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2022 FOREIGN POLICY REPORT CARD

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The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

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	2021	2019	2018
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TRADE	C+	C+	B+
DEFENCE	D+	C+	C

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The grades assigned for the Report Card serve as an assessment of the Trudeau government's foreign policy performance. While the grade is largely based on the last year since the last Report Card, there will certainly be a degree of overlap with previous Report Card.

We have provided letter grades for the following areas: Diplomacy, Defence, Security, Trade, Environment and Climate Change, Development, and Immigration and Refugees.

Each category is weighted equally to generate the final grade, which serves as an average of our seven categories. In assigning grades for each section, three factors were considered, with their respective weighting in brackets:

Rhetoric vs Reality (30%): By identifying key promises made during the 2019 and 2021 campaigns, outlined in ministerial mandate letters, the grading process evaluates the degree to which the government has made progress on their commitments.

Overall Preformance (60%): The grade reflects an evaluation from our policy experts on their effectiveness of the government's policies, actions and commitments in each area.

Openness, Transparency, and Accountability (10%): The Trudeau government campaigned heavily - in 2015, 2019, and 2021 - on distinguishing itself from the previous government in this regard. The grade assigneed considered the degree to which the government's action have reflected this rhetoric.

The objective of the Report Card is to engage the public in the discussion of Canadian foreign policy. Given that the grades of most files declined in comparison to last year's Report Card, this year's overall grade is a C-. Is the Trudeau government deserving of this grade? We welcome our readers to decide for themselves.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2022 was marked by some dubious achievements, including a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics involving a handful of states, an unprecedented level of economic warfare directed at Russia, the weaponization of multilateral organizations such as the G20 and the United Nations (UN), and a multibillion-dollar course correction away from China. Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly inherited a diplomatic file that repeatedly underperforms. Since coming to office in the fall of 2021, Joly has had plenty of opportunities to chart a productive, if not distinctly "Canadian," diplomatic agenda. Instead, her government's diplomatic performance is hampered by rhetorical overreach, squandered opportunities, failures to engage, hypocrisy, and irrelevance. The most recent example of Canada's fall from grace is its glaring absence at the Oslo talks on Afghanistan.

Under Joly's guidance, the Liberal's foreign policy approach to the monumental challenges posed by the global pandemic, the rise of China, and the war in Ukraine show a government and its intellectual underpinnings clinging desperately to an old liberal internationalist order, as interpreted by some 30 countries cobbled together by President Joe Biden under his "alliance of values" agenda. Joly's mandate letter released in December of 2021 makes no explicit reference to China, yet the country looms large in every entry. The letter makes it clear that the United States (U.S.) and Canada will work jointly to confront China.

Turning to development, the 2021 federal election brought increased official development assistance (ODA) and commitments for greater COVID-19 support internationally. However, the Liberal's development policy has made limited gains as the pandemic further impacts aid recipients. Additionally, funding challenges and a limited scope in feminist programming remain obstacles for the file, as highlighted in previous Report Cards.

The past year has also included a great deal of movement on the environment and climate change file. Ambitious new climate commitments and initiatives have been plentiful from the Liberals, whose goal is to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. However, this Report Card shows how a clear gap has emerged between the rhetoric and reality of many of these promises. With new emission reduction targets being announced alongside the approval of a new deep-water oil project, the rhetoric-reality gap will widen even further as the federal government tries to balance short-term and long eterm goals.

Canada's immigration and refugee file is also not without its shortcomings, despite achieving unprecedented immigration targets and mobilizing migration pathways in response to both the Afghanistan and Ukraine crises. The application backlog remains a persistent concern that, coupled with double standards for asylum seekers and controversy surrounding the Safe Third Countries Agreement (STCA), challenges Canada's international reputation on immigration.

On the trade file, there are concerns that Canadian exports are fuelling a humanitarian crisis. Trade negotiations with Asian countries that have weak human rights standards and undemocratic governments continue apace. These actions raise the question of whether the Trudeau government has a clear direction for this file while trying to incorporate a feminist foreign policy and inclusive trade agenda. Managing never-ending trade disputes with the U.S. and battling the border closures ate up much of the Liberals' time in 2021 and 2022.

Lastly, the defence file remains fragile. Delayed efforts in procurement, revitalizing defence systems in the Arctic, as well as the slow response in fixing Department of National Defence's (DND) toxic military culture put Canada on the backbench. Security has been equally concerning. Sustained challenges and threats caused by the pandemic portray a country sticking to outdated and reactionary policy responses. With a still pending decision on Huawei, the rise of ideologically motivated violent extremism (IMVE), and weak pandemic early warning systems, the Liberal's national security strategy lacks sufficient coordination, transparency, and forethought to adapt to evolving threats.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

DIPLOMACY

D-

"Hatred disturbs all serenity of spirit and vindictiveness muddies every pool of sanity. Even the sanest of our statesmen find it convenient to conform their policies to the public temper of fear and hatred which the most vulgar of our politicians have generated or exploited."

Reinhold Niebuhr

Since Justin Trudeau's Liberals were first elected in 2015, there has been a disturbing confrontational trend on the diplomacy file. The year 2022 was marked by some dubious achievements, including a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics involving a handful of states, an unprecedented level of economic warfare directed at Russia, the weaponization of multilateral organizations such as the G20 and the UN, and a multibillion-dollar course correction away from China. On the other

hand, the Liberals find themselves repeatedly taking an aggressive and hostile foreign policy posture when such confrontation serves domestic political ends. This passive-aggressive approach has played out reasonably well domestically. Internationally, however, Trudeau's Liberals have not used effective statecraft to their advantage, preferring instead to follow President Biden's lead on key files including Russia, China, the Middle East, and Venezuela.

This year's grade of D- is the lowest grade ever, signaling a long, slow slide towards foreign policy mediocrity. Unfortunately, the coalition deal between the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Liberals, means this trend is unlikely to be reversed. The NDP have shown little interest and expertise in challenging, modifying, or improving the Liberal foreign policy platform.

A PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY

How this decline came to be is open to debate. A good place to start would be Trudeau's choice of Chrystia Freeland as Foreign Minister in 2017. Freeland quickly became a favourite of conservative mainstream media, diaspora groups, and political pundits at home and abroad. In her current role as heir apparent to Justin Trudeau, Freeland has the three responsibilities of Minister of Finance, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Ukraine Affairs.

Each of these jobs is particularly critical at any point, but especially so during a pandemic. In a not-so-surprising twist, Freeland has managed to blend her personal interests in fighting Russia overseas, with her job as Minister of Finance. In her speech to the House of Commons concerning the release of the 2022 Federal Budget, Freeland implicitly endorsed regime change in Russia, noting that "Putin's assault has been so vicious that we all now understand that the world's democracies — including our own — can be safe only once the Russian tyrant and his armies are entirely vanquished." In a detailed section of the budget outlining how Canada would support Ukraine directly, Freeland advanced a controversial policy to support "the ability of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to cause the forfeiture and disposal of assets held by sanctioned individuals and entities." Today's confrontation between Russia and Canada has reached the point where Russia has banned Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the majority of

Canadian parliamentarians from entering Russia.

Despite the specific focus on Ukraine and a general increase in defence spending to counter Russia, Freeland's budget did not deliver guidance on how to recast Canada's place in the world. This lack of strategic thinking is largely because under the Trudeau government, the foundations of Canadian foreign policy have become unmoored; foundations which Trudeau himself laid claim to in 2015. Despite fairly comprehensive defence and aid policy reviews over the last few years, none of Trudeau's Foreign Ministers saw the need to conduct a parallel foreign policy review to recalibrate Canada's national interests in an increasingly complex world. Though a dedicated plan to rebuild diplomatic capacity has never been more urgent, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) appears to lack both the capacity and the will to carry out such a review.

In speeches to parliament and American think tanks, Freeland spoke of a need for Canada to engage in changing the international order. Yet, the level of effort in reinvigorating multilateralism waned considerably under her watch. This failure matters not just because multilateralism is an end in itself, but because Justin Trudeau told voters in 2015 that his party would reinvigorate Canadian diplomacy.

Indeed, as Foreign Minister Freeland was not a keen diplomat, she made no formal visit to Africa despite the billions of aid dollars flowing into the continent and provided only luke-warm overtures to support Canada's peacekeeping contribution in Mali. She also showed little interest in reinvigorating Liberal signature policies like the International Criminal Court (ICC) and Responsibility to Protect or, for that matter, a seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC).

Where there was support for a Canadian global agenda, it was both improvised and ad hoc. Summits on North Korea and Venezuela were mounted, not as efforts to engage in diplomacy, but to isolate, sanction, and contain. Through Freeland's negotiation of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), Canada became more firmly bound to American security, defence, and trade policy with little room for maneuver.

Though the ICC was largely neglected under Freeland's tenure, the Court has since become one of Canada's core

instruments to isolate and contain Russia. A number of countries, mostly those in the Global South, have been quick to label Canada's accusations of war crimes as hyperbolic maneuvering and the hypocritical grandstanding of a few wealthy countries.

This is partly because the U.S., also accused of war crimes in Afghanistan, pushed back and threatened to sanction members of the ICC should it decide to investigate America's record of abuses. Canada stood by and said nothing. Eventually the ICC suspended its investigation into U.S. war crimes in Afghanistan because of President Biden's rapid and ill-planned decision to pull out of Kabul, but also because of the pressure brought to bear on ICC officials.

Claims of hypocrisy come from the fact that Canada has only sporadically supported the Court, threatening to deploy it when convenient, as in the case of Libya, Venezuela, and now Russia. More importantly, the Canadian government is not immune to accusations of war crimes, having dodged a bullet on the Afghan detainee scandal, which has never been properly addressed.

To this day, Canadians do not know the names of all those who were aware that detainee torture occurred regularly and did nothing. Former diplomat Eileen Olexiuk raised the possibility that detainees transferred from Canadian to Afghan custody were at risk of torture back in 2005, but the Liberal government at the time felt it would play poorly at home in the way that Gitmo and Abu Ghraib had for the Americans.

These comparisons are not "what aboutism." If Canada is to be seen as a defender of humanitarian principles, strong multilateral institutions, and an advocate for a rules-based system, its leaders cannot pick and choose when and how such principles and laws apply. Liberal claims about bringing justice to the world ring hollow. The government's rhetoric only weakens the credibility of the Court and Canada's reputation on the world stage.

To say that Canadian diplomacy has become unhinged does not mean it must be this way. For example, contrast Canada's increasingly aggressive, confrontational, and minor voice on the world stage to the actions of Norway. Norway is a country which over the past two decades has relied on its good office to mediate and help manage more than five major conflicts.

"Unlike Canada, Norway appears to have a foreign policy based on common sense, honesty, and autonomy."

Time, energy, and resources that support and build conditions of trust and respect between states are the cornerstone of effective diplomacy. In making these investments, Norway shows why it succeeded in securing a seat on the UNSC and why Trudeau's Liberals failed to do so. Despite Foreign Minister Joly's claim, convening power is not adequate to building credibility on the world stage. By eschewing diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of disputes, Canada is no longer the multilateral player Justin Trudeau claims it to be.

The most recent example of Canada's fall from grace is its glaring absence at the Oslo talks on Afghanistan. Given the government's oft-repeated mantra that it helps build international coalitions and advocates for human rights, Trudeau's Liberals must be annoyed that as one of the largest donors to Afghanistan since 2002, it was left off the invitees' list. After the fall of Kabul, Canada was the first to announce that it would not recognize the Taliban government. This declaration was made without much forethought, with no attention given to how Canada's international partners approached the crisis and what collective measures could be planned. Through these actions, Canada removed itself from essential meetings on Afghanistan as an uninterested and unhelpful party, despite the urgency of a worsening humanitarian crisis.

If convening power is indeed one of Canada's foreign policy attributes, one has to wonder why the Liberals saw fit to force Radio Canada International (RCI) to abandon its mandate of producing programming for international audiences. This is an example of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) echoing the federal government by cutting or curtailing instruments of soft power that could achieve the goal of projecting Canadian values by undertaking more effective direct diplomacy. RCI's transformation has a clear yet worrisome agenda, as it is focused on diaspora communities and media in Canada, which are not part of RCI's mandate.

In a world beset by geopolitical rivalries, the ability to directly engage local populations abroad, free of interference, is absolutely essential. The change in RCI's funding and mandate is reflective of a widespread tendency by governments and organizations such as the CBC to trumpet the advantages of the digital world and its access to the globe, with little thought to what connecting with others is all about.

THE UKRAINE CRISIS – THE SEARCH FOR RELEVANCE

Mélanie Joly inherited a diplomatic file that has repeatedly under-performed. Since coming to office in the fall of 2021, there have been plenty of opportunities for Joly to chart a productive, if not distinctly "Canadian," diplomatic agenda. Instead, her government's diplomatic performance has been hampered by rhetorical overreach, squandered opportunities, failures to engage, hypocrisy, and irrelevance. These weaknesses draw attention to the corrosive effects that failures to engage have on Canada's standing in the world. Though Joly and GAC claim to be key players in building the foundation for global stability and prosperity, the evidence indicates otherwise.

