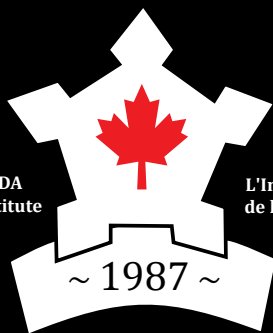


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in search of a new compass

**2016**

**THE STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR  
CANADA**

**BY FERRY DE KERCKHOVE**



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# THE STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR CANADA 2016

IN SEARCH OF A NEW COMPASS

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## FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that, on behalf of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, I present **Vimy Paper 27: *The Strategic Outlook for Canada 2016***, authored by the Institute's Executive Vice-President, Ferry de Kerckhove.

In many respects, the next year will be crucial for Canadian defence. The new government has committed to a defence policy review by the end of the year, including a process of extensive consultations, domestically and with our allies. This will be the first open and transparent defence policy consultative process in over two decades, since the 1994 White Paper. At the same time, the world is moving on and issues continue to arise, forcing the government to make many critical decisions early in its mandate that will shape Canadian defence policy for years to come.

It is therefore a golden opportunity to take stock of the international situation and to reflect on Canada's role on the international stage, as expressed already on several occasions by the Prime Minister and underscored by the mandate letters to the portfolio ministers – Global Affairs (Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development), National Defence, and Veterans Affairs, and to present to Canadians a clear vision for the future of the Canadian Armed Forces. *Strategic Outlook 2016* is an early contribution to this public consultation process.

Any attempt to predict the future must start with a thorough look back in time, to reflect on the meaning of the decisions, events and crises that shaped 2015. In this *Strategic Outlook*, therefore, former Ambassador de Kerckhove devotes significant effort to review the events of 2015 to make sense of them. As is clear from his analysis, the security environment in 2015 has not given much hope for significant improvement in 2016.

On the economic front, there is limited solace as the globalization multiplier transmits the impact of China's slackening growth to the rest of the world. Concerns are being expressed about China's flexing its muscles in the South China Sea, and its long-term strategic direction remains the greatest unknown. Russia continues to present the greatest uncertainty; indeed, few had predicted, in early 2015, Russia's active engagement in Syria. In the Middle East, even if ISIS's advance has been halted and contained for now, the overall situation is deteriorating, and the outlook for 2016 remains worrisome and complex.

Clearly, it will be quite challenging for a new government to confront these realities and to make choices on where to make a difference and to advance Canadian interests. In his study, Ferry de Kerckhove offers a comprehensive overview of the international security environment, and



courageously attempts to underline the complex foreign policy, security and defence implications of this environment, especially when juxtaposed with the vision of the new government to continue to project Canada as a key player on the world stage.

*Strategic Outlook 2016* is a complex study, and not everyone will agree with its conclusions. That being said, as President of the CDA Institute, I have the utmost respect for Ferry de Kerckhove's objectivity, balance and, most importantly, deep understanding of the world security environment and Canada's future role within in. I therefore urge you to read the analysis, to ponder its insights, and to debate the many multifaceted questions the author raises. This will position you well to participate actively in the important discussions on security and defence in the coming months.

In this important year for Canada, the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, and in support of the Conference of Defence Associations' mandate, is committed to supporting the Minister of National Defence in the process of conducting the defence review. As such, we will continue our focus on educating and enlightening Canadians on security and defence issues while helping the government to give substance to its desire for Canada to provide constructive leadership in the world. *Strategic Outlook 2016* is an important first step in this process and highly recommended reading.

**Major-General Daniel Gosselin (Retired)**

President of the CDA Institute



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## ACRONYMS

ADF	Australian Defence Force	JSS	Joint Supply Ship
ADMM-Plus	ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus	JTF-2	Joint Task Force 2
AGS	Alliance Ground Surveillance	JUSTAS	Joint Unmanned Surveillance Target Acquisition System
AOPS	Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships	MND	Minister of National Defence
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation	NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System	NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Command
BMD	ballistic missile defence	NSPS	National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces	O&M	operations and maintenance
CANSOFCOM	Canadian Special Operations Forces Command	PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
CETA	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement	PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
CF	Canadian Forces	PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
CFDS	Canada First Defence Strategy	R2P	Responsibility to Protect
CJOC	Canadian Joint Operations Command	RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
COP 21	Paris Climate Conference	RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
CSC	Canadian Surface Combatants	RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific
CSEC	Communications Security Establishment Canada	SAR	search and rescue
CSI	combat systems integrator	SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service	TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
CSOR	Canadian Special Operations Regiment	TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team	UNC	United Nations Command
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development	UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
DND	Department of National Defence	USAFRICOM	US Africa Command
DRDC	Defence Research and Development Canada	USSC	Office of the United States Security Coordinator
DWP	Defence White Paper	WD	warship design
EU	European Union	WTO	World Trade Organization
FMCT	Fissile Materials Cutoff Treaty		
IMF	International Monetary Fund		
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps		
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham		
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance		





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This edition of *Canada's Strategic Outlook* takes a deep scan of the world's crises and reflects on the implications for Canada and its security and defence priorities.

The new Canadian government has committed to restore “constructive Canadian leadership in the world” and has provided an initial appreciation of the international environment through the ministerial mandate letters, notably to “Defence” and the “Global Affairs” portfolio, consisting of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and International Development, with clear instruction to reinforce the linkage between defence policy, foreign policy, and national security. The key question is what the government will do to effect the restoration. Indeed, any effort to play a constructive role internationally comes at a price in a period when the government's overall financial picture is bleak.

Unfortunately, it also comes at a time when numerous *crises* are afflicting key regions of the world. Major geostrategic/economic shifts are taking place in the Middle East. Terrorism is the main focus, at present, and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) the prime target. But fighting the underlying sources (inequality, poverty, poor governance, religious extremism, etc.) is the real challenge. Moreover, until the anti-ISIS coalition matches its ends with means (military, political, diplomatic), *degrading* will take much longer and *destroying* will not happen.

The Shia-Sunni divide must be addressed at all levels – political, social and religious, especially given the quasi-war between Iran and Saudi Arabia. As one scholar wrote: “the reform of Islam is shaping up to be the most important issue in political ideology of the twenty-first century.”<sup>2</sup> With the implementation of the nuclear deal, Iran could join the “Global Commons” – at least if the regime's survival no longer depends on continued antagonism towards the West. Lastly, until things settle in the rest of the Middle East, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will remain a side-show. Israel must facilitate, instead of thwart, the creation of a Palestinian state.

Russia and China continue to pose challenges for the West. While President Vladimir Putin has branded North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) the enemy, it is likely that the economic conditions in Russia will force accommodation on Ukraine with greater respect for the Minsk II agreement and more cooperation in Syria. But unpredictability remains the safest bet here. Concerns regarding Russia in the Arctic are also legitimate given President Putin aggressive posturing, although prospects for cooperation should not be discounted. Meanwhile, Beijing's muscle flexing in South and East China Seas will also likely continue. Yet China's future direction is not foreordained to be adversarial. As a French diplomat and expert on China said: “China is an Empire, just as the USA, and behaves as such; it needs to be treated with respect. The quest for hegemony in the region does not necessarily translate into adventurism.”<sup>3</sup> Perhaps even more worrisome today is its slowing economy, which could jeopardize the post-2008 economic recovery, especially for a heavily resource-driven economy like Canada's. Then there is the United States, which despite a revanchist Russia and rising China still faces no true peer competitors even as it remains increasingly ambivalent to the world's crises.

In Africa, while countries continue to experience strong economic growth, parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb remain mired in poor governance and extremism and could also become the next center of gravity for jihadist violence. Even as the Middle East siphons global attention, the international community should start thinking beyond it. The same can also be said about Latin America. Brazil is a global concern as its economy continues



to stutter. Cuba is slowly coming out of the American imposed freeze and Columbia seems to slowly edge towards internal peace. Yet drug trafficking and associated criminality remain the single most critical obstacle to development as evidenced in Mexico, our North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) partner.

Possible Canadian *responses* to some of these challenges and *threats* include:

- Increasing our contribution to Operation *Reassurance* in Europe and reviewing our decision to withdraw from NATO's Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and the Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) program.
- Establishing an external consultative mechanism on military issues with the members of the Arctic Council as a confidence building measure for the Arctic. Any pressure requiring a forceful response would entail automatic consultation and response within NATO.
- Opening discussions with the US on joining continental ballistic missile defence (BMD) and strengthening its role in the Proliferation Security Initiative, in light of the North Korean ballistic missile and nuclear threat.
- Reinforcing our intelligence sharing on ISIS with our NATO partners, retaining security provisions of Bill C-51 (while ensuring oversight and accountability), and continuing with the government's decision to strengthen its training mission in Iraq.
- Joining diplomatic efforts at the UN to dampen the 3rd intifada, including by moving the only process capable of bringing peace – a Palestinian state.
- Reimposing sanctions on Iran in the event that it fails any part of the recently signed nuclear agreement.
- Volunteering military observers along the Jordan valley in the event of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.
- Support US efforts to ensure freedom of navigation in the South and East China Seas and building our credentials with the other countries of the region with a strong diplomatic and military presence.

