *International Donors' Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants* and committing $115.4 million CAD in humanitarian assistance to Venezuelan refugees and migrants in collaboration with the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the IOM (Government of Canada 2021a). Domestic collaboration among cross-sectoral partnerships and initiatives between settlement organizations, sponsors, Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH), and community members (social service agencies, business groups, ethnocultural groups, government representatives, etc) are based on "common goals, trust, and respect" and can be found across municipalities (Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto, and Etobicoke); grassroots organizations such as Lifeline Syria, Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP), and Helping Newcomers Work (Allies for Refugee Integration 2019).

Feminist International Assistance Policies (FIAP): Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

Canada's crosscutting approach to gender equality, emphasized internationally through FIAP is embedded in its approach to refugee crises responses and humanitarian assistance to be: (1) inclusive of women in decision-making planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and consultation in projects, and (2) empowering of all who face discrimination by recognizing the intersectionality's that exist, and proving these vulnerable groups with adequate and equitable support (Global Affairs Canada 2017). With a primary goal to address SDG 5 - achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls- Canada has fostered integrated humanitarian development, peace and security support, as well as refugee resettlement initiatives. This is

exemplified by Canada's establishment of 29 community centers in refugee camps and communities in Kurdistan to provide emergency care for female survivors of sexual violence (Global Affairs Canada 2017). Further, almost half of Canada's investments in the Middle East and Maghreb, in part under the objectives of the Middle East Strategy were fully gender integrated or targeted (Global Affairs Canada 2017). These are representative of Canada's value-based commitment to gender equality as a core action area of Canada's FIAP, as well as the additional action areas highlighted by the FIAP strategy; action areas include, human dignity, growth that works for everyone, environment and climate action, inclusive governance, peace and security (Government of Canada, 2021e).

Canadian Approaches to the Syrian, Afghani, and Ukrainian Refugee Crises

Canada has made considerable progress in refugee resettlement: resettling 44,620 Syrian refugees since November 2015; 13,050 Afghan refugees since August 2021; and 6,100 Ukrainian refugees since January 2022 (Government of Canada 2021b; 2022a; 2022b). Currently, Canada has two systems in place guiding refugee settlement through immigration policies. Between the *Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement* Program for people who need protection from outside Canada and a domestic Asylum Program for refugees to make protection claims while residing in the country, these programs inform Canadian responses during an international crisis (Government of Canada 2019). However, for each crisis, specialized and differentiating systems were put in place: *Operation Syrian Refugees* for Syrians; priority processing, waiving application fees and additional requirements, and implementing a special family reunification program for Afghans; the *Canadian-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel* (CUAET) and the acceptance of a non-limited number of refugees for Ukrainians (Government of Canada 2021b; Government of Canada 2021c; Government of Canada 2022c). Whereas it is recognized that policy approaches will always be subject to context, emphasizing that common norms and principles underpin the existing two-track system for processing international refugees would give Canada a story to tell, and contribute to sharing standard-setting and good practice in multilateral fora.

Canada's approach to refugee crisis response suffers from elements of inconsistency, as exemplified by the unique pathways to asylum introduced solely for Ukrainian refugees (Su 2022; Government of Canada 2022c). Further, Canada's approach is subjected to the public perception of variability, whereby refugees from white countries are perceived as having fewer barriers to entry into Canada (Giustra 2022; Hicks 2022).

Currently, five of the top ten refugee-hosting countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa, where the capacity to provide adequate public goods and services is limited (Global Affairs Canada 2017). Expanding its current refugee framework in international fora and utilizing its unique norms and principles as the foundations, Canada holds an opportunity to become a global leader and advocate for responsibility-sharing and collective action through a principled humanitarian response to refugee crises. This response is derived from the following characterization of refugee policy: public engagement and participation; inter-agency and cross-sectoral collaboration; and enduring principles underpinning the FIAP, that include gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

"Packaging" Canadian Responses to International Refugee Crises

Projecting multilateral strength in refugee crisis response demonstrates the need for a norms/principles framework to be in place at the national level. Consolidating Canada's positive experience to date and deriving a norm/principles-based framework from this experience could provide a useful contribution to multilateral partners, which are increasingly keen to know more about the "Canadian experience" (Bhuyan et al. 2017). Packaging Canadian approaches to a refugee crisis response [within the framework of Canadian values] serves to address the gaps within our current policy arrangements- which will, in turn, legitimize Canada's positive approach to refugee crisis response and enable the projection of a coherent brand. Rather than implement new policy, a shift toward an overarching policy paradigm rooted in outward-focused values approaches will reanimate Canada's identity in global affairs, given the atmosphere of increasingly fragmented multilateralism (Peace Diplomacy 2021). To strategically overcome the common criticism concerning Canadian foreign policy being too 'value-centric',

projecting Canadian values outward can facilitate Canada's relevance internationally by proving, through research and policy, that our value system is a strength (Paikin 2021). In doing so, the approach will mutually reinforce the development of Canadian refugee policy itself, while creating space for Canada to emphasize its policy and programming strengths internationally.