For example, since our 2021 Report Card, Canadian foreign policy on Ukraine has witnessed a deepened commitment to a combination of harmful and counterproductive strategies and tactics. These include initiatives to cripple and isolate Russia's economy and polity, ship lethal weapons to Ukraine in the absence of a clearly defined path towards negotiated settlement, curry favour with diaspora groups that generates invidious comparison, and raise and expend large amounts of discretionary funds with little oversight in the name of urgency.

Meanwhile, increasing food and energy security in the Global South arising from Western sanctions on Russia are the more pressing challenges. Interestingly, Trudeau's Liberals view its Ukraine strategy as a potential windfall for Canada as it takes advantage of global shortfalls to enhance Canadian exports.

While the Canadian government continues with the whimsical narrative that the Russian war is solely responsible for global economic decline, food and energy shortages, and political instability, the reality is that sanctions and transportation restrictions imposed on Russia are the core problems. Foreign Affairs

Minister Mélanie Joly characterizes sanctions as a tool for de-escalation, which they are not. The severing of energy deals between Western companies and Russian energy producers, along with the removal of major Russian institutions from the SWIFT payment system, have generated fuel shortages in both the short-and long-run.

Beyond sanctions, some of Joly's more debatable strategies include the Liberal goal of removing Russia from the G20 because, in her own words, the G20 is an organization focused on growth and "we want to stop Russia's economy from growing." A second scheme is the goal to seize all Russian foreign assets to use towards Ukraine's reconstruction. A third tactic, as noted above, has been the decision to lead an ICC investigation into Russian war crimes.

Indeed, since 2014, Canada has been one of the few states that chose not to narrow underlying rifts with Moscow. In fact, from Chrystia Freeland's tenure onward, Canada's Foreign Affairs ministers have shown a very limited diplomatic capacity to engage with Russia directly, save for a meeting that Marc Garneau held with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in the spring of 2021.

Along with the United Kingdom and the U.S., for example, Canada chose to work outside of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in some important ways. For instance, all three are part of the Multinational Joint Commission. Canada joined the Commission when Jason Kenney was Canada's Defence Minister, despite concerns over corruption in the Ukrainian military and arms trafficking. Canada's international standing was not effectively enhanced by these actions. Canada was not part of the Normandy Format nor the Trilateral Contact Group. It was not an active participant in the Minsk II talks, and its ministers have rarely referred to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe that brokered Minsk II.

While there is likely to be significant debate about the merits of a confrontation approach, the real issue is that Canada's policies towards conflict are not balanced by an effort to render the world a safer, more secure place. Indeed, Liberal actions to date are increasing the probability of protracted conflict with divisive and harmful global impacts. There is shared responsibility for this conflict, which is quite different from "moral equivalence," and which (unlike

one-sided condemnations) leads in the direction of conflict resolution.

Nor do Russia's efforts at sanction proofing guarantee economic stability for itself and the region. From a security perspective, if the current government in Moscow collapses, how can Canada – as a staunch advocate of disarmament and arms control – guarantee the security of Russia's nuclear arsenal and prevent it from becoming a weapon held by non-state groups or more radical factions within Russia's leadership? The prospect of this scenario should make any supporter of regime change in Russia think twice.

At the same time, Canadian sanctions are having a deleterious ripple effect on all parts of the world, raising the price of agricultural products and energy globally. Russia is the world's third-largest wheat producer and is among the top three oil producers in the world. Comprehensive sanctions have disrupted Moscow's ability to export essential commodities such as wheat, oil, gas, and aluminum. The war is also hampering Ukraine's wheat exports. By May 2022, prices of wheat and corn rose to their highest levels in over a decade. Collectively, these decisions have put an even greater constraint on the world's food and energy supply. Ultimately, developing and politically fragile states are suffering the consequences most severely.

If the Liberal government's Ukraine policy stands on ethical shaky ground, its legal foundations must also be questioned. The legality of Canada's newfound grey zone warfare is found wanting in the unprecedented economic, political, and military actions the Liberals have taken thus far.

Those strategies operate within a grey zone to remain below the threshold of a direct attack which could have a legitimate conventional military response. In regard to Western political and economic instruments of war now in play, international legal guidelines and norms are weak or absent and therefore open to exploitation.

In turn, these weaknesses have created a permissive environment for – and normalized – the use of unconventional economic warfare. Justin Trudeau's Liberals are operating from the belief that using unconventional instruments of war can serve two ends. They are assumed to be inherently less costly, and they are assumed to be a deterrent. Neither of these conclusions is true.

In addition, Trudeau's Liberals have put their support behind diaspora efforts to recruit "volunteers" to join Kyiv's forces. The legality of this decision is not clear cut. A few Canadian volunteers have been fighting in Ukraine since 2015. To date, with the support of the diaspora, Canada was on track to contribute an entire battalion. Canada has already committed special forces to Ukraine, though their exact purpose and location are unknown. The downside to this strategy is these soldiers do not enjoy the same rights and protections under the laws of armed conflict.

The increasing penetration of economic coercion into Canadian foreign policy is consistent with the inability of international institutions to influence state participants' behaviour, moderate choices, and find negotiated outcomes.

"Instead of strengthening multilateralism and international institutions, the Liberal government's actions are actually weakening them."

In part, this is because international institutions have generally been structured to mitigate Cold War era confrontations and are not equipped to prevent and manage highly complex intrastate and interstate rivalries and competition, where security and economic interests are bifurcated rather than overlapping.

But it is also because in choosing sides, Canada's actions precipitate massive unintended consequences. For example, in shipping weapons to Ukraine it is doing so with full knowledge that Ukraine is one of the largest arms trafficking markets in Europe, with significant war profiteering and associated criminal elements having grown over the last eight years. Faced with this knowledge, the Liberals deemed it best to turn a blind eye to this problem. When former Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko was criticized for profiting from the war and for his involvement in the illegal arms trade, for example, Canada's Chrystia Freeland intervened to prevent his arrest from going to trial.

THE END OF GLOBALIZATION – A SMALL(ER) CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Under Joly's guidance, the Liberal's foreign policy approach to the

monumental challenges posed by the global pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the rise of China, show a government and its intellectual underpinnings clinging desperately to an old liberal internationalist order, as interpreted by some 30 countries cobbled together by Joe Biden under his "alliance of values" agenda. If this strategy is problematic, it is because Western actions are actually driving nations apart. The key point is that in order for the U.S. to succeed, it must discipline allies and punish adversaries using coercive instruments of foreign policy. Value-based diplomacy is not sufficient. Every instance where the U.S. instrumentalizes other states in order to advance American interests hastens the shift towards a more competitive form of multilateralism.

In an effort to build an "alliance of values," the Biden agenda has been twofold. The first has been the passage of the trillion-dollar infrastructure act, amidst parallel efforts by U.S. administrations to further entangle trading partners in America's geopolitical agenda. The second is to push ahead on America's democracies and backsliding agenda. In the latter instance, the so-called "alliance of values" under U.S. leadership is intended to address China's and Russia's increasing influence and support for weak, hybrid, and unconsolidated democracies.

There is good reason to believe that an "alliance of values" alone will not be sufficient to fix the erosion of U.S. hegemonic influence. A key point almost always lost in these debates is the importance of good governance. Democracy furnishes no guarantee of good governance and in turn healthy economic performance. Strong economic performers in the Global South have been telling America and its allies this fact for decades.

Today, economic warfare against Russia combined with COVID-19's after-effects are contributing to a new era of higher inflation and interest rates, driving globalization into reverse. Soaring global energy and food prices mean almost 60% of developed economies now have year-on-year inflation above 5%, the largest share since the late 1980s, and it is over 7% in more than half of the developing world. Supply chains have been damaged by both the pandemic and trade wars.

As noted in previous Report Cards, Canadian productivity and competitiveness are at risk and in decline. The short-term costs in

terms of activity and employment are the price to pay to avoid higher costs down the road. Before the war in Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic threw the spotlight on the importance of maintaining an open trading system that is both inclusive and economically sustainable. Canada's continued efforts to support the liberalization of international trade have been less than successful, as seen by the disagreements and challenges faced by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and growing protectionism.

With Canada now a keen advocate of economic warfare, looming questions about Canada's fate as a trading state must be answered. Since the end of the Cold War, the conventional wisdom driving foreign policies was that strong economic relations and interdependence align strongly with peace. The Liberal government's preference for economic warfare challenges prevailing beliefs about Canada's commitment to a rules-based order and its commitment to peace. As is evident in the current crisis, economic actions including sanctions, just short of formal war declarations, can have broad and debilitating global effects. Ultimately, Liberal actions have raised doubts among trading states outside of the G7 and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) about Canada's pretensions to defend a multilateral trading system on moral and ethical grounds.

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Canada's commitment to strengthening ties with China was clear well before the Liberals came to power in 2015. However, it was the Liberal government that committed fully to negotiating a trade deal with China. For example, the main priority in Chrystia Freeland's mandate letter as Minister of Foreign Affairs was to focus on "expanding trade with large fast-growing markets, including China and India, and deepening our trade links with traditional partners." The appointment letter was also unprecedented in that it instructed Freeland to develop a targeted strategy to promote trade and investment with emerging markets – "with particular attention to China [and India]."

Today, China's economy is poised to overtake the U.S. by the end of this decade. As China's rise challenges U.S. power, America is turning inward towards greater self-sufficiency in order to reduce

dependencies, shorten supply chains, and shift its economic focus away from globalized interdependence to domestic consumption and manufacturing. As the U.S. withdraws into a smaller circle of like-minded states, Canada has followed.

These changes pose problems for Trudeau's Liberals in a number of important ways. Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly's mandate letter released in December of 2021 makes no explicit reference to China, yet the country looms large in every entry. The letter makes it clear that the U.S. and Canada will work jointly to confront China through the development of a multi-year, billion-dollar undertaking and through thedevelopment of a treaty on the prohibition against arbitrary detention.

Ironically, Canada's trade with China has returned to pre-pandemic levels and is increasing, suggesting that corporate strategies are at odds with the Liberals' geopolitical rhetoric. However, the most prominent feature in the Canada-China relationship over the last decade or so is the extent to which it is now shaped and influenced by the China-U.S. rivalry. China's rise to significant diplomatic and economic status has elicited a confrontational stance from the once China-friendly Liberals.

"As Canada becomes more hamstrung by U.S. actions, the chances of improving Canada-China political and economic relations declines."

In this light, Canada's scramble to shift away from China may be futile because China is the largest consumer and producer of many of Canada's key exports, such as wheat, oil and gas, and plant protein. For each of the four markets that are priority targets for the Canadian federal government in 2021, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Brazil, India and Indonesia, the largest foreign trade partner and often leading foreign investor and regional political power is China.

Many emerging markets are charting a course that delivers benefits from a transformed economic order driven by China's economy. To constrain Canada from benefiting from this China-driven global growth, bilateral institutions that Canada has with the U.S. are often leveraged to serve

American ends, such as CUSMA and the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD).

It is a sad reality that in terms of trade actions, Canada has had more direct harm from the U.S. than it has from China, perhaps unsurprising given the volume of trade differentials. However, Canada has also had to contend with what may be termed "indirect" trade actions by the U.S. These actions include the enforcement of unilateral U.S. sanctions and economic pressure to follow U.S. foreign policy.

In response, there is the view that the Liberals not only need a new China strategy, but also a new U.S. strategy. Simply put, the increasing presence of economic coercion in American foreign policy is not only a reflection of the inability of international institutions to moderate America's foreign policy choices, it also brings harm to Canada directly.

For example, despite U.S. efforts to damage Huawei's ability to deliver 5G technology around the world, the multinational has made significant inroads in Asian, South American, and even African markets. Only after the two Michaels and Meng debacle was resolved did it become clear that the U.S does not yet have a viable alternative to Huawei's 5G technology, nor to the broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that will deliver 5G for that matter.

By allowing itself to be pinned down by U.S. extraterritorial overreach on the Huawei file, the Liberals failed to realize economic benefits from a key driver of technological growth. The Huawei fallout is less about spying and more about American industry being outpaced by a more able competitor.

In examining America's extraterritorial overreach, the Meng Wanzhou trial, the two Michaels and decisions over 5G are merely the prelude. The Biden administration's Competition and Innovation Act contains more than 30 specific references to Canada and three sections of legislation devoted solely to Canada. In essence, the Act will bind Canada to a series of policy actions intended to compete with China in the crucial domains of information technology, aerospace, and defence, impinging upon all aspects of academic research, technology transfer, and capacity building for Canadian universities.

The hypocrisy of American actions is shown in the fact that prior to completion of CUSMA, in which the

Americans inserted a clause to dissuade parties from entering into trade agreement negotiations with China, the U.S. and China entered a Phase One agreement.