The *policy framework* for Canada's national security strategy should be carved around our country's interests, values, and ambitions, its economic health, and essential capabilities. It should not focus first on how much is available for national defence and related security agencies, but rather on a coherent foreign and defence policy designed to respond to envisioned threats and challenges and meet its responsibilities towards its citizens. Each threat scenario should entail possible corresponding responses, including the option for Canada to refrain from becoming engaged.

The new defence strategy called for by the government should emerge from an overarching vision of Canada's national security requirements, taking into account the strategic imperatives stemming from the international environment. Linked to foreign policy choices, a defence policy needs to be driven by the fundamental choices of what is needed and what is not. Thus a defence policy review has to question force structure fundamentals and eventually define a new architecture or support the existing one. It is not just about procurement but involves a full assessment of our country's assets.



In terms of *means*, Canada enjoys plenty of non-military assets (e.g., economy, social fabric, alliances, global networks). While its military assets are not insignificant, they have suffered from unpredictability, procurement delays, under-resourcing, and financial cuts, all of which have undermined the original 2008 *Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS). Although progress has been made on naval procurement through the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, there are continuing fears of schedule slippage and no guarantee that the number of ships planned will all be built. A decision is expected this year on the replacement of the CF-18 fighter aircrafts but the overall funding horizon looks highly vulnerable.

Yet we cannot afford being dictated in our security and defence policy choices by our financial situation. We need to make critical choices about what capabilities we cannot afford to forego and which are more discretionary or optional. These choices are first and foremost dictated by our basic security and defence needs.

As such, our key *recommendation* reiterates a point made over the last few years: that within the next few months the government launch a fundamental, open, and integrated *international policy review* that would cover our entire international agenda (diplomacy, defence, development, and commerce) – to stake out our broad objectives in the world, and to give the nation a sense of our place on the international stage and of what we need to achieve to attain it.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Canada's Strategic Outlook* enters its fifth year. As for previous editions, the purpose of this document is to take a deep scan of the world's crises and reflect on the implications for Canada and its security and defence priorities. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised during the campaign that brought him into office last October that his foreign policy will get Canada "back in the game." His first moves in this area show that this is a promise he intends to keep, but it will not be easy.

Looking into 2016, uncertainties continue to abound. We are stuck for another ten months in the no-man's land of the American presidential elections. The crisis of leadership amongst Republicans is underlined by the appeal of bombastic US presidential candidates, à la Donald Trump, or extreme, exclusive personalities like Ben Carson, leaving "conventional" candidates like Jeb Bush high and dry. Europe is struggling to deal with refugees and creeping authoritarianism in a number of European Union (EU) member states. One should also mention the UK's possible withdrawal from the EU. NATO looks like a wall of strength in comparison. Yet even it faces the quandary of reassuring its eastern members, especially following recent Russian belligerence. And the Chinese both talk peace and build for war. In the Middle East, ISIS remains the ultimate foe, even as the memory of the Arab Spring gives way to renewed authoritarianism. The recent Iranian nuclear deal raises for some the spectre of a re-empowered Iran, while the state of quasi-war between Iran and Saudi Arabia is threatening to engulf the Arab world as never before.

All this is ongoing while a new government has come to power in Canada. It is important that the government be provided with a reasonable projection of where things might go and a clear-eyed analysis on the implications for our country's security and defence. Therefore, as we have done over the past few years, we strongly recommend that within the next few months and as a government priority that the Prime Minister conduct a fundamental, open, and integrated international policy review which would cover our *entire* international agenda (diplomacy, defence, development, and commerce) – to stake out Canada's broad objectives in the world, and to give the nation a sense of our place on the international stage and of what we need to achieve to attain it.

## 2. GLOBAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: WHERE DOES CANADA FIT

Global security trends, as identified last year, have not changed significantly. The *crisis of leadership* remains ever-present in the world, notably in the United States in the grips of a presidential campaign. However, a few hopeful signs can be found: Britain's recent turnaround of its security and defence strategy;<sup>4</sup> France's renewed role in the anti-ISIS campaign; and Germany's continuing leadership of Europe and decision to accept millions of refugees, even if the latter promises to siphon its political and social strength. Multilateral *institutions* like the United Nations seem impotent in confronting entities like ISIS or the multiplicity of non-state actors. *Inequalities*, unemployment, and social exclusion are increasingly linked to the ease of ISIS recruitment abroad.

Europe's strategic absence in the management of multiple Middle East crises reflects a fundamental crisis of *governance*, irrespective of Merkel's role in dealing with the Greek financial collapse, Ukraine's amputation, and refugee flows. Many disagree or refuse to admit that there is a *civilizational crisis* looming. Lastly, *great power transition*



has only accelerated. Today, we witness an uncertain United States, China establishing a new reality on the ground, and Russia entering forcibly into the fray in the Middle East.

The rest of this section will provide a holistic strategic survey of the global security environment, in order to identify continuing trend lines on key global foreign, security, and defence issues – from ISIS to Russia to the Asia-Pacific. This will provide the necessary context to what should inform a joint foreign and defence review and the starting point for a national security strategy for Canada.

### **The Case of ISIS**

Fighting ISIS militarily is not sufficient in the long run to destroy its essence. Only economic, social, and political change will be the true enabler. But the latter will not happen so long as ISIS is a potent force. Today, owing to current military efforts ISIS has been prevented from expanding further. One hopes that through continued air operations or reinforced on-the-ground military training, possibly with land force contributions by neighbouring states, further ISIS territorial gains will be denied. It is not the time to reduce the military effort; nothing else will alter the objectives pursued by ISIS or their narrative. The real problem is that of unreliable regional partners and funders of various active groups in the conflict.

According to former US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey, the war against ISIS has been from a military standpoint a stalemate. But it does not mean it should stay like that. ISIS occupies territory as a quasi-state and remains highly vulnerable to conventional attack. Furthermore, they do not have the firepower of conventional countries, even if they possess a certain amount of modern weapons and their soldiers are disciplined and committed. More importantly, as a French general once said, “they suffer from an incurable disease: they are stuck in an enclave.”<sup>5</sup> The real danger is the expansion of ISIS in Libya which would provide an alternative “state” possibly easier to overtake than Syria and Iraq. A “defeated ISIS” would not resolve the problem however. According to Anthony Cordesman, “The terrorist and extremist threat is far broader than ISIS and focusing on one group ... ignores the reality that it will remain and resurface regardless of what happens to ISIS.”<sup>6</sup>

Yet the real issue facing the coalition is one of “balance of power” and the need to make the so-called “coalition” real and effective.<sup>7</sup> One needs to recognize that each participant in the civil war has specific attributes and interests. The rebels in the South and on the coast are secular Syrian nationalists with an interest in the country’s integrity. So does the regime, which controls most of the coast line and is backed by formidable Hezbollah fighters. Al-Nusra, while a local branch of Al-Qaeda, are also Syrian nationalists and are a better fighting force than the Free Syrian Army, which can defend its territory but cannot mount a sustainable attack on its own. Then there are the Syrian Kurds, who have demonstrated a unique capacity to fight ISIS – the retaking of Sinjar being an even more powerful symbol than Kobane. The Kurds control territory North-West of Aleppo and the whole area east of the Euphrates along the Turkish border. But Turkey does not want the Kurds to establish a full Kurdish zone along the Turkish border. In the air, Americans and Russians barely manage liaison to prevent air collision and are at odds on Assad. Meanwhile Iran is backing the Syrian government against ISIS, with an expeditionary mission using Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces, Quds Force, intelligence services, and law enforcement forces.

Meanwhile, ISIS’s momentum may have been stopped but certainly not reversed. The 13 November 2015 attacks in



Paris has strengthened the spine of those who put a priority on removing the ISIS scourge and driven the continued expansion of the air war. Unfortunately, there is possibly an inverse relationship between the strength of ISIS on the ground and its penchant for terrorist attacks abroad. The less they are able to expand in Syria-Iraq, the more they would likely launch attacks internationally or expand in more fertile environments such as Libya in order to maintain their legitimacy as the caliphate, which is one of the symbols that has attracted so many followers to ISIS. On the other hand, there is a growing feeling that getting rid of Assad will not make the solution any easier, quite to the contrary.

Turkey's position in the region is difficult to decipher. Despite its NATO partnership and apparent interest in regional stability, Turkey's consistent unpredictability is a concern. Europe's recent "rapprochement" with Turkey suggests that leading Western allies have prioritized stability in the region over democratic values. Yet President Erdoğan's legitimacy was confirmed at the Antalya G20 meeting. Furthermore, while hosting the largest Syrian refugee population in the world, Turkey seems not unwilling to incite civil war, unabashedly, and actively discriminate against minority groups for political purposes. It is quite possible that a man like Erdoğan, so imbued of his own destiny, feels deeply wounded by Europe's continued refusal to allow Turkey to join the EU. This may have incited him to emphasize Turkey's emergence as a leader of the Sunni world, to the detriment of Turkey's presence and obligations as a NATO member. Erdoğan's Turkey might be the most difficult ally to manage over the coming years, as shown by its vacillations as part of the anti-ISIS coalition.