Recommendations

Long-Term Recommendation

1. **Projecting Canadian norms and principles as national instruments of power by characterizing, triangulating, and packaging Canadian values across social policy.** GAC can reinforce a "human-centric" approach to "global social policy" that would complement existing policies and differentiate Canada's contribution in multilateral fora. This action requires reviewing and characterizing the norms and principles across other social policies. This wider research, such as in the area of education and health policy, could then be triangulated with this research on refugee management policies - to inform how these norms and principles could facilitate and be discussed in strategic level multilateral exchanges. Additionally, packaging 'Canadian approaches', underpinned by Canadian social norms and principles, could help project Canada's positive approach to global social policy. This could help reanimate Canada's identity in the multilateral fora by promoting the strength of a principle-based social policy in a diverse society at home.

Short-Term Recommendation

2. **Promote global responsibility-sharing by elevating the principles of the Private Sponsorship for Refugees (PSR) program to the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI).** If we look at this issue in the context of international refugee crisis management, neighboring countries to those in conflict are overburdened and lack the administrative capacity to receive and integrate those fleeing from conflict (Global Affairs Canada 2017). As security threats rise globally, Canada has a role to play in responding to this challenge. The one-of-a-kind PSR program marries Canada's civic engagement to address this global challenge. Canada has an opportunity to utilize its principle-based approach to refugee policy to capitalize on leading international good practice – using Canadian communities as an example for states to create additional community-based sponsorship networks (Ilcan, Bueno & Manuela 2020). These principles can also be leveraged by GAC to encourage and promote the sharing of responsibility for global crises in the multilateral fora. As a founder of the GRSI, Canada can champion collective action among states and NGOs that have already declared their support for community sponsorship and showcase the benefits for other countries to participate (Government of Canada 2016). In addition to the overarching social norms and principles, the sharing of good practice about the PSR model and community-building capacity will allow Canada - in the form of capacity-building - to support partner countries and their civil society organizations in countries in addressing international refugee crises (Ilcan, Bueno, Manuela 2020; Government of Canada 2016).

3. **Foster a positive relationship with less like-minded partners by expanding opportunities for investment through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) to promote cultural and education initiatives to meet FIAP goals.** GAC can also use this approach to build relationships and engage with less like-minded partners namely, China and Saudi Arabia. Initiatives, such as the CFLI, increase opportunities to project a common set of standards and reanimate Canada's role as a standard-setting power (Government of Canada 2021d). Expanding cultural and educational initiatives among less like-minded partners to establish people-centered and community-based programming will help: (1) strengthen bilateral relations between Canada, recipient countries, and their civil societies to contribute toward positive outcomes in economic, social, and cultural development; and (2) meet FIAP goals. An expansion of initiatives, such as the CFLI, confronts diverse values among less like-minded partners, and allows Canada to uphold its positionality as a democratic country by projecting value-centric approaches outward through community empowerment and working with the less like-minded countries for mutual benefits (Government of Canada 2021d).

4. **Expand engagement with the United Nations through multilateral collaboration to address the needs of equity-deserving groups.** Canada's diplomacy at the United Nations has allowed for Canadian principles and values to be given a strong voice on the world stage (Matheson 2020). GAC can continue to ground their crisis response by playing an active role in its partnership with UN agencies to increase multilateral participation in the protection and management of refugees. This focuses on an area in which Canadian strengths lie, toward innovative solutions to meet the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees, and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) (UNHCR 2017). Canada remains an example of how a strong democracy can project its values and principles in its foreign policy. In the UN partnership, Canada has mobilized international donors to provide an intersectional approach to refugee policy, humanitarian assistance, and advocacy efforts (Matheson 2020). Leading human-centered programs with the UN allows GAC to ground crisis response in social policy principles that will help meet global SDG targets and in turn, increase Canada's presence internationally.

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