Indeed, the political, ideological, and racial divides which continue to destabilize American society raise doubts about the future directions of U.S. policies and what they mean for Canada. The problem for Canada is its sovereignty is both strengthened and weakened by being closely tied to the U.S. Unlike other U.S. allies, Canada has less room for maneuver and fewer and limited regional institutional opportunities to engage the world that are not dominated by the U.S. This is a reality borne from a highly integrated U.S.-Canada defence and security architecture that emerged strongly from 9/11 onward. Indeed, Canada's defence community shares a world view similar if not identical to that of U.S. administrations.

Despite Liberal claims that they speak for Canada, there is no real consensus on these divisive issues. The fundamental problem is not just the lack of public debate. It is the realization, as unpalatable as it might be, that Canada must not only navigate a world in which it is subservient to U.S. interests, it must also find a way to offset potential harmful U.S policies that are implemented to advance American interests against Canadian interests.

For the U.S., sanctions encapsulate the key features of America's entrenched strategic culture of exceptionalism, an idea that has repeatedly been picked up by key players in the Global South who stand opposed to America's policies towards Russia and China in particular. The U.S. is very clearly and very openly forcing these countries to make a choice in a "you are either with us, or with the enemy" manner.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

DEVELOPMENT

C-

The 2021 election has brought a mixture of new and old development campaign promises from the Trudeau government. A few key promises are a sustained focus on increasing Canada's international development assistance until 2030 and a $200 million COVID-19 vaccine pledge to the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) Facility by the end of 2022, along with supporting financial recovery abroad from the pandemic. Although offering optimistic commitments, Canada's results track record is checkered, with transparency on both commitments and progress creating challenges for proper evaluation of the file. Additionally, the development file has stagnated in many regards as reoccurring issues of overall funding and the nature of how gender equality is advanced slow down the degree and extent of progress.

Amidst these challenges, the development portfolio has faced added strain as Canada's pandemic recovery efforts have led to domestic issues dominating the political agenda and federal budgets. While this domestic focus is

not entirely negative nor surprising, given the immense losses and setbacks in international development progress during the pandemic and the worrying reversal of extreme global poverty trends in 2020 for the first time, global needs require greater attention from the government. Consequently, there has been a decrease in Canada's development grade from a C last year to a C- this year as the Liberals struggles to address longstanding development issues, follow through on campaign promises, and meet global needs amidst a time of limited political will.

FIAP FIVE YEARS LATER

The Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) has been a cornerstone of Canada's foreign relations since 2017. Seeking to eradicate poverty and address inequality through a feminist approach, FIAP includes six action areas focused on gender equality, economic development, governance, climate change, peace and security, and health and education. However, almost five years later, FIAP has yet to overcome criticism regarding funding and the policy's overall approach to feminism.

The 2021 and 2022 Budgets reveal a gap between the rhetoric and reality as FIAP continues to be championed for its feminist focus while remaining chronically underfunded, with the 2021 Budget including $165 million to short-term emergency humanitarian assistance rather than long-term assistance. There have also been funding challenges in terms of tracking and transparency. FIAP funds and projects are not categorised under the six key action areas, and funding announcements are often unclear about whether funding is new or repurposed from a previous allocation.

FIAP still faces criticism for its approach to gender equality as well. Many have highlighted the policy's reductionist tendency to "add women and girls" as opposed to more complex, long-term reconsiderations of policies and approaches through gender-based analysis plus (GBA+). In this light, the Trudeau government is only adopting specific components of GBA+ which it deems favourable. Without greater consideration of the structural realities underlying gender equality, a transformative approach to feminist policy will remain unrealized. Therefore, as FIAP reaches its fifth year, the government needs to address these longstanding concerns and make concrete changes to strengthen FIAP

and Canada's credibility as a leader in gender equality. Within this context, Trudeau's cabinet shuffle brought a surprise when Minister Harjit Sajjan replaced the well-liked Minister Karina Gould. While Minister Sajjan is an experienced cabinet minister, his inability to address sexual misconduct issues within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) as Minister of National Defence has cast doubt on his ability to lead FIAP.

A SHORT-LIVED ODA BOOST

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada's ODA increased to 0.31% of gross national income (GNI) in 2020, making it the nation's highest ODA/GNI proportion since 2012. However, this is still less than half of the UN aid spending target of 0.7% of GNI and an eighth-place ranking in aid volume amongst OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donor countries. Additionally, while the Trudeau government finally surpassed 0.3% of GNI, predictions indicate this ODA increase is an exception rather than an emerging new trend, with Canada expected to return to its pre-COVID-19 development funding pattern and growth.

The main drivers behind the nearly 8% increase from 2019 ODA levels are climate financing, in-donor refugee costs, and COVID-19 assistance. Under Trudeau's leadership, in-donor refugee costs have become an increasingly greater proportion of Canada's ODA, with 12.5% of Canada's ODA going toward in-donor refugee costs in 2020. Although countries such as Iceland, Germany, and the Netherlands were also above the DAC average of 5.6% in 2020, Canada has the highest proportion of in-donor refugee costs. While an important cause, this growing trend is worrisome given that ODA spent domestically does not reach the poor and most marginalised people that FIAP targets abroad.

In addition, stated ODA increases in relation to climate financing are deceiving. Increases in financing are likely from previously committed funds that were recently disbursed. This reflects a larger issue of transparency within Canada's development budget. To note further, the Canadian International Development Platform calls for clearer communication regarding Canada's international assistance envelope base level, funding status of commitments, and excess funding that is pushed to the next fiscal year. As a result, it is challenging

to evaluate Canada's ODA spending properly.

SUCCESS AND SHORTCOMINGS IN CANADA'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

COVID-19 funding has substantially impacted Canada's ODA levels with a $1.6 billion addition to the international assistance envelope for the 2020/2021 fiscal year, representing the biggest increase in a fiscal year. The great majority of Canada's international COVID-19 assistance funds have targeted the G20 inspired Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a crucial component of the global effort to address COVID-19. With $940 million provided to the ACT-Accelerator last fiscal year, Canada became one of six countries to fully meet the accelerator's 2021 contribution request. Additionally, Budget 2022 funding pushed Canada's total contribution past the $2 billion mark.

Despite hitting these funding targets, there remains a clear gap between the reality of COVID-19 supplies and vaccines distribution and the ACT-Accelerator's goal to address COVID-19 by accelerating tests, treatments, vaccine development, and supporting equitable distribution of such tools. As seen in Canada and many other rich countries, vaccine nationalism has been rampant and served as an obstacle to the equitable distribution of COVID-19 tools. Consequently, the accelerator faces a funding gap of $22.8 billion USD for the 2021-2022 funding year with pledges from October 29, 2021, counting to the next fiscal year.

While not taking any more doses from the COVAX supply as they did last year, the Liberals continue to pursue a "Canada First" vaccine strategy as Prime Minister Trudeau stated that the government will "prioritize the sharing of excess doses." Canada will assist other countries when convenient and after Canadian needs are met. Although governments have a duty to their citizens to protect and guarantee their health, the World Health Organization (WHO) and scientific community have clearly stated that equitable vaccine distribution is crucial given the virus knows no borders. Nonetheless, the government has held firm on its "non-committal" position on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) COVID-19 Waiver, an initiative first established in October 2020 to waive the WTO agreement protecting intellectual property (IP) rights on prevention,

containment, and treatment of COVID-19. International Trade Minister Ng reaffirmed this indecisive stance in May 2021 as well. While sharing how the federal government is prepared to discuss the IP waiver proposal, Minister Ng also stated that "our government firmly believes in the importance of protecting IP."

Now over a year and a half since the establishment of the TRIPs waiver, Canada's stance remains unchanged amidst growing international consensus to relax at least some IP rights. However, recently disclosed government records have shed greater light on this positioning preference. Documents reveal multiple talks between the federal government and pharmaceutical industry over the past year and note how industry representatives are content with the Liberals holding off on making a decision. Given these apparent close relations, concern is warranted over the extent of influence the pharmaceutical industry has on the federal government.

The waiver, which has garnered support from over 100 WTO members, has established some areas of compromise, with a leaked copy of the waiver in March 2022 noting that only vaccines would be covered. However, there is still consensus building challenges writ large as some in the vaccine development community find that IP rights are not the greatest hurdle to vaccine equity. Instead, challenges such as distribution and know-how have been highlighted as major issues. Regardless, what will happen officially in the coming weeks remains to be seen. At this point, a lack of political will means the Trudeau government is unlikely to shift away from vaccine nationalism and its hypocritical stance of donating vaccines while blocking TRIPS.

The Liberals are also lagging in their efforts toward the campaign promise of donating "at least 200 million doses to the COVAX Facility by the end of 2022." Thus far, Canada has only provided 14.2 million surplus vaccines as well as 762,080 AstraZeneca vaccines to Latin America and the Caribbean, the latter which are not included within the 200 million pledge. This is well below the stated 50 million excess doses from the domestic need that Canada noted they would donate. Concerns have also been raised over Canada donating vaccines close to expiry as well as maintaining a federal stockpile of over 10 million vaccine

doses over the fall season when other supply contracts were in place.

In addition to doses, Canada's pledge is primarily set to be achieved through funding COVAX for vaccine procurement and delivery. Official communications state that funding for 87 million vaccines has already been provided, yet some sources have questioned this number. With these challenges of vaccine distribution and funding, it has become evident that greater transparency and a detailed plan are required for the Liberals to achieve their vaccine dose promise.

FINDEV'S ROLE – STILL RELEVANT?

With Minister Sajjan's mandate letter highlighting the importance of economic recovery from the pandemic abroad and Canada's leadership on development finance, FinDev at first glance appears to be gaining in significance. In addition, a three-year $300 million recapitalization is slated to begin in 2023 to expand the portfolio's impact on agribusiness, green growth, and financial institutions sectors.

However, if the intention is to support private investment in lieu of state-led investment such as China's Belt and Road Initiative, the impact of FinDev appears limited. With $489 million USD committed in signed commitments at this time to primarily Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, this number pales in comparison to the Green Finance and Development Centre's estimation that Belt and Road Initiative financing and investments in 2021 were $59 billion USD. This purpose of FinDev was reaffirmed via the Build Back Better plan announced at the June 2021 G7 Leaders' Summit. Aimed at addressing COVID-19 and the impacts of the pandemic, a few key components of the plan are facilitating collaboration between G7 development finance institutions and focusing on strategic partnerships. With details still being clarified, it remains unclear as to how and whether this G7 plan will counter the established Belt and Road Initiative and the extent of FinDev's role in such efforts.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE

Having provided over $250 million in development assistance and $64 million in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine since 2014, Canada has rapidly increased its funding to the country amidst the Russian intervention. From January to late March 2022, the Liberal government gave $180 million towards both

humanitarian and development aid. The largest allotment occurred in the first week of March when Minister Sajjan announced $100 million in assistance, with half of the funding going towards aid agencies and partners to address immediate needs. The government also matched donations given to the Canadian Red Cross for the Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis, providing $30 million in funding.

Loans are also a crucial part of Canada's response to the Ukrainian crisis, providing emergency funds to help ensure the country meets its scheduled debt payments. Budget 2022 contained a major new loan with up to $1 billion offered through an Administered Account at the International Monetary Fund to support the Ukrainian government's delivery of essential services. This builds on to the $620 million announced since January 2022, including $500 million via the Bretton Woods and Related Agreements Act and $120 million through Canada's Sovereign Loans Program (SLP), the latter of which represents one of the few SLP disbursements since the program's creation in the 2018 Budget.

While positive developments for Ukrainians in need, these efforts notably contrast the Canadian government's response to the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 and the ongoing civil war in Ethiopia. Afghanistan and Ethiopia were Canada's top two overall aid recipients in 2021 with $178 million and $143 million in humanitarian assistance provided, respectively, according to the Canadian International Development Program.

"Holding into account the difficulties of comparing crises, it appears that Canada's proud claim to support and protect the international rules-based order only extends to certain geographies."

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Amidst the promotion of gender equality internationally, the response to the 2019 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) has been slow-paced. In June 2021, the federal government released the long-awaited 2021 Missing and

Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan and a Federal Pathway report outlining their commitments and contributions to the action plan. Garnering criticism for the lack of timelines and implementation funding resources, the federal government promised a co-developed implementation plan for the Federal Pathway. However, a plan is yet to surface and there have been cooperation issues, with some Indigenous groups stating that they have been excluded from the plan's development process despite their voluntary efforts in reaching out to the government to assist.

Despite this poor track record, improved progress on the MMIWG file could be coming in the near future as a result of the Liberal-NDP deal in March 2022. The partnership calls for faster action on implementing the Federal Pathway and creating a multi-jurisdictional table on MMIWG between federal, provincial, and territorial governments to support the implementation. In addition, Budget 2021 allocated $180 million directly towards the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People. Still, progress is riddled with poor implementation and issues such as the appointment of a non-Indigenous man to executive director of the MMIWG Secretariat, which generated substantial criticism.