Transforming the coalition to an instrument capable of altering the present balance of forces in the fight against ISIS requires each coalition member to erase some of their red lines and work towards a compromise:

- Accepting that Assad has to be part of the transition – but only the transition, preferably short, however tough it is for the US and Turkey to accept.
- Bringing Iran on side by speeding up the removal of sanctions related to the nuclear deal. As Ted Galan Carpenter puts it, "Instead of spurning their contribution, the West should recognize it as an important tactical benefit."<sup>8</sup> The cost might be a greater influence by Iran in Eastern Iraq, which will happen anyway.
- Recognizing rather than opposing a Russian role in the conflict, in order to get them to strike only at ISIS targets while opening a broader discussion on Ukraine. US Secretary of State John Kerry and his counterpart Sergey Lavrov already have an ongoing dialogue that could be strengthened.
- Convincing the Kurdish Peshmerga to go beyond Kurdish territory in Syria, including taking on Raqqa, in exchange for a commitment to maximum autonomy for Kurds in both Syria and Iraq – ensuring of course that Kurds in Iraq and Kurds in Syria reconcile.
- Bringing Erdoğan on side beyond interdictions at the border, in exchange for an ironclad assurance that no fully sovereign, independent Kurdistan will ever be created. Turkey might join in given its interest in clearing the Islamic State from a corridor of land stretching along the Syrian side of the Turkey-Syria border.
- And, most difficult, consider accepting Al-Nusra as an ally in the fight against ISIS, conditional on joining future negotiations on the transition in Syria.
- Continuing to reinforce Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's forces in Iraq to allow him to retake lost territory.



His recent decision to have Sunni forces engaged in the retake of Ramadi shows a desire to reduce the sectarian divide within his armed forces.

One of the dangers of the continued bombing of Iraq and Syria, two major countries of the Middle East, is its further exploitation by jihadists to recruit members against the “invading foreign infidels.” Therefore, not only should this compromise be done rapidly but it requires troop contributions from neighbouring Arab countries, unfortunately very unlikely in the present circumstances. The whole scenario is far from easy to implement and it is doubtful that this would be Canada’s first priority in terms of involvement.

## The Other Middle East

**Israel-Palestine:** The emergence of ISIS has refocused attention on a new set of protracted conflicts in the Middle East, which are rooted in dynamics particular to the Sunni-Shiite divide and a set of corresponding questions about the fundamental balance between religion and state in key theatres throughout the Middle East. This sectarian dimension is critical to understanding the greater regional context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in particular the simmering and increasingly violent dispute between Iran and Saudi Arabia now playing out in Yemen. If the West hopes to spearhead Israel-Palestinian negotiations, it needs to go beyond addressing the well-known imbalance between Israel and the Palestine authority, which allows Israel to quibble on, delay, and reject any and all proposals to allow the Palestinians to have their own state committed by UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of 27 November 1947. In addition, it also needs to recognize and address the shifting balance of power in the ‘backyard’ of Israelis and Palestinians alike.

As any Canadian government will recognize, Israel does have very legitimate security concerns. Israel’s unstable neighbourhood – civil war in Syria, ISIS in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, terrorists in the Sinai, Hamas in Gaza, and the preoccupation with Iran’s adherence to the nuclear agreement – are certainly not conducive to enshrining a solution. The ongoing “intifada three” must compel leaders to think about what is behind this heightened insecurity. A simple question must be asked: Would there have been three intifadas over the nearly last 25 years had a Palestinian state come into existence? And would they have happened if settlements had not expanded to the point of leaving only a rump territory for an eventual Palestinian state? Would Israel be less secure than it is today?

Yet a majority of Israeli public opinion remains in favour of a Palestinian state living side by side in peace with Israel and a majority thinks Netanyahu’s recent UN commitment in favour of that option is not genuine.<sup>9</sup> While many blame the US for allowing settlements expansion to continue, history will show the US also had a major role in restraining its rhythm.<sup>10</sup> But borders are what matters and real solutions for these have to be defined, including credible land swaps. Security concerns are fully legitimate from the Jewish state perspective. Indeed, solutions can be found through multilateral UN-mandated observers along the Jordan River. The refugee issue is more a symbol, however potent. In the unfortunately failed 2001 negotiations in Taba, Egypt, various options were considered for dealing with refugees. At the end of the day Israel would have the final veto on who would be allowed in and who would not. Even the symbolic recognition of the “Jewish State” is not a deal breaker despite being rejected by Mahmoud Abbas.<sup>11</sup>

The most intractable issue is the status of Jerusalem. It is no wonder that the framers of the 1947 resolution suggested





that it be made an international city prior to East Jerusalem being annexed in 1967. As Michael Bell put it, “Nothing is more sensitive than the holy sites of Jerusalem, to which both sides attach their very being. Exclusive control of the Old City by one or the other is anathema to the other. It would violate what each sees as its sacred trust.”<sup>12</sup> Yet there were times when joint management worked. Undivided Jerusalem is a symbol within which some form of accommodation can and must be found. Expanding settlements in East Jerusalem is a recipe for long-term disaster.

Canada’s new government will have to address early on if it wishes to rekindle its former role on the issue of refugees or engage in other aspects of the conflict. It would be wise for the responsible officials to read Gilead Sher’s call for a renewed Israeli initiative,<sup>13</sup> to avoid “being dragged into a choice between a Jewish-dominated apartheid-like state and a shared, unitary Jewish-Palestinian state” and who has the courage to talk about removing settlements outside of the major blocks as part of the process of creating a Palestinian state. A good start is the current Canadian military role under Operation *Proteus*, which is meant to strengthen the Palestinian Authority’s institutional capacity under the Office of the United States Security Coordinator in Jerusalem.

***Iran beyond the nuclear deal:*** The nuclear agreement with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) has been signed and has already had a major impact, even as we wait for its full delivery over 2016. For their part, Arab leaders have swallowed the pill. But, as Iran emerges from sanctions, Saudi Arabia has kept oil prices low for both market share reasons and to hold Iran at bay, making life miserable for all competing oil producing countries. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia is waging a proxy war against Iran in Yemen as well as in Iraq and Syria. Yet, now that “Iran is out of the penalty box,”<sup>14</sup> the key question today is whether Tehran will act as a full member of the international system.

Iran has deep interests in Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, in addition to Yemen. But, as Iran faces a growing challenge to its regional ambitions, to what extent will the nuclear deal allow it to worry less about the US military presence in the Persian Gulf or, to a far lesser degree, to a unilateral threat from Israel? Will this theocratic, somewhat paranoid regime be prepared to go beyond its general hostility towards the West and build a relationship with the “Great Satan”? For its part the US still has deep misgivings and grievances against Iran. Therefore can the US build on the nuclear agreement? Importantly, as Suzanne Maloney notes, Iran is “a young, dynamic, incredibly well-positioned society for the future...I think if I were to place a bet on the long-term democratic opportunities in the region, Iran is it. By a long shot.”<sup>15</sup>

The answer depends on the extent to which the survival of the Iranian regime depends on a continued antagonism towards the West. The lifting of sanctions will bring about a growing economic resurgence of Iran and the middle-class will witness a rebirth. With it the forces of change may force Iran to rejoin the international community. An important question for the Government of Canada is how and when will it renew relations with Iran, and will Iran be prepared to reciprocate?

***Regional geostrategic changes:*** For now, the US remains deeply engaged strategically from the region as a critical player, over and beyond concerns with ISIS. Asian powers, to sustain their growth, have become increasingly reliant on energy imports from the Middle East. As the world’s major power projection nation, the US cannot stay indifferent to any threat against the free flow of oil and gas as essential components of the world economy. Freedom of navigation, Israel’s security, and a measure of control on the energy flows towards Asia underpin the continued presence of US in the region – and as such are not in contradiction with the Pacific “pivot” or “rebalance,” but rather complementary.

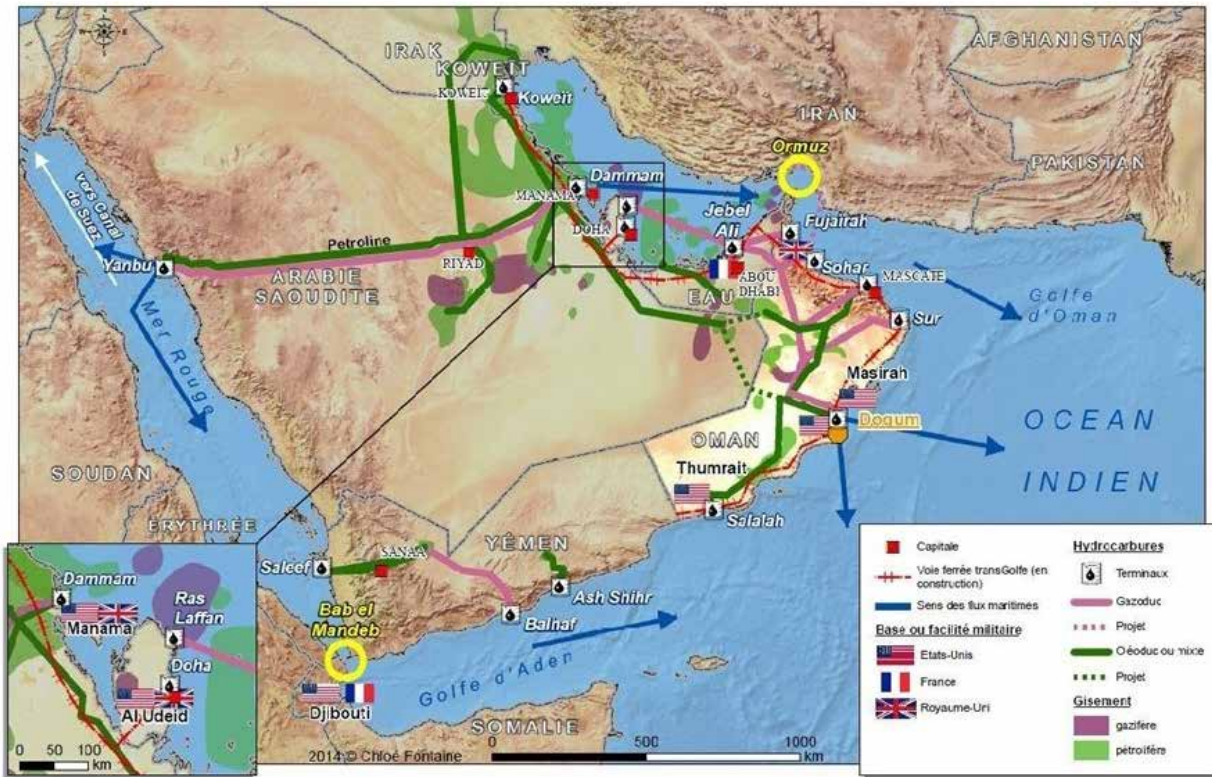


In this context, a worrisome issue today is the succession crisis in Oman. Indeed, as French scholar Pierre Razoux underscores, Oman’s geographic location (see Figure 1) constitutes an ideal forward base for the US to monitor and control in three directions – the Gulf, Arabian peninsula, and Indian Ocean, with the possibility of containing Iran, Iraq, Yemen, and Pakistan and manage any transition in Saudi Arabia or mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran.<sup>16</sup> Major oil and gas infrastructure developments, notably in Doqum on Oman’s Indian Ocean coast would eventually bypass the critical straits of Hormuz and Bab-El-Mandeb.

Russia also wants to remain a player in the regional distribution of gas; hence its attempts to derail the Qatar-Mediterranean gas pipeline project. Anything that counters US influence in the region is a bonus. For the Europeans, containing the flow of migrants is the most pressing concern, hence their interest in the region’s stability through cooperation in the fight against terrorism. As the largest trading bloc in the world, freedom of navigation is essential for Europe.

Russian interests in the region go beyond fencing Islamic extremists, particularly in the Caucasus and ensuring Syria does not fall out of its orbit. The recent spat with Turkey brings back home the dual purpose of Russian strategy – estrange Turkey from NATO while reducing its influence, including in Central Asia. Following the end of the Soviet Union, Russia and Turkey rekindled their old rivalry for pre-eminence in this “Turkic” region, with Russia winning most of the competition, having maintained if not reinforced its sway through its Eurasian Economic Union in all five Central Asian countries — Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. As Joshua Walker

**FIGURE 1: Oman: Strategic location between the Gulf, Arabian Peninsula, and Indian Ocean**



(Source: Pierre Razoux, “Oman : future pièce maitresse de la stratégie américaine dans le Golfe et l’océan Indien,” *Note de reserche stratégique* N°15, janvier 2015)

FIGURE 2: Middle Eastern Leaders Phantasms about the Future Slicing of the Region



(Source: Ralph Peters, "Blood Borders," *Armed Forces Journal*, 1 June 2006)

puts it, "The stakes have never been higher along the ancient Silk Road,"<sup>17</sup> especially now that China has also gone some way in making further inroads through its "One Belt One Road" framework into Central Asia.

A number of references have recently been made in the Middle East as to the role of Picot and Sykes, the French and British diplomats who carved the post-World War I Middle Eastern borders as if it were a chess game. Stalin played the same game in Central Asia, more brutally. Colonial powers did likewise in their respective empires. Yet, the powder keg is more ominous in the Middle East with real questions about the future boundaries of the region, as depicted in the following map (see Figure 2) that Pierre Razoux calls 'Middle Eastern leaders' phantasms about the future slicing of the region.<sup>18</sup>

Canada will need to look at its long-term interests in the region, even though our routes to Asia are through the Pacific. International trade is intertwined; we still import oil from the Middle East and have large investments in Central Asia. Of course, Canada has growing interests in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries as well, where hundreds of thousand Canadians work as part of the 2 million-plus Canadian diaspora outside of our country.

### The US Enigma

The Prime Minister has placed the United States as Canada's top foreign policy priority. That is the right thing to do. But it also means Canada should get a clear and thorough appreciation of the foreign policy of our single most



important strategic ally. Indeed, while there is no space between Canada and the US on continental defence (other than on missile defence), the vast majority of Canada's engagement abroad will be tied to the US position. Beyond the fact that we are less than a year away from a new presidency in Washington, questions linger about US priorities and its international engagements.

Some see in today's America a fatal attraction towards the old demons of isolationism, although it has been more of a post-1945 myth than anything approaching reality. Others have blamed President Obama for timidity and a fixation on the middle road. But it is far from being so simple. As Kathleen H. Hicks puts it so well: "The first key factor shaping the role of the United States today is the paradox of enduring superpower status combined with lessening global influence."<sup>19</sup> The American and the Canadian views of the world are pretty much the same: ensuring security for our citizens and our allies; upholding (for the US) and even expanding (for Canada) the rule of law on the international stage; resisting impediments to an open and liberal economy. Both countries share an abiding commitment to the respect for human rights.

But none of the above is sufficient today to define how the US would or will act or react to future crises on the international stage. Indeed, Hicks comments point to a much more selective engagement, and after Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya to a less proactive role. This is most likely the reason why "the United States appears to be on the defensive everywhere," as Michael J. Green puts it.<sup>20</sup> A kinder version would be that the Obama's years in foreign policy have been mostly reactive – with the exception of the nuclear negotiations with Iran and the détente with Cuba leading to the reopening of its Embassy in Havana and possibly the lifting of sanctions, both of which will be among his key foreign policy legacies. The policy has been characterized by modulated engagements with limited objectives, as with Presidents Putin and Xi Jinping.

Canada will have to define its own priorities in its international engagements abroad, but may limit its involvement overseas – so long as the United States adopts it more ambiguous, reactive, and selective approach to international crises. The ball game could be different in January 2017 but it is hard to predict at this stage.

## Russia in Ukraine and Beyond

*The nuclear file:* In the latest Russian national security policy statement *About the Strategy of National Security of Russian Federation*, the US is clearly identified as a threat to Russia.<sup>21</sup> In terms of capabilities, Russia is ominously capable, even trumping China in this regard due to its nuclear arsenal. Yet nuclear negotiations had started fairly well under Medvedev with the 2010 New START agreement limiting nuclear warheads on both sides. With Putin back at the helm, total nuclear parity for him was vital, hence his denunciation of US nuclear forces in Europe. While it makes little strategic sense, Russia sees American BMD capabilities as making Russia vulnerable to a first-strike – reminiscent of the Reagan-Andropov days and the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). Putin thus demanded the complete withdrawal of BMD interceptors on the European front, arguing that the US had altered the balance when deciding to replace long-range interceptors in Poland with shorter-range missiles. The US maintained that "rogue states" remained the target for these missiles.

That being said, Russia has still largely followed the New START mandated warhead limits – even if the numbers have fluctuated somewhat, going above the agreed 1,550 warheads in the past couple of years. But the effective limit



only applies as of 2018, and fluctuations are based on both Russia modernizing its arsenal and for the political purpose of having more warheads. But few expect Russia to not follow the Treaty, if only because 1,550 warheads are widely considered overkill and the cost of maintaining that force exorbitant.<sup>22</sup>

Given US-Russia tensions, the times are not ideal for fostering a resumption of the nuclear dialogue. For its part, the Fissile Materials Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) continues to be blocked at the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. As tensions rise with Russia, one is reminded of the inherent contradiction between aspirations for a nuclear weapons free world and the continued, and now strengthened, reliance on nuclear deterrence.

It could be appropriate for Canada to confirm that nuclear deterrence remains the pillar of collective security, while nevertheless encouraging whatever move is made to reduce tensions in the field and rekindle our long-term commitment to a nuclear weapons free world – as demonstrated by the over 800 recipients of the Order of Canada who support UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon's call for a Nuclear Weapons Convention to outlaw nuclear weapons. The new government has already indicated that, while progress on such a convention might not be “politically feasible,” it does plan on spearheading a FMCT at the Conference on Disarmament and giving additional support to Obama's Nuclear Security Summit.