FALLING BEHIND IN THE BOOKS

Education was a key topic on the table at the 2021 G7 Leaders' Summit, with members expected to announce their renewed commitments to the largest global education fund, the Global Partnership for Education. This summit prompted high expectations for Trudeau's government in large part due to their championing of the file three years prior while hosting the Charlevoix Summit. However, hopes were left unfulfilled, with Prime Minister Trudeau announcing $300 million to the partnership over 5 years and falling far below the suggested amount of $500 million. As multiple reports cite that COVID-19 has reversed gains in education, alongside other social development efforts, many advocates have called the government's funding pledge inadequate. Furthermore, funding is an important factor in confirming the government's commitment to the issue since Minister Sajjan and his predecessor Minister Gould have had tasks in their mandate letters to strengthen action in international education.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

SECURITY

C

In light of constantly evolving domestic and international threats, Canada's security file is quite complex. China continues to threaten global order, rivalling the U.S. for the position of geopolitical superpower, while Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine threatens to disrupt the international system for decades. Consistent with last year's Report Card, the Trudeau government earns a C for its accountability, transparency, and overall performance in security.

An Abacus Data poll, which highlights the top perceived threat to Canada by Canadians, indicates the threat of climate change and China's emergence as a global power as top security concerns for the general public. Potential pandemics took third spot as the top perceived threats. In reality, Canadians tend to be complacent and less concerned with matters of national security. However, the Trudeau government's insufficient coordination and foresight, outdated security strategy, and far too responsive and ad-hoc approach to security

have left the country flat-footed, scrambling to juggle both new and old threats.

CHINA AND RUSSIA – GAMES OF CHESS AND CHECKERS

While both China and Russia remain important concerns to national security, the threats posed by these two countries manifest in quite different ways. Russia's "crash and bang" actions are an immediate global threat, requiring continuous monitoring and immediate international action. However, China's geopolitical strategies, notably their acquisition of strategic materials rights and a rising sphere of influence through the Belt and Road Initiative, reflect a much longer-term shift in the world order that will have more significant implications for future global security.

China's impact on Canadian safety and security can also be seen through broad disinformation campaigns, notably China's foreign interference campaign during the 2021 election against the Conservative Party that targeted Chinese-Canadian voters. Although this interference campaign was not indicative of shifting the election outcome, according to Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), it connects to the greater narrative of threats to Canada's democratic processes.

Tensions with China have created a division between Canada's political parties. The Conservative boycott of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) ended earlier this year, in response to former Conservative leader Erin O'Toole's concerns about how the Trudeau government handled information from the Winnipeg lab incident in July 2019. After stripping two scientists of their security clearances from the country's Level 4 National Microbiology Lab, worries were raised about possible Chinese espionage. The government instructed for documents to be submitted to NSICOP instead of to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). This limits the transparency and public accessibility of the information since the Committee submits classified reports directly to the Prime Minister instead of Parliament.

Furthermore, the Liberal's decision to shut down the Special Committee on Canada-China relations, with consensus from the Conservatives, has closed an important avenue for bilateral communication while minimizing government capacity

to monitor China's operational influence in Canada. Although there has been pressure to reopen the committee, limited technical capacity in Parliament under the pandemic conditions has reduced the number of special committees that can run simultaneously.

"The gap in understanding Canada-China relations will undoubtedly raise national anxiety over China's long-term geopolitical strategies and will have broader implications for Canadian security."

The perceived threat of China spans into the discussion on Trudeau's decision – or lack thereof – to ban China's 5G technology. Highlighted in the previous year's Report Card as the "dragon in the room," the Liberal government is still holding out on making a decision despite international pressure. All other Five Eyes Alliance countries – Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. – have already banned or restricted Huawei, while China has stated that Canada "will pay a price" if it follows suit, which may manifest in banning Canadian exports. Regardless, delaying this decision only complicates the implementation of 5G technology by telecommunication companies and pushes Canada further behind in innovation and technological capacity. Canada's security and espionage concerns with China and Russia extend beyond Huawei and the invasion of Ukraine. CSIS Director David Vigneault voiced concerns over Beijing's threats to Canadian national sovereignty and security. With more targets towards health, biopharma, quantum computing, aerospace, ocean technology, and artificial intelligence, cyber security threats are mounting frequently, requiring a coordinated and foresight-driven national response. With the proposal of $875.2 million over five years, Budget 2022 allocates significant funds to enhance the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) in providing foreign signal intelligence and information technology security to the federal government. Recognizing the importance of research in staying proactive on cyber security threats, the budget also proposes $17.7 million over five years to fund academic research on pertinent CSE work, with the hopes of providing

intersectoral action for Canada's security file.

EFFECTIVENESS OF CSIS

CSIS has fallen under scrutiny in recent years. Under the Anti-Terrorism Act, the organization's mandate expanded in 2015 to allow for a Threat Reduction Mandate but has several gaps and inconsistencies in its documentation process. A review conducted by the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA) indicates that although CSIS met its ministerial obligations, the agency must consider on a case-by-case basis how its engagement with third parties restricts individual rights.

Additionally, a recent internal audit indicated that CSIS failed to consistently follow all required stages and steps to execute warrants. Without clear definitions or an established documentation and monitoring process, there is a substantial grey area surrounding the invocation process of warrants. Insufficient training and a lack of quality control measures, as well as CSIS' past withholdings of audit content, challenge the organization's overall performance and transparency. Although there are still limitations in the formalized documentation process to justify when and why legal advice is not adhered to, publishing reviews of CSIS reflect efforts to be more accountable and accessible to the Canadian public.

The borderless nature of the internet and social media platforms creates a space for greater IMVE, which includes both white supremacy and other far right-wing extremist movements. This poses particular challenges to security, since there are limited resources deployed to attempt to counter threats without a set geographic location. With several IMVE attacks occurring over the last few years, notably at the Quebec City Mosque in 2017 and at the Toronto spa in 2020, IMVE poses a national threat to Canadian security. Between February and June 2021, seven IMVE entities were added to Canada's Criminal Code list, including six organizations and one individual.

More recently, CSIS has redirected priorities to actively address IMVE. Vigneault has raised concerns about whether the agency has both the capacity and degree of public trust required to diligently address these threats, and has pushed for an expanded mandate that would grant greater warrant powers on data usage and collection related to basic

subscriber information – mainly addresses, account holder's information, emails, and phone numbers. There is controversy surrounding if this extension of power should be given to CSIS or not, or if the organization should instead focus on leveraging its existing powers more effectively. Nonetheless, any expanded mandate that grants greater warrant powers will need to assure public trust and emphasize transparency, a relative shortcoming in Trudeau's security file.

CANADA'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

From failed early warning systems and outdated technology to the impacts of continued border restrictions, COVID-19 has exposed cracks in the Liberal's capacity to respond to and manage fast-moving global threats effectively. When the pandemic reached Canada in early 2020, PHAC was not prepared, as the agency was understaffed and the Chief Health Surveillance Officer position had been vacant since 2017. An independent review issued by former Minister of Health Patty Hajdu revealed that a 2016 surveillance plan for pandemic detection never received any formal approval, indicating that poor surveillance in infectious disease reporting had been a reality for the years leading up to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Underpinning Trudeau's slow action against COVID-19 is the Global Public Health Intelligence Network (GPHIN), a monitoring system that is severely underfunded and has been since the Harper administration. Created by PHAC in 1997, GPHIN provides roughly 20% of the open-source intelligence information for the WHO and is credited with helping spot both the SARS and H1N1 outbreaks. However, outdated technology, a lack of funding, and meagre government support have rendered this surveillance system nearly obsolete.

Adding insult to injury, Canada's military medical intelligence branch known as MEDINT tracked early pandemic warnings up to three weeks ahead of other open-source information. PHAC seemed to rely solely on the WHO for pandemic information, but early warnings from MEDINT could have allowed for faster action by the government. The underutilization of MEDINT and GPHIN reflect a more pervasive gap in cross-departmental communication, as well as antiquated technology, both of which weaken Canada's

security file. Ultimately, the Liberal's lack of preparation for the pandemic serves as a wake-up call for national security strategy reform.

FREEDOM AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

The trade-off between national security and individual freedoms and privacy is a consistent grey area in security that has become more evident during the pandemic. In efforts to better understand Canada's population movement and the spread of COVID-19, PHAC collected data from 33 million mobile devices to be analyzed by a third party. The data is de-identified and cannot be used to track individual travel habits or specific locations; however, privacy and data collection have been cited as potential security concerns. Although Canada has a robust security review system that strongly protects individual rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the balance between lawful access to information and maintaining national security is a policy area the government tends to avoid addressing explicitly. This returns to the discussion of governmental transparency and public education when dealing with matters of security.

This trade-off between individual rights and collective national security manifested quite evidently through the Freedom Convoy in early 2022. Over the course of several weeks, protestors and trucks protested COVID-19 related restrictions across Canada, most prominently in Ottawa's downtown core. Protests included blatant displays of right-wing extremism and disinformation, raising concerns for Canadian security and contributing to a rise in IMVE. It would be naive to assume that extremist sentiments are new to Canada, especially considering that populism and political polarization forces in the U.S. have influenced Canadian politics.

After weeks of protests, Trudeau's decision to invoke the Emergencies Act for the first time in Canadian history, granting additional and temporary powers to Cabinet, proves the public safety concerns of the downtown occupation. Beyond supporting local police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) efforts, the Act mandated that crowdfunding platforms register with Canada's financial intelligence agency, Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FinTRAC). The debate as to whether or not the Emergencies Act should

have been used, as well as minimal justification from the government, indicate gaps in transparency and clear communication of security issues to the general public. The government's delayed response to the Freedom Convoy reflects a much more reactive than proactive approach to security, while also identifying the need for better foresight and a "whole of Canada" security policy.

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

From a lack of continuity between U.S. and Canadian border policies to economic consequences caused by restricted cross-border management, COVID-19 indicates a need for updated security priorities at Canada's borders that incorporate greater preparation for international threats and enhance cross-departmental communication. Although health security is a pressing issue, there are other border-related threats that will redefine Canadian security priorities. Canada's unique geography, which has reduced invasion threats in the past, will not be as effective as technology and the impacts of climate change become increasingly borderless.

Additionally, Arctic security will have higher stakes as world powers fight to stake a claim on shipping routes, resources, and regional influence, with added concern from Russia's aggressive military action against Ukraine. Digital threats may require technological solutions, including facial recognition and artificial intelligence, which once again push Canada into the grey area of balancing security with personal privacy rights.

"The pandemic has revealed the Trudeau government's lack of foresight and capacity to tackle emerging threats with coherence and transparency."

Given the expansion of what is defined as a national security threat since Canada's last security strategy reform in 2004 following the 9/11 attacks, the government must rethink strategies to combat these evolving threats. Through the publicly available NSIRA and NSICOP reports, as well as a willingness of prominent members in Canada's security agencies to engage in public

conversations, there seems to be a trend of greater security transparency and a shift to welcoming security review processes. With the recent agreement struck between the NDP and Liberal parties, there is also an opportunity for more substantial government alignment on security issues, including potential reform.

The recommendation of a new Cabinet committee on national security that harnesses collaboration between the Office of the Prime Minister, the Privy Council Office, GAC, DND, and Public Safety Canada is one avenue to establish more robust, cross-departmental action on security threats. Ultimately, a coordinated national strategy with a forward-thinking mandate is absolutely crucial in addressing security issues, preparing the Liberal government to respond to emerging and non-traditional security threats with coordination, efficiency, and efficacy.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

C+

The environment and climate change are key pieces of the government's foreign policy agenda, which includes multiple new commitments and pledges announced throughout the 2021 federal election and the twenty sixth annual United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP 26) as well as a highly anticipated Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP) and Budget 2022. From doubling climate finance and placing a cap on oil and gas emissions to increasing GHG emission targets and mandating 100% zero-emission vehicles by 2035, the government has a lengthy, ambitious list of deliverables.

Leading these efforts is Minister of Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault, a former Greenpeace activist who took on the role in October 2021. The appointment is widely seen as a positive development and signal of a stronger stance on climate change from the Trudeau government. With Canadians increasingly viewing global climate change as the top foreign policy priority, according to a 2021 Abacus Data poll, there is an opportunity

for greater Canadian leadership on climate change. However, the Liberal government's recent approval of a new oil project and creation of a so-called "fossil fuel subsidy" in Budget 2022 have called into question such a possibility. In order for the government to achieve its bold environment agenda and build much needed credibility on the file, the present gap between rhetoric and reality needs to be drawn closed alongside the ironing out of policy details. Consequently, the grade for the environment and climate change file has downgraded from a B last year to a C+ this year.

RAISING THE BAR FOR EMISSION TARGETS

The federal government released an updated National Determined Contribution (NDC) in advance of COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland. An ambitious new plan, the government has expanded its goal to reduce GHG emissions from 30% below 2005 levels by 2030 to 40 to 45%. However, multiple environmental reports find that these new targets fail to meet the Paris Agreement's 1.5-degree Celsius limit nor Canada's fair share.