**Ukraine:** Jeffrey Rathke observes that “Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggression elsewhere in Ukraine has ushered in a new period of insecurity in Europe, re-drawing boundaries by force as well as heightening confrontation and the risk of conflict between NATO and Russia.”<sup>23</sup> Last year's *Strategic Outlook* dedicated a number of pages to Russia's leader. Putin's objective is to drive a wedge between Europe and the US and bring as many Eastern European countries under some form of influence. But a consensus is emerging about the opportunistic, tactical approach of Russia, which makes predictions ever more difficult. Will Russia go further or not? One should not forget Russia has achieved a significant gain in harpooning Crimea, notwithstanding the economic cost; not a Western government today can believe that Crimea will ever realistically return to Ukraine.

NATO faces continuing risk from the enhanced deployability of Russian conventional forces and their continued modernization. Robin Niblett puts it squarely: “There can be no military solution to the conflict in Ukraine because Putin will always be able to escalate further than the West.”<sup>24</sup> It is not difficult to agree with the need to bridge the rift within NATO between “eastern allies focused on Russia, [and] southern allies on instability in the Middle East and North Africa.”<sup>25</sup> Strengthening deterrence may be a requirement to reassure those members of NATO abutting Russia and to get the Europeans to contribute a fair share of the defence burden, but this should be done with clear signals that these measures are strictly defensive and do not run counter to the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act. How much Russia will remain a major threat is as much a matter of economics as of its aspirations. This may be the reason why, tactically, Russia has allowed the conflict in Eastern Ukraine to abate. Otherwise, as Adrian Karatnycky and Alexander J. Motyl maintain, “Putin's Ukrainian dream could turn into a nightmare.”<sup>26</sup>

To the extent that the US has no intention to take on Russia unilaterally, there is no alternative to a dialogue with Russia, support of the Minsk II ceasefire in Ukraine, coupled with strengthened deterrence at all levels. This is not a position of weakness but instead requires firmness in articulating our objectives as NATO members. This is why it is critical to strengthen NATO, and find ways to prevent aggressive Russian interference in the Baltic States. These are



issues which will challenge the new government of Canada, especially given Canada's commitment to maintain our contribution to Operation *Reassurance*, designed to demonstrate NATO solidarity in response to Russian aggression. Canada could play a role in reengaging Russia. But at the end of the day, oil prices may determine the ultimate success or failure of the Minsk II process.

*Syria – Ukraine's bedfellow?:* One needs to assess the extent to which Russian action in Syria is linked to Ukraine and if its activity in the former is meant to remind countries – especially Europeans – that it might be in their interest to back off on sanctions (whether by playing a spoiler role in Syria, resulting in more refugees to Europe, or by being more cooperative). The connection with Ukraine was evident in the beginning. But now that Russia is operating in Syria and has been hit by ISIS, its role in Syria has taken on a different dimension. Should one give some slack or relief on Ukraine-driven economic sanctions? What is Putin's end-game in Syria? As Olga Oliker puts it, "it can be hard to tell if Russia seeks the same goals as Western countries [in Syria] or whether here, too, it's acting to undermine their interests."<sup>27</sup> It could be a good thing for the West if the objectives were aligned – as we might be able to get Russia on side vis-à-vis ISIS, without needing to make concessions on Ukraine. Or perhaps we should, if only to guarantee Russian action on ISIS.<sup>28</sup>

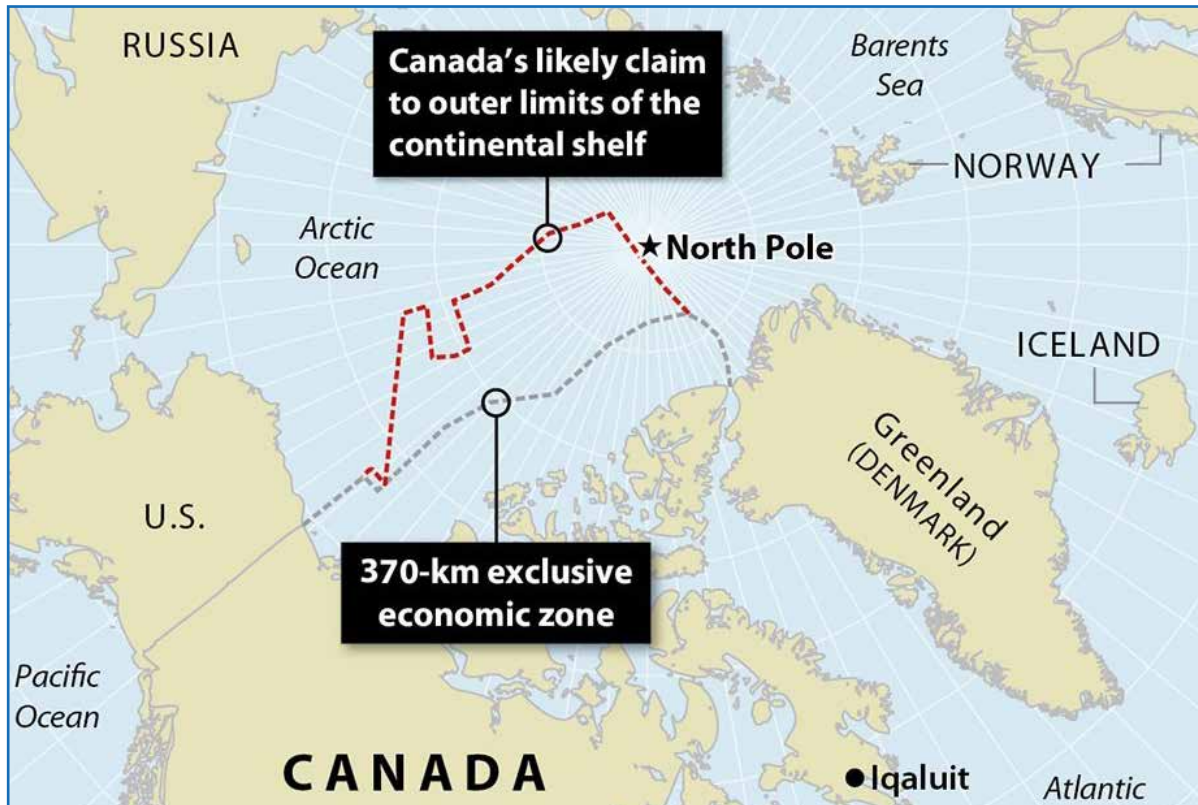
For now, as Russian action against opponents of Assad shows, President Putin might be pursuing his country's own distinctive interests in the region – not least in propping up a regional ally. Also, as Vice-Admiral Drew Robertson (Ret'd) puts it, "Beyond the value of operational tests, using naval cruise missiles where iron bombs would suffice, and making public noise about them and providing the launch videos to garner media coverage is partly about building the image of a modernizing Russian military with capabilities the Europeans and others must take into account and of course enhancing national prestige based on military power."<sup>29</sup> But Russian interests need not be all contrary to ours. The ultimate fate of Syria matters. By establishing parameters of cooperation with the anti-ISIS coalition, we will recognize that Russia has interest and legitimate concerns about terrorism in the Middle East. Russia faces a much higher risk than most Western powers given the number of ISIS and Al-Qaeda terrorists and foot soldiers originating from Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia.

Prime Minister Trudeau expressed clearly Canada's position to President Putin at the recent G20 meeting – "I pointed out that...we remain committed to the fact that Russia's interference in Ukraine must cease, that we stand with the Ukrainian people and expect the president to engage fully in the...peace process." Yet, while Russia fears NATO and wants to be treated as an equal by the US, it also behooves the West to engage Russia, to consider its perspective, and to avoid needling Russia with promises to bring Ukraine into NATO. As a senior US official said, "The current impasse between Russia and the West does not necessarily imply the start of a Cold War. Unlike in the past, Russia is a member of the larger international community, and the goal is to have them further integrated politically, diplomatically, and economically. However, this may imply altering expectations of success on both sides."<sup>30</sup>

It is important for Canada to define its interests in the Middle East in general, and more specifically in Syria and Iraq – especially now that Russia is increasingly engaged in that theatre. But it is going to be difficult unless the US defines its interests vis-à-vis Russia in Syria and beyond, including in Afghanistan which faces growing instability, re-Talibanization, and the spread of the ISIS "Khorasan" franchise. If the cooperation that presided over the successful Iranian and failed North Korean negotiations provides any lesson, it is that clearly defined objectives and strategies



FIGURE 3: Canada's Extended Continental Shelf Claim



(Source: Andres Mayer, "Race to claim High Arctic's oil resources may be a fool's mission," *CBC News*, 12 December 2013)

to achieve them can lead to results. Yet the two problems that will continue to plague the issue are the lack of clear US leadership and the Cold War mindset of Vladimir Putin.<sup>31</sup>

**Russia and the Arctic:** Russia's increasing military presence in the Arctic is a source of concern. As Caroline Rohloff puts it, the Arctic has "become a venue for Russia's force posturing and global power projection vis-à-vis the West,"<sup>32</sup> not least through infrastructure upgrades and expansion and further deployment of military units in its North. In the past year, Russia led two major, unannounced military exercises in the Arctic. The first exercise involved 45,000 troops, 41 warships, and 15 submarines, and called the Northern Fleet to "full combat readiness," while the second entailed 12,000 forces and 250 aircraft.