A key component to achieving Canada's strengthened climate goals is the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act (Bill C-12). Confirming the Liberal government's commitment to net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, the Act received Royal Assent in June 2021. The climate accountability framework stipulates emission reduction targets every five years (2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045) and these targets need to be announced ten years in advance. There is also an interim 2026 objective to offer guidance to working towards Canada's updated NDC, which serves as the federal government's 2030 target. For each set of targets, ERPs will be created and include opportunities for submissions from provinces, territories, Indigenous groups, and other stakeholders. Additionally, a Net-Zero Advisory Body has been formed to support these target creations and provide advice on reduction plans.

In terms of accountability, each set of targets will have progress reports and final assessments. While this helps satisfy the calls of environmental organizations for more transparency, the Act lacks teeth for proper enforcement. If a target is missed, the only response the Act stipulates is an examination of why the target was not met and what the government will do in response. With a poor track record

in meeting climate targets, concern is warranted over the government's ability to meet these new targets and the impetus to do so in the face of no legal consequences. These latter issues of government interest and willpower have emerged in other contexts as well. For instance, according to the Funding Climate-Ready Infrastructure performance audit, Infrastructure Canada softened its reporting requirements for tracking environmental impacts of federally funded infrastructure projects following program complaints.

In this context, the Trudeau government's release of its first ERP has been welcome and eagerly awaited following a 6-month extension. The 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan: Canada's Next Steps for Clean Air and a Strong Economy serves as an implementation guide for how Canada will achieve its latest NDC goal of 40 to 45% GHG emissions by 2030 from below 2005 levels. Defining a pathway for the 2026 emission objective, 2030 target, and setting Canada off to a strong start towards net-zero by 2050, this plan is the most detailed climate plan in Canada yet. The ERP is centred upon nine pillars including the Low Carbon Economy Fund, green buildings, electric vehicles (EVs), oil and gas pollution, renewable energy, industry adaptations, nature and nature-based solutions, agricultural innovations, and carbon pricing. However, with nine key pillars identified, numerous initiatives introduced, and over $9 billion in funding, the implementation of the ERP would benefit from prioritizing its top goals.

The key developments to carbon pricing, oil and gas, and other issue areas will be discussed shortly; however, one notable update is the setting of the 2026 interim emission goals of 20% below 2005 levels which offers a check-in point before the first 2030 target. With the environmental agenda set and the process of implementation beginning, the Trudeau government can count on additional support in the House of Commons for climate legislature given the recently finalized Liberal-NDP agreement. Most of the climate specific points identified in the agreement are calls for continued advancement of pre-existing commitments and pledges; however, this solidified support is nonetheless positive for the advancement of the environment and climate change file.

FUNDING FOR THE FUTURE

Climate finance is an increasingly popular tool to address climate change. For instance, the G7 made a goal in 2009 to raise $100 billion USD for climate change mitigation in vulnerable countries per year by 2020. However, these efforts have fallen short even amidst fundraising efforts from Germany and Canada at COP 26. As a result, the target will likely be met in 2023. A similar story of insufficient climate funding emerges in Canada as well. In June 2021, the Liberals doubled their international climate finance commitment to $5.3 billion over the next five years, yet various calculations conclude that this amount is not sufficient to meet Canada's fair share.

Preference for climate finance through multilateral channels will continue as the 2021 Climate Finance Delivery Plan, a plan that Canada co-led with Germany at COP 26, encourages continued collaboration with multilateral development banks (MDBs). From 2015 to 2021, over 50% of Canada's $2.65 billion climate finance disbursement went to MDBs and Canadian climate funds housed within them. Although many MDBs incorporate gender equality into their programming, this financing channel presents difficulties in terms of tracking funding and its alignment with the Trudeau government's commitment to have 80% of climate finance go towards projects that incorporate gender equality.

Funding mechanisms also present another concern as Canada's climate finance is largely provided through loans, ranking third amongst the OECD-DAC in 2019 for its loan financing. This past year, the federal government aligned with the 2021 Climate Finance Delivery Plan calls for greater use of grants to support vulnerable countries and announced that the use of grants would increase by 10%, moving from 30% to 40%. While a positive development in general and especially welcomed amidst the added economic difficulties brought on by COVID-19, the primary provision of loans in the context of the climate crisis is problematic. Many vulnerable countries have not been the main contributors to the current climate crisis, whereas Canada is the tenth largest GHG contributor as of 2018. Although the federal government is taking a step in the right direction, further action on grants needs to be taken to acknowledge Canada's role in the climate crisis and address the issue of fairness.

HALTING FOSSIL FUEL FINANCING

Canada's reputation within the international community has been tarnished due to its continued support of fossil fuel developments. At first glance, Minister Guilbeault's mandate letter appears promising in addressing these concerns with goals to end both public financing and subsidies of fossil fuel development. However, limited progress and the new carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) tax credit announced in Budget 2022 have cast doubt on these promises.

The 2021 Climate Transparency Report ranks Canada third among G20 countries in terms of conditional and unconditional fossil fuel subsidies, with over half of subsidies from the start of 2020 to August 2021 being unconditional in nature. Despite shortening the timeline to end fossil fuel subsidies from 2025 to 2023, the Trudeau government's commitment to the issue has been lacking given Budget 2022's $2.6 billion allotment to CCUS tax credits over the next five years. The Budget's biggest climate policy investment has gone towards a tax credit that many environmental groups have called a "fossil fuel subsidy."

In terms of public financing fossil fuel developments, Canada ranks fourth in the 2021 Climate Transparency report's list of G20 countries' public financing for fossil fuels. Both Minister Guilbeault's mandate letter and the ERP mention the creation of a plan to phase out public financing of fossil fuel developments. However, no further details have been provided beyond the NDP-Liberal agreement stating "early moves" for the plan in 2022. In terms of international efforts, the Liberal government signed the Statement on International Public Support for the Clean Energy Transition at COP 26, becoming 1 of 30 countries committed to stopping financial support for foreign unabated fossil fuel projects. While seemingly positive, the word "unabated" is critical as it prevents a full departure from fossil fuel projects, highlighting the government's hesitation and unwillingness to commit to a complete transition from fossil fuels.

CUTTING BACK ON COAL

The 2021 federal election brought a welcomed campaign promise of ending thermal coal exports by 2030. However, previous criticism of "shipping" emissions abroad while cutting back domestic use of thermal coal remains valid. Canada shipped over 11 million tonnes of thermal

coal in the past year, including exporting U.S. coal, according to global think tank Ember. Canada has also notably increased coal exports to China in the past year alongside other major coal producers as China continues to ban Australian coal. At the same time, these developments stand in stark contrast to the federal government's increased concern over the anticipated environmental effects of sustained thermal coal mining, having noted that thermal coal projects and expansions have "unacceptable environmental effects."

Turning toward metallurgical coal, there are no commitments pertaining to reduced production or exports. Metallurgical coal is primarily used for steelmaking and accounts for almost half of Canada's coal and the majority of the country's coal exports. However, a key reason behind this is the fact that there are fewer green alternatives for steelmaking, whereas thermal coal is often used for electricity generation and there is an abundance of sustainable options. As a result, Canada, as well as many international pledges and commitments, tend to focus only on thermal coal.

CAPPING AND CREDITS – OIL AND GAS

Reducing oil and gas emissions is another key priority of the Trudeau government indicated in Minister Guilbeault's mandate letter, with plans to establish five-year targets to reduce emissions and work towards achieving net-zero in the oil and gas sector by 2050. Given that Canada is the fourth largest oil and gas producer in the world, emission reductions in this sector represent a significant opportunity for international leadership on the file. However, this window of opportunity appears to be closing quickly, due to government policies and actions being riddled with inconsistencies.

First, ERP progress has been slower than hoped, with implementation details of the oil and gas cap not included in the March 2022 release. In addition, the emission target for oil and gas was less ambitious than anticipated; the government called for a 31% reduction of emissions below 2005 levels by 2030, while much higher emission cuts were called for in other sectors. The specifics of emission regulations can be expected in late 2022 or 2023 following consultations with various stakeholders.

Expectations have also been dashed by the government's lack of commitment on transitioning away from oil. Although the shift is complicated by Canada's jurisdictional division of powers, which grants control of oil and gas production to provincial and territorial governments, the recent approval of Canada's first remote deep-water oil project is telling. Merely a few weeks after the ERP release, the Bay du Nord oil project off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador has been given the green light, much to the dismay of environmentalists. In fact, three environmental groups (Ecojustice, Sierra Club Canada, and Équiterre) banded together in May 2022 to file a lawsuit against Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, and Equinor (the Norwegian oil company leading the project) with hopes to stop the project. The federal government's reluctance to move away from the oil and gas sector is also seen in the new CCUS tax credits, with the government heavily relying on carbon capture technology amidst concerns in the environmental field about CCUS effectiveness.

While reviewing these domestic developments, the impact of international events must not be underestimated. As the world experiences rising inflation and oil prices, contradictions emerge between the short-term need for non-Russian energy sources and the long-term goal of net-zero emissions. Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson tried to reconcile these differences at the March 2022 International Energy Agency's ministerial meeting, noting Canada's desire to help allies by increasing oil exports by 5% and still maintain sight of broader climate commitments. However, with calls such as Alberta Premier Jason Kenney's for increased energy exports and a revival of the cancelled Keystone XL Pipeline, it is clear that finding a balance between these two goals will prove extremely difficult.

STALLED OUT – CANADA-U.S. ELECTRIC VEHICLES DISPUTE

Building on a key campaign promise to achieve a 50% target of new light-duty vehicles being zero-emission by 2030 and 100% by 2035, the recent ERP has increased EV targets further, with 20% of new light-duty vehicles being zero-emission by 2026 and 60% by 2030. There are a multitude of supports to encourage EV sales in Canada, including rebate programs in six provinces and two

territories as well as the federal government's Incentives for Zero-Emissions Vehicles. A brand new $1.7 billion funding allotment through the ERP has also been announced to continue credits for EV purchasers with further details to be released. Charging station infrastructure is getting a boost as well to entice EV buyers, with the Budget 2022 allotting $400 million over the next 5 years to increase the number of charging stations.

Though measures to increase EV uptake are being set up, production and material supply have both faced challenges. Despite shared messages of collaboration and improvement to the Canada-U.S. Critical Minerals Action Plan by President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau at the start of 2021, the road map of Canada-U.S. EV partnership has been stalled by protectionist U.S. policy. The Build Back Better bill, which is currently awaiting a vote in the Senate House, has sparked concern amongst many governments and auto-sectors as Biden's plan offers an additional tax credit to American consumers if they purchase an EV assembled by American union-workers. Seeking to avoid retaliatory tariffs, Trudeau has proposed aligning Canada's tax policies with the U.S. in return for the inclusion of Canadian-made EVs. No major developments have transpired since, however, leaving the Canadian government and auto-sector waiting to see whether the U.S. Senate will act in their favour.

In addition, the government has taken steps to strengthen critical mineral supply chains which will directly support the EV sector. Budget 2022 introduced a $3.8 billion investment over the next eight years to implement a Critical Minerals Strategy. The first of its kind in Canada, the strategy's effectiveness remains to be seen as details surrounding the strategy have yet to be rolled out.

WINS AND WOES IN CARBON PRICING PROGRESS

As a matter of national concern, the federal government has implemented a carbon pollution pricing system since 2019 to help reduce GHG emissions. The system entails a two-part federal backstop – a federal fuel charge and a federal Output-Based Pricing System that targets industry – which provinces or territories must utilize should they not have their own cap and trade system in place that meets or exceeds the federal one. Currently, the backstops apply to Yukon, Nunavut, and Manitoba in full, and in four provinces, only

one of the two backstops applies. While the carbon tax is presently $50 per tonne, the minimum price is set to increase by $15 per tonne annually from 2023-2030 to reach a price of $170.

However, this system has faced legal opposition by the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, all of whom launched separate appeals against the federal government's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act claiming the Act is unconstitutional and a matter of provincial jurisdiction. In March 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada reached a decision and ruled in favour of the federal government and the federal carbon backstop. Providing a pressure relief to the provincial-federal relationship, this court decision has brought clarity to the cross-jurisdictional issue and supported further developments in the climate change file.

Turning to the international stage, Canada advocated for a global price on carbon at the COP 26 Summit in November 2021. Co-hosting a panel discussion on carbon pricing, Trudeau pushed for 60% of the planet's GHG emissions to be covered under carbon taxes by 2030, in comparison to the current 20%. However, Canada's leadership on this file faces challenges. Having seen the initial opposition to the federal backstop for carbon pricing within Canada, the difficulty of implementation is apparent to other countries. Also, while Canada's pricing system serves as an example to other countries, Canada's overall credibility on the climate change file internationally is weakened by consistent failures to meet reduction targets over the past 30 years.