But the Arctic is also critical for Russia's energy future and Rohloff invites us to understand the importance of the region beyond the security dimensions. Russia is the largest Arctic state with the longest Arctic coastline, with 20 percent of its GDP, 22 percent of its exports, and strategic nuclear force based in the region. All Arctic countries have one understanding in common: the nature of operations at that latitude makes them as complex as expeditionary missions. Thus all, including Russia, are compelled to maintain multilateral cooperation in the region and high Search and Rescue capabilities and mutual support. Yet, the growing militarization of the area by Russia creates an uncertain climate.

Russian activity in the Arctic is an issue of great importance to Canada, given its territory in the Far North, sensi-



tivity over the legal status of the Northwest Passage, and alarm at the frequent Russian aircraft activities on the edge of Canadian airspace. Indeed, in 2013, Canada announced an extended continental shelf claim, which if approved would bring it all the way to the North Pole and beyond – an area also claimed in part by Russia (see Figure 3).<sup>33</sup>

Canada has certainly not stood idle on the issue of Arctic security, as shown by the numerous policy pronouncements of the previous government, frequent military exercises held in the Arctic (Operation *Nanook*), and plans to build the Nanisivik naval base and a fleet of Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS), the latter of which have finally begun. The current government has reaffirmed this focus on the Arctic, but questions remain on the degree to which action actually matches rhetoric. And there are some pressing challenges in the years ahead, including the need to update the North Warning System radars, expand maritime domain awareness capabilities in the Arctic, such as through the Joint Unmanned Surveillance Target Acquisition System (JUSTAS), and assess what role North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) could play in this theatre.<sup>34</sup>

### China, the Other Empire

It is very doubtful the new Canadian government will miss the opportunity to engage China and profit from its slowed but still thunderous growth. Yet it does not mean that a very careful review of Canada's strategy towards China will not be essential. Indeed, even as the US remains the *ultimate global power*, China may become the *most important player* on the international stage – although much depends on its willingness to cooperate with the West and be a “responsible stakeholder” globally rather than being tempted by hegemonic ambitions. On one hand, we need to understand what China may be prepared to do or to risk in order to build an alternative hegemony in the Asia-Pacific. But, as noted scholar Thomas Christensen reminds us, we also should be wary of an internally-focused China that eschews a global role, at a time when many pressing challenges – from climate change to proliferation – requires its *constructive* involvement.<sup>35</sup> China's reaction to the election of a pro-independence leader in the Republic of China (Taiwan) will be a good test of its forbearance.

**China's blue-water policy:**<sup>36</sup> China's naval forces have become the country's prioritized military service, even as the newly coalesced Chinese Coast Guard has emerged as the lead agency in patrolling and maintain control in the South and East China Seas.<sup>37</sup> This reality was confirmed in China's latest defence strategy paper, which “clearly articulates the Chinese leadership's dedication towards constructing<sup>38</sup> and enhancing military power in the maritime domain.” The strategy also emphasizes that the maritime environment is one of four ‘Critical Security Domains,’ which also includes cyber, space, and nuclear. Force development in these priority areas, Adam MacDonald reports, “is seen as critical to China's ‘core interests’ and national survival.”<sup>39</sup>

For Canada, China continues to be an unknown quantity.<sup>40</sup> On the one hand, China's history is not that of an invader. Yet, on the other hand, their expanded naval capabilities raise questions of whether China still wants to be a legitimate partner at sea and beyond, as perhaps evidenced by its anti-piracy deployments in the Gulf of Aden, or if its growing assets are aimed instead at altering the existing power configuration, such as by ‘Findlandizing’ the South China Sea, coercing other maritime claimants and/or US allies with its superior naval and air assets, and ensuring that the United States no longer has free access to this region. Such a contradiction was on full display at RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) 14, a major multinational naval exercise to which the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN)





were invited and in which they participated, yet one they also felt the need to survey.

China's military investments, and particularly its naval buildup, represent a challenge to the US command of the sea in the region, based on its aircraft carrier battle groups. However, the PLAN still relatively prioritizes sea denial,<sup>41</sup> evidenced by its continuing reliance on attack submarines, surface ships geared for anti-ship attacks, and a strike-reconnaissance complex – including deployment of an anti-ship ballistic missile – designed to target American allies, forward bases, and naval forces. This is not to say that China is not developing foundations for greater blue-water ambitions. By denying American access in the region, China creates an opening to further cement its own control over these critical sea lines of communication. Of note, the PLAN's increasingly large surface warships are equipped with both offensive anti-ship *and* anti-aircraft capabilities,<sup>42</sup> while there are indications of even more ambitious warships on the horizon – from the Type 055 cruiser, which could be larger than a US Aegis destroyer, to its construction of indigenously-built aircraft carriers.

In response, as part of a series of hedging initiatives, Japan has expanded its military posture, including legislating the export of military technology; the Philippines has offered access for a rotational American presence at its bases, as have other nations in the region; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) has started toying with the idea of military cooperation despite its traditional non-confrontational approach to regional tensions; India has signaled its concern over increased instability and declared its intent to get involved; and Australia has entertained the idea of a submarine partnership with Japan that would present itself as some form of control against growing Chinese maritime strength. Regional states have also turned to a series of piecemeal bilateral and multilateral movements, such as the increasing security discussions between the US, Japan, and Australia and the US, Japan and South Korea, as well as the possible reintroduction of the four-power Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), involving the US, Japan, Australia, and India.

The United States remains indispensable to these developments. Moreover, they should be seen as part of its “pivot” or “rebalance” to the Asia-Pacific, including diplomatic (joining the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus [ADMM-Plus]), economic (negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP]), and military (a strengthened alliance network and expanded US naval, air, and Marine Corps presence) elements. Recent events in Ukraine and the Middle East, while somewhat stalling this rebalance, have not halted its steady development. Yet despite some tentative statements about re-engagement, Canada has been notably silent about these developments, refraining from criticizing China's recent activities or offering a response – to say nothing about support – to the US rebalance.

*The reefs issue:*<sup>43</sup> The Chinese intent to use the reefs to further their regional control is not new. Some construction to establish pretty austere facilities at the Fiery Cross reef took place in 1988, while conflicts in other island groups with Vietnam go back to the 1970-80s. The Spratly chain was viewed with concern over a decade ago precisely because of Chinese activity. Yet a new phase appears to have begun in recent years, with expansive facility construction and land reclamation projects (see Figure 4 and 5) designed to create islands out of reefs (Fiery Cross Reef, Mischief Reef, and Subi Reef, among others). One can also add its activity on the Paracel Islands in the northwest part of the South China Sea,<sup>44</sup> which will help consolidate its military presence near its crucial military base on Hainan Island. Other claimants have undertaken land reclamation and built structures in the South China Sea, but nothing compared to the scale and size of these Chinese projects.<sup>45</sup>



Several commentators<sup>46</sup> have been critical of the alleged “timid” response to these Chinese activities by the US. Yet the US has a long-standing position not to take sides on sovereignty disputes; as such, much of the recommendations (logistically supporting Vietnam and Philippines in their claims) would be quite contrary to that stance. The US also has slightly different interests. Claimants are fixated on territorial waters, exclusive economic zones, etc. Among the central concerns facing US policy-makers are ensuring unhindered access into and freedom of navigation within the South China Sea, alongside, of course, maintaining peace and security, deterring conflict and coercion, and promoting a rules-based system.<sup>47</sup>

Notably, the US has been undertaking periodic operational assertions with its naval forces in this region and elsewhere – and these assertions have been directed at countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the Philippines, as well as China. This fact also puts greater context to the US’s recent freedom of navigation operation (FONOPS) by USS *Lassen*, widely seen as an operational assertion directed at China. This initial FONOPS should be seen as something of a test, to gauge China’s reaction prior to what one would expect to be further FONOPS and B-52 overflights.<sup>48</sup>

Washington has become more assertive in naming China over the past several years.<sup>49</sup> It denounced China’s preposterous 9-dash line claim, a historical demarcation line that lays claim to the entire South China Sea and is often referenced by China despite having no basis in international law. But it walks a fine line. The US has also made gradual but important moves to strengthen ties with rival claimants Vietnam and the Philippines, forming a new defence partnership with the former and selling military equipment and returning on a rotational basis to the Philippines. Importantly, Vietnam and the Philippines might not be so eager to have America’s direct support in their maritime territorial dispute against China, probably based on fears of being either entrapped (if the US starts to openly contain China) or abandoned (if the US retrenches).

Arguments that the US should ramp up its involvement in the region or buttress their countries claim in the face of Chinese land reclamation projects ignores this reality. Indeed, it also makes little sense to overstate the degree to which these developments are “game-changers,” which overlooks both the vulnerability of such military facilities and their largely symbolic significance.<sup>50</sup> More important by far is China’s growing number of advanced air and maritime assets that promises to make American access into these maritime approaches more difficult, if not impossible – irrespective of whether China builds defence installations on isolated and distant reefs or not.