"An improved track record is necessary for Canada to command more credibility as a leader in climate change efforts."

Modifications and additions to Canada's carbon pricing system are possible in the near future, with the ERP highlighting the government's desire to legislate carbon pricing and Budget 2021 laying out a consultation process to consider border carbon adjustments (BCA). BCAs present another measure to combat GHG emissions, incorporating carbon pricing into international trade to prevent carbon leakage and ensure Canadian companies remain

competitive despite carbon costs. With the United Kingdom and the U.S. on the path to BCAs and the European Union (EU) set to implement a BCA system by 2023, BCAs are gaining momentum. With the first round of BCA consultations completed, it remains to be seen whether Canada will join other countries in creating BCAs.

SLOW GROWTH TO 2 BILLION TREES

Following disappointing findings in late 2020 that no trees had been planted in relation to the Trudeau government's 2019 pledge to plant 2 billion trees by 2030, this past year brought some progress, yet skepticism remains. The tree planting program's $3.16 billion in funding was dispersed starting in spring 2021 under the leadership of Natural Resources Canada. Aiming to increase the disbursement size and trees planted each year, annual funding is expected to increase six-fold in the next four years from $60 million in 2021 to $355 million in 2025. However, concerns still plague the program as an access-to-information request by the Canadian Press found that only 8.5 million trees had been planted as of mid-November 2021, falling short of the 30 million planting goal for 2021. With 60 million trees expected to be planted in 2022, the program's poor track record thus far yields little optimism.

PROTEST DOUBLE STANDARDS

Amidst efforts to plant trees, tensions are also rising around old growth trees. The Fairy Creek old-growth logging protests on Vancouver Island in British Columbia have become the epicentre for old-growth logging disputes. Centred upon one of the few remaining unprotected old-growth forests and its logging by the Teal-Jones Group, the protests have been occurring for almost two years. With a court injunction permitting logging and allowing the RCMP to remove protestors, more than 1200 people have been arrested as of January 2022 in what is now the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history. Attempts to mediate the issue have been pursued with little progress. The province created the 2020 Old Growth Strategic Review which offers many recommendations; however, the review only defers logging from certain areas. Of the deferments that have occurred, implementation has been criticized as slow while meanwhile, the B.C. Court of Appeal has reinstated the injunction against protestors after an initial extension was denied.

With the high numbers of arrests made and concerns over police brutality and media access, the treatment of protestors at Fairy Creek are in sharp contrast to the protestors involved in the Freedom Convoy that occupied the capital city for a month over vaccine mandates. The blatant double standards ring true beyond the Fairy Creek blockade to other Indigenous protests, resurfacing the longstanding issues of racism and discrimination in Canada.

PLASTIC WASTE DELAY

At the One Ocean Summit in February 2022, Trudeau announced Canada's membership to the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, a group of over 500 governments and businesses focused on reducing plastic pollution. He also showed support for the UN Environment Assembly's budding efforts to form a legally binding agreement on plastics.

However, this rhetoric surrounding strong action on plastic pollution contrasts recent developments on Canada's own Zero Plastic Waste by 2030 campaign promise. Already behind schedule, the government released a Single-Use Plastic Prohibition Regulations proposal in December 2021 with final regulations anticipated for the end of 2022, although the latter was originally expected for 2021. The regulation bans the use of six single-use plastic products including grocery bags, six-pack rings, stir sticks, straws, cutlery, and certain food packaging containers with hard to recycle plastics. A major downfall of the regulation, however, is the failure to ban the exporting of these single-use products. With many environmental groups sharing concern over this component of the regulations, there is ample opportunity for the government to revise the regulations before the end of year and demonstrate their commitment to the issue.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES

C+

Under the backdrop of COVID-19 this past year, the Liberal government and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) have had to address Canada's immigration and refugee policies under particularly complex circumstances. Unprecedented immigration backlogs stand in stark contrast to the anticipated transition to a digital application process, while continued controversy over the Safe Third Country Agreement with the U.S. has been pushed to the sidelines in the name of border security. With ambitious immigration targets set for the next few years, the cases of Afghanistan and Ukraine highlight double standards between the Liberal's response to the two refugee crises and add layers to Canada's migration pathways. Ultimately, the Trudeau government's performance in the immigration and refugee file is downgraded from a B- in last year's Report Card to a C+, having some successes amidst growing shortcomings.

AMBITIOUS PANDEMIC IMMIGRATION

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of Canada's immigration and refugee file is achieving the 2021 immigration target of 401,000 new permanent residents. Accomplished under additional obstacles given the pandemic, this number surpasses the previous highest immigration intake in a single year, which was set in 1913. Due to pandemic-caused border closures and travel restrictions, typical immigration strategies could not be fully realized and alternate strategies had to be implemented. For instance, emphasis was placed on processing temporary resident applications to achieve the 2021 immigration target. Additionally, the guardian angel strategy was crucial in granting permanent residency to people claiming asylum in Canada who work in the health-care sector.

Canada's Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot Program, created in 2018, has been another avenue used to facilitate skilled refugee resettlement and mitigate national labour shortages. Through the program, skilled refugees are able to qualify for certain economic immigration programs in Canada, including the Atlantic Immigration Pilot, the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, and the Provincial Nomination Program. The Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program in particular has shown success in population and labour retention in the Atlantic Canada region, facilitating family reunification efforts and supporting local businesses in filling labour quotas. Specifically, this program includes employers and companies in the process of hiring foreign nationals to fill vacancies that had not been filled through local labour, while also making companies responsible for the recruitment and settlement processes of their employees. With a 90% retention rate of refugees, the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program's success in the region has expanded to include expedited permanent residency applications as of March 2022.

A cornerstone to the Liberal's COVID-19 economic recovery plan, immigration is essential for the Canadian labour market, accounting for nearly 100% of Canadian labour force growth. Looking specifically at the health sector, 36% of physicians, 23% of registered nurses, 39% of dentists, and 27% of pharmacists in Canada are immigrants, which is important considering the rising strain on Canada's health care system since 2020. Immigration will also be

key in addressing domestic labour shortages, currently hovering around 500,000 jobs.

NEW YEAR, SAME BACKLOG

At nearly 1.8 million applications, immigration backlog is a stubborn reoccurrence at the IRCC. A variety of factors contribute to this substantial backlog, including limited overseas operational capacity, border closures, and travel restrictions throughout the pandemic. To address the significant backlog, Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland allocated $85 million for the next fiscal year, which Sean Fraser – Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship – noted as important for digitizing Canada's immigration system.

Although it could take years to completely convert the paper-based system, Minister Fraser anticipates the funding and streamlined digital process will increase Canada's immigration capacity and allow the IRCC to achieve higher targets going forward. Given the NDP values on addressing backlogs and supporting family reunification, the recent Supply and Confidence Agreement between the Liberal and NDP parties may help fast-track this challenge.

On the other hand, criticism has been drawn from Budget 2022, which allocates $1.3 billion in funding to the Canada Border Services Agency, CSIS, and the Immigration and Refugee Board to address the integrity of the Canadian asylum system. Rather than adapting current shortcomings in the application system, this funding emphasizes bureaucratic strengthening and solidifying existing application processes, without clarity on how these funds will address the backlog or ameliorate obstacles to seeking asylum. With criticism from opposition members of parliament, Trudeau's Liberals must take a hard look at if budget money is being leveraged effectively, especially given the urgency of ongoing crises in Syria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine.

Backlogs and long wait times are not new realities for Canada's immigration and refugee file, speaking to a broader trade-off between processing applications and maintaining a healthy application supply. Although high levels of immigration are needed to maintain domestic labour and facilitate economic growth, certain security processes – background checks, health screening, and identity verification, to name a few – can only be automated to a certain extent without compromising quality.

While digitization can help mitigate backlogs, internal capacity through immigration officers is also needed to efficiently process applications and uphold national security, although the IRCC has not announced any significant training campaigns to scale up staff. The Trudeau government must do a better job at balancing public confidence with the integrity of Canada's internationally regarded application process, especially given the criticisms mentioned above.

THE DOUBLE STANDARDS OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

The fall of Afghanistan's government in 2021 shortly after Biden's decision to pull out American troops added an additional crisis to the rising global refugee population, while undermining Canada's longstanding efforts in the country. In August 2021, the Taliban seized Kabul and 26 of 34 provincial capitals in 10 days, triggering massive violence, instability, and the displacement of over 500,000 people, mainly women and children. In response, the Canadian government set a target of welcoming 20,000 refugees, which then doubled to 40,000, through two specific avenues: a special immigration program for Afghan nationals and their families who have assisted the Government of Canada, and a humanitarian program targeting vulnerable Afghan nationals such as women leaders, LGBTQ+ individuals, and journalists. Considering the Taliban's historically horrific treatment of women, assuring the protection and safety of Afghan women and girls is essential and in line with FIAP.

As of April 2022, the special immigration program has received 14,895 applications, approved 10,195, and welcomed 5,645 Afghans into Canada. In addition, the humanitarian program has brought 5,720 Afghans into the country. These numbers, although a start, are still far from the 40,000 target which is estimated to be reached in two years. This large and vague resettlement timeline is attributed to poor infrastructure within Afghanistan and the lack of a Canadian diplomatic presence in Kabul since the capital's seizure, as well as efficiency and directionality issues within the IRCC. Additionally, an October 2021 data breach by the IRCC revealed nearly 200 names and some pictures of vulnerable Afghans, further complicating the precarious situation that many Afghan citizens are in.

The slow process for Afghan resettlement also demonstrates the differences between Trudeau administration's

immigration and refugee targets this past year, with the latter falling disappointingly behind national objectives. Maintaining a target of resettling 81,000 refugees in 2021, the IRCC was only halfway to this goal by the end of October. Coupled with the 70,000-person backlog for privately sponsored refugees, the pandemic has exacerbated shortcomings and flaws in Canadian refugee migration pathways.

"Poor communication and directives between the federal government, private sponsors, and refugee applicants remain a challenge."

Furthermore, Trudeau's approach to Ukrainian refugees, which is a modification from the typical application process, stands in stark contrast to those of both Syrian and Afghan refugees. Through the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) initiative, the government created a pathway for extended temporary asylum for Ukrainians and their family members with no upper admission limit. Budget 2022 allocates $111 million over five years, as well as $6 million in future years, to implement the CUAET initiative. Not only does this establish new pathways, but it also expedites the application process to easily support Ukrainians coming into Canada.

In the last month alone, nearly 7,000 Ukrainians have arrived in Canada; this pales in comparison to the meagre 8,700 Syrian refugees resettled in the last year, despite a conflict spanning over a decade that has resulted in over 5.6 million refugees and 6.9 million internally displaced people. In addition, while the immigration process was streamlined for Ukrainian refugees, which included waiving certain biometric screening requirements and eliminating many normal visa requirements, Afghan refugees have not received similar allowances. Canada has the absorptive capacity to provide significant support for refugee resettlement, especially with the use of private sponsors. However, the variation in resettlement numbers from different global conflicts raise concerns about the Liberal government's preferential treatment of certain refugees over others.

CENTRAL AMERICAN MIGRATION CRISIS AND THE STCA

The Trudeau administration has also indicated its support for resettling Central American migrants. There has been a large influx of refugees and asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border, which has substantially increased during the pandemic. The November 2021 meeting between the "Three Amigos" further emphasized efforts for collaboration among the three countries.

Minister Fraser has met with the U.S., Central American countries, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to discuss strategies to address the Central American migration crisis. The 2021 Budget allocated $80.3 million spanning over two years to address the economic and political situation in Venezuela, which resulted in approximately six million refugees by the end of 2021. As Chair of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) Support Platform, the Canadian government also announced a 4-year initiative with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNHCR in December 2021, pledging $10 million to support women and girls impacted by displacement and migration in Central America while aligning with FIAP.

Despite these efforts, there is still controversy surrounding the STCA. An agreement between Canada and the U.S. since 2004, the STCA requires refugees or asylum seekers to claim asylum in the first of the two countries they enter at official land border crossings to eliminate inefficiencies or duplicate asylum claims. In 2020, Canada imposed stricter measures on the STCA in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 and control the surge in asylum seekers entering Canada between official points of entry.

These new provisions were found unconstitutional by the Federal Court of Canada in July 2020. This is due to contradictions to the rights of life, liberty, and security of the person, as well as arguments that the U.S. is not necessarily a "safe country" for refugees or asylum seekers based on border detention centres and documented mistreatments. However, the Trudeau government has continued to support the agreement despite criticism from opposition parties, civil society, and other actors, including the Canadian Council for Refugees. In April 2021, the federal government was granted an extension

to the STCA by the Federal Court of Appeal, keeping the agreements and its stricter measures in place.

There is a window of opportunity, although fleeting, with the Biden administration to revisit the objectives of SCTA. Previous Canadian responses to criticisms of the agreement were based on not trying to antagonize the Trump administration; however, the Biden administration's shift away from anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric shows more potential for modernizing the agreement. Present in both the 2019 and 2021 mandate letters, collaborating with the U.S. to modernize the STCA is a longstanding promise that the Trudeau government should honour to better serve incoming refugees and provide an equitable, safe resettlement process.