FIGURE 4: Fieri Cross Reef (top) and Mischief Reef (bottom)



(Source:  
Asian  
Maritime  
Security  
Initiative)



FIGURE 5: New Structures in the South China Sea



(Source: Andrea Chen, "China charts course for blue-water navy," *South China Morning Post*, 26 May 2015.)

Canada had once provided financial support for a series of South China Sea dialogues between claimants in the 1990s. Even if it showed interest in doing so again, it remains to be seen whether these nations are prepared to join in similar discussions, given the increasingly tense and often antagonistic relations between them.

Yet a critical opportunity to test the waters may be on the horizon on June 2016, when the International Court of Justice makes a ruling under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) between competing claims offered by China and the Philippines.

### A Word on Africa

Prime Minister Trudeau has rekindled a commitment to the multilateral world, as evidenced at the Malta Commonwealth meeting and by our intimate presence in La Francophonie, and to the continuation of the initiative on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health launched by the previous government. As such, Africa will likely regain the government's attention – as the region of the world to which close to 75 percent of UN institutions and agencies resources are dedicated. Africa is both a continent where fascinating progress is made and where some of the greatest trans-border ills occur.

The map below (Figure 6) illustrates the vastness of the Arc of Instability in 2014/15. The same map for 2016 would likely require adding further inroads by ISIS. At present, the French are engaged in combatting terrorism in the Sahel, while the Americans have ramped up their security assistance and military presence under the auspices of US Africa Command (USAFRICOM). Yet the international community continues to struggle to sort out the crises in Sudan and Somalia or assist Nigeria in its fight against Boko Haram and Kenya against Al-Shabaab. Boko Haram is a typical example of a terrorist network expanding beyond Nigeria and poisoning several unstable neighbouring countries such as Cameroun, Niger, Chad, Mali. As Ely Karmon underscores it, "its proximity to the jihadist battle front in the Sahel converts it into an immediate and infectious regional threat."<sup>51</sup> The bottom line is clear: "Sub-Saharan Africa could be the next center of gravity for jihadist violence."<sup>52</sup>

With Canada poised to re-engage in Africa, the new Canadian government could find itself playing a greater role in a region where jihadist and terrorist violence are on the rise and counter-terrorism has become a more pressing issue. In 2014, CTV documented the role of the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR) undertaking counter-ter-



FIGURE 6: New Terrorism Hotspots: Africa's 'Arc of Instability'



(Source: Yonah Alexander, "Terrorism in North Africa and the Sahel 2014," Inter-University Centre for Terrorism Studies February 2015)

rorism training in Niger as part of Operation *Flintlock* under USAFRICOM.<sup>53</sup> One can certainly imagine additional such missions in the future, especially following recent terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso by Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb that claimed the lives of 6 Canadians. This requires a better understanding of the security threats in the region, and their linkages with developments in the Middle East – especially in light of Canada's promise to remain part of the anti-ISIS coalition.

### Latin America and the Caribbean

Canada is a big player in Central America and Caribbean in the tourism industry and infrastructure projects. Despite the commodity market's downturn, Canada's extractive industry sector is very present in the mineral and energy-rich Andean countries. Canada is also taking a chunk of the information and communication technologies in the Latin American market. But insecurity in the Americas not only affects the stability and overall development of the region but also has consequences to Canada. One need only look at the worldwide drug trafficking network that connects Andean drug producers in Columbia to narcotics traffickers in Mexico to distribution hubs in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. Of particular concern is the criminal insurgency in Mexico that has devastated parts of the country, killed tens of thousands, and can even reportedly be tied to an increase in drug violence in Canada.<sup>54</sup>

Canada contributes to efforts at addressing corruption, development, accountability and transparency in several countries in the region. This includes significant training of Latin American and Caribbean military officers, including "counterterrorism operational groups" as part of its capacity building assistance to enable interested countries "to prevent and respond to terrorist activity in a manner consistent with international counter-terrorism and human rights norms, standards and obligations."<sup>55</sup> Trilateral defence discussions with US and Mexican officials have accelerated since the first such ministerial meeting in 2012.



Canada also spearheaded a sizable “whole-of-government” humanitarian relief operation after the 2010 Haiti earthquake, involving significant military assets under Operation *Hestia*. Of course, Canada has long provided naval assets as part of the multinational drug interdiction operations in the region, most recently under Operation *Caribbean* in 2015. Despite all these accomplishments, however, there is still a considerable level of ignorance about Latin America. *Canada’s Strategy for Engagement in the Americas* dates back to 2007 (albeit reviewed in 2012), while Foreign Affairs’ *Canada and the Americas: Priorities & Progress* policy statement was released in 2009; an updated strategy document is certainly needed.

In fact, now that the Colombian government and the left-wing FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) rebel movement have asked the UN for a mission to oversee the end of their decades-long conflict,<sup>56</sup> Canada might be one of the first countries to contribute as a definite example of its commitment to the UN in our priority region.

### 3. CANADA'S INITIAL SECURITY POLICY RESPONSES

#### A New Mandate for Canada

Canada has had a new government for less than four months (at the time of writing). Right from the beginning, the Prime Minister was “thrown” on the international stage, starting first with the Syrian refugee crisis, then his first G20 meeting in Antalya, in November followed by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Manila, the Commonwealth in Malta, and the Paris Climate Conference (COP 21) in December. He thus had a unique opportunity to consider Canada’s role and image abroad while presenting his initial thoughts on major foreign policy issues. Yet the foundations of the new policy framework are to be found in the ministerial mandate letters.

Indeed, if there is one aspect of the new government that has struck the imagination, it is the detailed program made public through the ministerial mandate letters<sup>57</sup> and which reflected the election platform of the Liberal Party. These mandate letters offer a framework within which the government will articulate policy responses to events and crises in the international arena. Yet they do not convey a sense that the world is facing some enormous challenges. It may be that these letters are not the documents to answer these – or are they?

Trudeau’s very first statement on 20 October 2015 on the return to a more “compassionate” and internationalist Canada set the bar quite high. The mandate letters for the three ministers of the newly-titled Global Affairs Canada (formerly the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development [DFATD]), clearly intimate an activist foreign policy. It is worth recalling – in an abridged version – the specific tasks enunciated by the Prime Minister on the portfolios of Foreign Affairs, Trade, International Development, and Defence:

***Foreign Affairs and Trade:*** The two mandate letters for Foreign Affairs and Trade emphasize restoring constructive Canadian leadership in the world by revitalizing its diplomacy and leadership on key international issues; improving relations with the United States, including making progress to reduce impediments to trade and commerce, as well as strengthening trilateral cooperation with the US and Mexico; and reinforcing the linkage between defence policy, foreign policy and national security. More specifically, it advocates working with the Minister of National Defence (MND) to increase Canada’s support for United Nations peace operations.



**International Development:** A few key changes include calling for a new policy and funding framework, emphasizing help for the poorest and most vulnerable, supporting fragile states, ensuring that Canada's valuable development focus on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health is driven by evidence and outcomes, *not ideology*, including through closing existing gaps in reproductive rights and health care for women, and providing assistance to countries that are vulnerable to the destabilizing effects of climate change such as through climate finance. The Prime Minister's commitment on the latter was evident both at the Commonwealth meeting and at COP 21 in Paris.

**National Defence:** The mandate letter reiterates the need for a link between defence policy, foreign policy, and national security underpinned by the "overarching goal" of ensuring that "the Canadian Armed Forces are equipped and prepared, if called upon, to protect Canadian sovereignty, defend North America, provide disaster relief, conduct search and rescue, support United Nations peace operations and contribute to security of or allies and to allied and coalition operations abroad." At the same time the letter calls for a new defence strategy to replace the 2008 CFDS.

Specifically, the mandate calls for ending Canada's combat mission in Iraq and Syria, with a refocus on training and humanitarian support; maintaining current defence spending, including planned increases; launching an open and transparent competition to replace the CF-18 fighter aircraft; renewing Canada's commitment to UN peace operations; leading international efforts in training personnel for UN missions; maintaining existing commitments to NATO and the NORAD; and renewing focus on surveillance/control over territory, including the Arctic, and reviewing measures against cyber threats.

All four mandate letters provide a broad perspective on the government's priorities. Other than on the issue of the US, there is relatively little specificity. While eschewing calls for a foreign policy review, it does push for something beyond just an update of CFDS, albeit within existing means and leaving somewhat open the question as to what is being sought – a change in the procurement "shopping list" or a change on strategic outlook. There is less emphasis on the security risks per se and more on collective responses, a contrasting perspective to the preceding government's policies.

The key question, of course, is what the government will do to effect the restoration of "constructive Canadian leadership in the world." These are courageous words but any effort to play a constructive role internationally comes at a price in a period when the government's overall financial picture is bleak. After all, our defence and development assistance together to this day represent around 1.2 percent of Canada's GDP, while the average for G7 countries is around 2 percent.<sup>58</sup> Leadership does not come cheap. But a key question remains: what kind of leadership does Canada wish to exercise in this complex world to best serve our interests. Thus, a review of the major crises in the world and of how they affect Canadian interests and values is in order.