LOOKING AHEAD

With notable national progress on immigration targets that indicates quantitative immigration success, domestic events question Canada's status as a poster child for migration and inclusivity. In January 2022, the bodies of a family of four were discovered in Manitoba near the Canada-U.S. border, after arriving in Toronto from India only a week prior. Dying from exposure to extreme weather conditions, investigators believe that this family is tied to a group of people found travelling in a van south of the border and a larger international human smuggling operation. Although the case is still being investigated, this tragedy speaks to the realities and impacts of illegal migration that still occur within Canada's borders.

Additionally, the recent Freedom Convoy reflects rising populist sentiments that have the potential to threaten Canada's multicultural and inclusive identity. A platform for anti-mandate and anti-Trudeau rhetoric, the protests were used to further extremist agendas and garner greater anti-government support in Canada. The convoy raised millions of dollars in support through crowd-funding campaigns and included leaders and participants that made explicit anti-immigration and racist remarks. This movement, along with the rise in votes to the People's Party of Canada in September's federal election, highlights the rise of a right-wing extremist platform in Canada.

"Canada's immigration and refugee file is a mixed bag of successes and failures."

While certain internal efficiencies within the immigration and refugee file have become more evident over the last year, Canada's diplomatic reputation of developing norms and policies related to the global refugee regime fares well internationally, indicating both the programmatic and diplomatic nature of the Trudeau administration's migration priorities. However, the Liberal government's refusal to recognize the Taliban as a legitimate government limits the country's diplomatic arm in Afghanistan, contributing to the country's exclusion from the Oslo meetings. Although this does not necessarily translate to a complete failure in Canadian leadership on refugees and their rights, it is indicative of certain gaps in Trudeau's global refugee engagement, especially when considering the aforementioned double standards with regards to Afghan, Syrian, and Ukrainian immigration pathways.

Surrounded by three oceans, Canada's geographic position constrains the country's ability to deliver promises on refugee resettlement on intake numbers alone. As such, the Liberal government has leveraged its international reputation to expand multilateral agreements on immigration and refugees. However, contrasts in immigration pathways, enormous backlogs, and failing to modernize the STCA reflect the significant amount of work that needs to be done for Trudeau to accurately claim Canada's status as an international leader in the realm of immigration and refugees. Considering the crucial role immigration plays in furthering economic prosperity and multicultural objectives, the Trudeau administration must address domestic inefficiencies and re-evaluate aspects of its application processes to facilitate sustainable migration for pandemic recovery and beyond.

Photo Credit: Adam Scotti (PMO)

TRADE

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Canada is the only country with trade agreements with the EU and all G7 countries. However, lingering unresolved trade issues, bitter trade relationships, and a series of unpredicted events clouded the file this year. The Trudeau government's selection of trading partners, which range from those respecting human rights to those disregarding them, makes Canada appear inconsistent and hypocritical. While innovative efforts were taken to diversify trade and support women in trade in alignment with Canada's feminist foreign policy, the inability to solve the aforementioned existing problems dampens the Trudeau government's ability to improve from its previous grade of C+ in the 2021 Report Card. As a result, Canada's trade file receives a C.

CONNECTING BACK TO THE CROWN

The departure of the United Kingdom from the EU has pivoted the country's trading relationship with Canada. The Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement attempts to continue the long-lasting trade relationship between the two countries, notably addressing

the concern for minimal protection of Canadian dairy and cheese producers. The agreement serves as a protective shield for these producers by limiting the amount of British cheese imported to Canada. This action by the Liberal government prevented a repeat of 2020 when it had to pay over a billion dollars in compensation to dairy farmers due to the absence of cheese quotas in the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

The agreement will also alleviate the tariff barrier for small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), allowing Canada to easily export goods and take advantage of the $31 billion trading relationship. In addition, there is a particular focus on the role of women in the trade sector to rectify challenges that women face in international trade. It is expected that this specialized support for women will contribute billions of dollars to the Canadian economy. Furthermore, the agreement is predicted to showcase Canada's values of women's rights and gender equality while committing support for SMEs nationwide. However, until the agreement is fully executed, it is unknown if such lofty goals will be realized.

PROTECTING THE U.S.

The 2021 revival of the "Three Amigos" meeting brought the heads of government from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. together to discuss several multilateral issues. Collectively, the Liberals had high hopes that the meeting would lead to improved trade relations among the three countries. However, a less favourable result occurred.

President Biden's promotion of a protectionist agenda, at the expense of the Canadian economy, aims to increase domestic jobs and the prosperity of American businesses. For example, Biden proposed a $12,500 USD tax credit towards the purchase of EVs made in America. Though the majority of American vehicles source out Canadian nickel and cobalt to manufacture them, this may no longer be the case if the tax credit is to hold.

American protectionism is not a new or unforeseen circumstance for Canada; the same Trudeau government witnessed the Trump administration place tariff protections on American steel and aluminum. Those tariffs hindered bilateral trade between the two countries and required litigation through the WTO. This time around, Ministers Ng and

Freeland have been quick to respond, arguing the tax credits violate CUSMA guidelines and equate to a 34% tariff on Canadian assembled EVs. In addition, this would jeopardize the longstanding integration between the Canadian and American auto sectors. The consequences could expand beyond Canada as well, with other stakeholders such as the EU and Japan sharing concerns over the proposal. Seeking to avoid retaliatory tariffs, Trudeau has proposed aligning Canada's tax policies with the U.S. in return for the inclusion of Canadian-made EVs. However, no significant developments have transpired, leaving the Liberals waiting to see whether the U.S. Senate will act in their favour.

Moreover, both Canadian ministers fail to understand that the more significant issue in the picture is not American protectionism, but rather Trudeau's evergreen trade dependence on the U.S. for all major foreign policy matters, including trade. Rather than always relying on the actions of the American government, Canada is attempting to diversify its trading partners but appears to be stuck. On the one hand, failing to create more robust trade relations with U.S. has reduced Trudeau's ability to build a more autonomous presence in North America. On the other hand, Canada appears disadvantaged in finding proper trading partners at the continental and global level.

TRADE TENSIONS

The newly elected Biden administration hoped to ameliorate the unpleasant trade relationship between Canada and the U.S. Unfortunately, Canada, the U.S., and Mexico continue to breach CUSMA regulations.

For instance, America's ongoing allegations against Canada regarding dumping softwood lumber did not cease in 2021. Indeed, the Biden administration doubled tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber to 17.9%. Not surprisingly, these tariffs have led to a decrease in lumber exports to the U.S., according to Natural Resources Canada. Ironically, while the American government is decreasing lumber imports, the U.S. cannot produce enough to meet its demands. More than Canada, America's actions disadvantage U.S. construction companies as wood cost rises. Since the new tariffs by the U.S. are in violation of chapter 10 of CUSMA, Minister Ng launched a challenge in December 2021 to prevent further damage to the $25 billion forestry industry.

Additionally, trade relations worsened in November 2021 when the U.S. blocked potatoes from Prince Edward Island after discovering a non-debilitating soil-borne fungus. This four-month blockage resulted in lost revenue of $50 million, significantly hurting the province's farmers. Though this issue was partially resolved in March 2022, when table-stock potatoes were permitted to be traded if they met the new U.S. regulations, seed potatoes are still banned for another year. Seed potatoes make up 10% of Prince Edward Island's export output and the loss of this income will not be compensated by the government, unlike in the previous year when dairy farmers were provided compensation. While the Liberals invested $28 million in long-term strategies to prevent reoccurring export bans, the short-term impact to farmers has not been adequately addressed.

THE ASEAN ADVANTAGE?

To the rescue comes Canada's $3.5 billion Indo-Pacific strategy. Though trade diversification is important, avoiding China is not the solution, as Canadians demand Chinese goods and hundreds of Canadian businesses operate in China. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadian exports to China spiked by 8.2%, while exports to the U.S. plummeted by 14%. Despite Canada's negative perception of China, the countries' bilateral trading relationship has grown by 12%, presenting a sharp contrast to the Canada-U.S. average growth rate of 2.6% in the last two decades.

Yet the focus of the Liberal government is oriented towards ASEAN. While some ASEAN members such as Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore, and Malaysia are already partnered with Canada via the Comprehensive and Progressive Free Trade Agreement (CPTPP), partnering with ASEAN could provide Canadian market access to the remaining six members. The Asia-Pacific Foundation reported that 63% of Canadians support a free trade agreement (FTA) with the regional intergovernmental organization, a 40% increase from the same survey conducted a decade prior. However, this new FTA is forecasted to increase Canada's GDP by $6.5 billion or 0.3%, which taken at face value is not overly important or enabling for Canada's economy.

As the FTA is predicted to not boost the Canadian economy significantly, the agreement with ASEAN is largely a political strategy. The plan is an

integral element of all the mandate letters of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, and International Development. However, the government cannot forget its values of inclusive trade and rule-based order. For instance, the Philippines and Laos are home to high levels of violence and injustice, as well as poor working standards. It will be vital that Canada's Trade Minister Ng stands her ground to ensure that gender and human equality are upheld in any forth-coming trade agreements in the Indo-Pacific.

UNBALANCED PARTNERS – WORLD TOUR 2022

Even though the Trudeau administration preaches liberal values of inclusive trade and a rules-based order, the government continues to blur the lines between its utopian ideals and actions on international trade. During Prime Minister Trudeau's 2021 visit to the Netherlands, he emphasized the two countries' similarities in promoting human rights and equality. Yet Canada's ninth round of negotiations for an FTA with India will connect it to a country that is home to a high number of human rights abuses. Canada also seeks partnerships with Indonesia, which has consistent human rights violations as well. These range from discrimination against specific religious and ethnic groups to lack of media freedom, according to the 2021 Human Rights Watch report. A staple in inclusive trade and democratic objectives is Canada's notable feminist foreign policy, which fell short when the government failed to understand the high prevalence of women and other human rights abuses in certain Indo-Pacific countries. As a leader in the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement, it is concerning that Canada is planning to collaborate with nations with such low standards for women's working rights.

In the Middle East, Canada is a key player in the Yemen-Saudi Arabia conflict. For example, Canada's $15 billion agreement with Saudi Arabia to export light-armoured vehicles and sniper rifles has been called out by humanitarian groups and organizations.

"Canada seems to ignore its commitment to democratic and human rights principles through its involvement in the Arms Trade Treaty."

Canada became a member of the treaty in 2019, which strives to regulate international trade, specifically on weaponry and prevent the misuse of arms. Since Canadian law prohibits weapons trade to other countries if it violates human rights, Canada is presently in violation of domestic law by supplying weapons to Saudi Arabia. With reputable evidence that Canadian weapons are harming the Yemeni people, this brings into question the supposed gold standard for peace and democracy that Canada claims to uphold.

The tour of unbalanced trade partners continues on to Ethiopia, where the government is in the midst of a civil war with the Tigray population in the northern region of the country. Human rights abuses such as sexual assault and withholding food from children are occurring, but the Liberals continue to support the development of a $15 million investment in Ethiopia's mining sector. While other countries have pulled out of Ethiopia due to the human rights abuses, Canada continues apace.

Last on this tour is Paraguay, a key member of the Mercosur trading bloc and a country of interest for Canada. Gender-based violence with daily documented complaints and sharp income differences between men and women are just a few of the problems in this country. This brief survey indicates that the Liberals have a desire to create many trade agreements and are willing to sacrifice inclusivity and fairness to achieve that goal.

A BLOCK ON THE BRIDGE

An unexpected by-product of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Freedom Convoy significantly impacted trade relations with the U.S., frail existing supply chains, and SMEs. The estimated cost was $3.64 billion as the trucks blocked three important bridges: the Ambassador, Coutts, and Emerson. The Ambassador Bridge, for example, carries $360 million in goods each day, representing 25% of the goods trade between the U.S. and Canada. Although the Liberal government provided $20 million to support Ottawa businesses after the protest ended, the convoy has produced long-lasting effects with several trade-related operations expected to take months to fully revitalise.

SANCTIONS AS WAR

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a multi-dimensional issue, resulting in the creation of additional economic

sanctions by the Canadian government. A series of Russian exports that need permits are now obstructed by sanctions that hurt the production of prominent Canadian exports, notably in the agriculture, aerospace, technology, and mineral sectors. Since Russia was removed from Canada's Most-Favoured Nation status, any Russian goods imported into Canada, including rubber and fertilizer, face an additional 35% tariff. These increases will hurt key Canadian sectors and its consumers, as the unit cost will increase by a minimum of one-third. The impact will be broader too. For example, China and the U.S. are the leading importers of Canadian agriculture and aerospace goods, where a rise in these expenses can act as a barrier to flourishing trade relations. In addition, importing Russian gas and oil is prohibited.

With a handful of very prosperous nations banning Russian and Belarusian exports, the demand for Canadian potash exports could rise, as Russia and Canada are the leading potash exporters. The crisis also forces Canada's wheat industry to output more, as developing countries are deprived of this staple good due to their past reliance on Ukraine and Russia. Canadian farmers have already planted their wheat for the summer harvest, leaving them stuck at a crossroads as the global demand for their goods rise and making it more expensive for Canadians to purchase a loaf of bread. Hence, the sanctions imposed by a plethora of countries on Russia have led to a ripple effect, hurting millions of citizens in developing countries who do not have any wheat and leaving them in a state of potential famine.

Photo Credit:
Canadian Armed Forces (Facebook)

DEFENCE

D+

The 2022 defence file shows no significant improvement from last year. From halting efforts to pivot towards the Asia-Pacific to weaknesses in defence procurement, a variety of obstacles stand in the way of success. Falling short of most goals outlined in the Strong, Secure, and Engaged (SSE) policy document, Trudeau and his team are awarded a D+ this year. It should come as no surprise that following the 2021 federal election, defence fell under the purview of a new Minister in hopes that the file will move in a more positive direction.

DEFENCE REDUX

Procurement punctuality was listed as a fundamental goal for Canadian defence policy. Yet the government's $100 billion National Shipbuilding Strategy remains delayed. The government's initial aim was to finish constructing 15 Type 26 frigate warships by 2030, however, the real end point remains unknown. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant hurdle in completing the ships, this is not the sole reason for the delay. Communication and project management skill

deficiencies on the government's side have plagued the project, resulting in a lack of understanding between the two main shipyards: Seaspan in British Columbia and Chantier Davie in Quebec.

In addition, the Liberals' risk-averse procurement approach has led to multiple rounds of revisions. For example, there have been multiple changes to the structure and functionality of the frigates as well as alterations to the design in order to stand up to Canadian weather conditions. The greatest source of delay is the structure and process of military procurement. Military procurement is a fusion of the Royal Canadian Air Force, DND, and Public Services and Procurement Canada, with quick turnover rates amongst staff. This absence of consistency in personnel is a major factor in prolongation.

DELAYED ACTION – F-35 JETS

As Canada's existing CF-18 jets are 40 years old, the government has come close to finalizing replacements. Striking a deal with American company Lockheed Martin could lead to the purchase of 88 F-35 fighter jets. The long-awaited upgrade is crucial to ensuring that the Canadian fleet is stronger and more resilient to the evolving demands of homeland defence, military missions, and NATO operations. However, this purchase has not been without setbacks. As the military goods will not be arriving on the Canadian doorstep anytime soon, the Trudeau government's leisurely working pace puts Canada in jeopardy.

It is unclear what caused Canada to delay its decision on the new acquisition while its allies such as the U.S., Germany, Switzerland, and Finland all struck an agreement with Lockheed Martin much earlier. Regardless of the cause, the delay in decision-making shows a weakness in Canadian defence policy. In the meantime, the government will be investing hundreds of millions of dollars to keep the current CF-18 jets afloat and fully functioning until the new fleet arrives.

REASSURING UKRAINE & SUPPORTING THE REGION

As a staunch NATO member, Canada continued to support Operation REASSURANCE. The operation entails CAF support to Romania by providing the Romanian Air Force with 6 CF-18 Hornet military aircraft and 150 army personnel. CAF recently opened a new multi-national headquarters building in June 2021 in Riga, which

has served to strengthen bilateral ties with Latvia. Since February 2022, Canada's military personnel contribution to the region has increased to 1375. Canada also provided another frigate ship, a maritime helicopter, and a CP-140 Aurora aircraft to Latvia, as well as 150 CAF personnel to Poland to help manage the influx of 2.7 million Ukrainian refugees.

As Canada has no defence treaty with Ukraine, it has no specific NATO requirement to support the former Soviet country. Before the Russian invasion, the military mission to support Ukraine, Operation UNIFIER, was extended by an additional three years until March 2025. The Canadian government was providing soldiers who, up until the start of the war, were present in Ukraine; this included 60 additional troops to the existing 200 Canadian soldiers along with more military training, armour, thermal binoculars, medical bags, and mobile hospitals.

Operation UNIFIER was initially affected by the global pandemic, as some Canadian troops were temporarily side-lined due to contracting the virus. In addition, deployed military officers were ranked third in priority to obtain vaccinations, leading many officers to work unvaccinated. This lack of care contradicts the SSE, which strives to ensure that the army can be relatively resilient under all conditions.

By the end of 2021, CAF helped train over 32,000 Ukrainian military officers cumulatively since the operation commenced 7 years ago. As a result of insufficient insight and control over the training program, the Canadian government was responsible for training members of the Azov movement, a collection of neo-Nazis and far-right extremists within the Ukrainian army. Canada's connection to supporting Nazism, even if done in error, devalues the goals of Operation UNIFIER and Canada's overall goal of supporting a stable and tolerant Ukrainian polity. In addition, as the Russian attack on Ukraine continues, Canada has shifted its stance from providing non-lethal or defensive weapons to more lethal weapons.

ALL ABOARD THE INDO-PACIFIC TRAIN

Operation NEON focuses on Canada's desire to strengthen security ties to the region. Aligning with the SSE, Operation NEON includes the deployment of a CP-140 Aurora and Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Winnipeg to South Korea to

assist with sanctions against North Korea. Canada also deployed HMCS Winnipeg and HMCS Calgary to the region in support of U.S.-led security initiatives.

This same operation has played a role in the Taiwan Strait. In January 2021, CAF sent a surface ship to stabilize the growing tensions between Taiwan and China. Meanwhile, China has deployed air force missions into the Taiwanese air defence identification zone, as well as 150 military aircraft into the island nation.

PEACE OPERATIONS

Peace operations are an important common denominator in SSE, the Trudeau government, and the history of Canada. As the Trudeau government aims to uphold UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security and its feminist foreign policy, Canada has tried to live up to its promise through an additional $15 million investment towards augmenting the number of women in UN peacekeeping missions and restricting the use of child soldiers in wars.

The funding will also assist with Trudeau's Elsie Initiative, which aims to create gender parity among all UN peacekeeping missions. As stated in the 2021 Minister of National Defence mandate letter, the government is on track for incorporating women in greater light within peacekeeping missions.

PROTECTING OUR NORTH

The Canadian Arctic accounts for nearly half of the nation's landmass and 75% of Canadian coastlines, making it an essential priority for the government. Recognizing its importance, significant strides were made in the past year to ensure its protection and adherence to commitments laid out in the SSE to protect the Arctic. The Canadian ship Harry DeWolf is the first Arctic offshore patrol ship released in July 2021, marking delayed progress in protecting Arctic waters.

Continuing the strengthening of the Arctic, Operation NANOOK undertook a series of exercises in 2021, such as ice-diving to ensure that the army could immediately respond to threats in the region. These new measures coordinated efforts with Indigenous communities and chiefs, allowing their perspectives of ancestral lands to be embedded into the operation.

Nonetheless, the Liberal government's efforts to strengthen Arctic security

and reconciliation efforts with Indigenous communities have yielded mixed results. On the one hand, Nasittuq, an Inuit company, was awarded a lump sum contract to ensure that the North Warning System (NWS) radar data is continuously available to NORAD and CAF for any operation. This agreement is supposed to create more employment opportunities for Inuit people.

On the other hand, the radar systems Canada is using are more than 50 years old and cannot detect modern threats, such as hypersonic missiles and other long-range cruise missiles. With the potential to threaten Arctic sovereignty, Canada has been working with its NORAD partner, the U.S., extensively to modernize its systems. In August 2021, then Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan and U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd James Austin III released a joint statement indicating NORAD modernization to include updating the NWS bases, radar systems, and communications infrastructure.

NORAD's modernization, costing an estimated $16 million USD, will in theory have better methods for data collection. In addition, NORAD's March 2022 initiative Operation NOBLE DEFENDER, consisting of 350 military personnel, aims to mitigate risks in the northern region. The operation strives to increase the number of military personnel in the Arctic and strengthen its ability to intercept missile attacks.

"Nevertheless, Canada's ability to defend Arctic territory remains in doubt."

The 5000 Canadian Rangers are not equipped nor trained for any military-mission.

IS ORANGE THE NEW DEFENCE?

The NDP partnership with the current Liberal government poses a challenge for the defence file. The Supply and Confidence Agreement, which highlights the goals of the coalition, does not identify any defence priorities. In fact, when the NDP ran in the 2021 election, only 1 of its 59 policies focused on defence. Their military commitment to "Defence at home and abroad" parallels Liberal goals, including increased procurement, training, and search and rescue operations. The NDP pledged to increase funding support for defence

in its election campaign in 2021. Still, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh expressed his disapproval of Canada meeting the NATO requirement of spending 2% of its GDP on defence.

The shared Liberal-NDP aversion to defence spending could lead to a reallocation of military spending to NDP friendly files, such as health care. However, it is the Liberal government that has not met its NATO target despite being in power for the past seven years. The government revealed its reluctance to hit the 2% target in Budget 2022 when it committed $8 billion to the defence portfolio. It remains to be seen if the Liberal government will utilize NDP's disapproval of defence spending as a reason to focus even more on pandemic recovery and strengthening the economy.

THE FREEDOM CONVOY

Canada faced challenges at home with the Freedom Convoy in February 2022. Ottawa streets were filled with trucks blocking the downtown core and protestors calling for an end to vaccine mandates. An alarming component of this month-long event was the involvement of over 75 experienced current and former CAF members in the protest's planning and execution. Their contributions helped create a protest much stronger than anticipated.

To add insult to injury, CAF Special Forces were tasked to monitor the protest in aircrafts, despite a military directive prohibiting such activities. In addition, DND personnel were placed throughout the protest to monitor for signs of terrorism and extremism. However, if the convoy were to be an extremist event, it would have been detected well in advance; this would have led to a much difference response from the Liberal government than that which allowed protestors to block the downtown core for over a month. For its part, the NSIRA held to the view that white supremacy extremism was an ongoing threat, suggesting an inconsistency in messaging between government departments and agencies regarding racial matters.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL – A NEW MINISTER

The 2021 federal election brought a leadership change to the national defence portfolio for the first-time during Trudeau's leadership. That shuffle resulted in the long-lasting Minister Harjit Sajjan moving to the International Development file and Anita Anand coming in as his

replacement. Selecting a woman of South Asian descent could provide a completely new outlook and perspective that could benefit Canada's defence. The new Minister's SSE-oriented agenda focuses on improving the military by changing the morale within the CAF.

To that end, Minister Anand made a formal apology in response to the CAF sexual misconduct cases, which was an important milestone. In connection with Minister Anand's vow to change DND's military culture, extensive efforts will be necessary to show genuine commitment to ensuring the embedded issues of racism and discrimination towards women, indigenous peoples, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and visible minorities do not continue.

Anand was instrumental in changing the responsibility for reviewing sexual misconduct cases from the military justice system within the CAF to the civilian legal system. This shift was anticipated to be an important step towards achieving justice. However, this assumption has been cast in doubt after former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Jonathan Vance's low-level criminal verdict. After Vance's series of sexual misconduct allegations, including forcing the victim, who was also his subordinate, to falsify the narrative on trial, the former CDS was dismissed with only one year of probation and a minute amount of community service. To strengthen the Canadian justice system and to consolidate the new Minister's efforts on military culture, executing the new Bill C-3, where judges are obligated to receive sexual assault training in the immediate future, will be necessary.

Efforts like these, along with the additional $100.5 million dedicated to culture change as noted in Budget 2022, could motivate women to enter the Canadian military. However, these transformations are dependent on implementation.

ACRONYMS

2SLGBTQQIA+	Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Inter-sex, and Asexual Plus
ACT	Access to COVID-19 Tools
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BCA	Border Carbon Adjustments
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CETA	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement
CFPJ	Canadian Foreign Policy Journal
COVAX	COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access
CPTPP	Comprehensive and Progressive Free Trade Agreement
CSE	Communications Security Establishment
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CUAET	Canadian-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel
CUSMA	Canadian-United States-Mexico Agreement
DND	Department of National Defence
ERP	Emission Reduction Plan
EU	European Union
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
FinTRAC	Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada
FTA	Free Trade Agreements
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GBA+	Gender Based Analysis Plus
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GNI	Gross National Income
GPHIN	Global Public Health Intelligence Network
HMCS	Her Majesty's Canadian Ship

ACRONYMS

ICC	International Criminal Court
IMVE	Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism
IP	Intellectual Property
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IT	Information Technology
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Plus
MIRPS	Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework
MMIWG	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDP	New Democratic Party
NORAD	North America Aerospace Defence Command
NSICOP	National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians
NSIRA	National Security and Intelligence Review Agency
NWS	North Warning System
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
RCI	Radio Canada International
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SME	Small-and-Medium Sized Enterprises
SSE	Strong, Secure, and Engaged
STCA	Safe Third Country Agreement
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
U.S.	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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