### Canada and the Legacy of Foreign Interventions

An early decision of the new Canadian government was to announce the eventual suspension of Canada's participation in the aerial bombing of ISIS targets while committing to strengthen our training mission in Iraq. While a lot of questions were raised as to the timing, especially given the 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris, that decision also brought home a key question on the value and modalities of foreign interventions. One of the criticisms levied against the previous government was its alleged readiness to have Canada participate in any coalition-based military mission



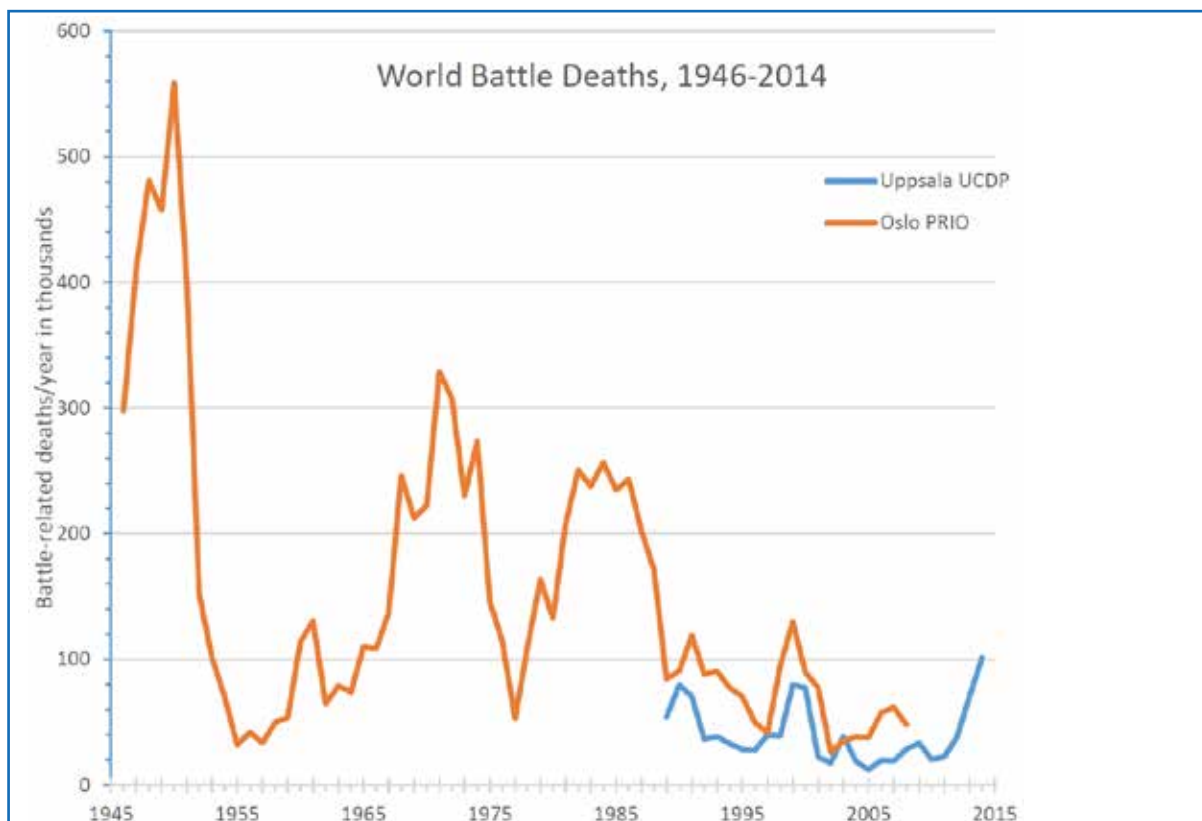
while expressing skepticism towards multilateral approaches. This was an exaggeration; Canada only joined UN-approved missions – a long-standing inclination that has had few exceptions (one being the 1999 Kosovo war).

Joining the coalition against ISIS was as much a fence-mending with the US as a commitment guided by its interests in the region. This should not be surprising. Canada has traditionally committed military forces abroad as part of a coalition or alliance, and its defence activities tend to be closely aligned with the United States and supportive of a *Pax Americana*.<sup>59</sup> And today, the government is facing a choice about an ongoing intervention in the Middle East in the most unusual circumstances and against a particularly strange foe. Important questions can and should be raised about Canada's future role in expeditionary operations, especially in the aftermath of a long and bloody engagement in Afghanistan that saw our first integrated "whole-of-government" approach to a military operation but resulted little in the way of influence on strategic decisions about the war's broader direction.<sup>60</sup>

History is replete with accounts of interventions in one form or another by a party into someone else's territory or space. In recent years, interventions have been on the upswing. The concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was enshrined at the 2005 UN World Summit. But, as James A. Lewis puts it, R2P "can often sound like 'Right to invade' to audiences in the global south."<sup>61</sup> An important contribution would be if the new Canadian government, in cooperation with civil society, initiated a review of R2P, in this day and age of medieval-styled executions and retributions.

While the number of deaths from international conflict and civil strife have clearly gone down since 1945 (see Figure 7), it makes little difference in terms of the number of conflicts. 2015 has been at least as rich as 2014 in this regard,

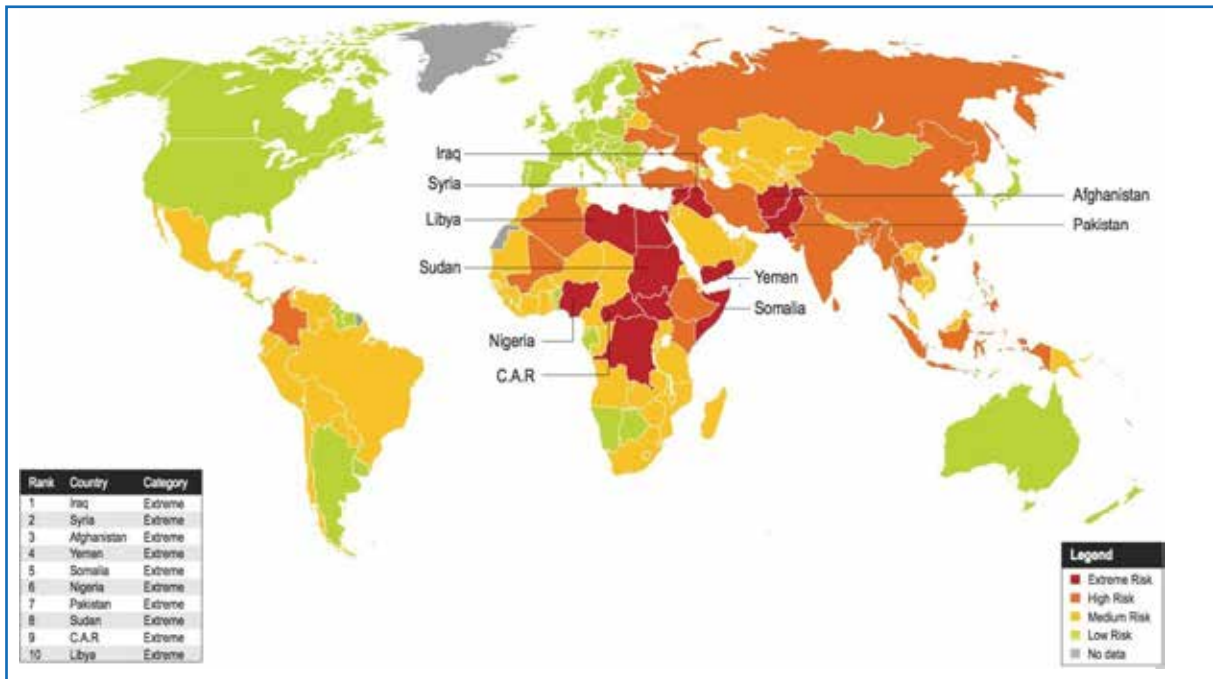
**FIGURE 7: World Battle Deaths, 1946-2014**



(Source: Joshua Goldstein, "World Backsliding on Peace," *International Relations.com*, 3 August 2015)



FIGURE 8: Political Violence Index 2014



(Source: Verisk Maplecroft, 2014)

with even greater violence (see Figure 8) and more ominous consequences: Ukraine, Iraq, Syria, Mali, Central African Republic, Congo, and Somalia, to name just a few. Sadly enough, these cases are heavily concentrated in Muslim countries, stretching from Western Sahara to Jakarta. And there is little chance for that trend to abate. Indeed, the Global Terrorism Index reveals an increase in the number of terrorist attacks/fatalities. As Alex Wilner describes it: “more than 32,500 people were killed in terrorist attacks worldwide in 2014 alone.” Even if globally the actual number is not huge, it still represents an increase of 80 percent over 2013. The figures for 2015 have been roughly on par with 2014 – a trend that seems likely to continue and perhaps even accelerate into 2016.<sup>62</sup>

The range of causalities or reasons for entering into conflict remains disconcertingly high – borders, religion, ethnicity, power struggles, natural resources, staple, environmental degradation, migrations, and more. Ever since non-state actors have joined the field of conflict, new forms of war have emerged to the point of altering the practice of conflict management. Not only are there serious risks of profound changes in the borders and territories of some Middle East countries but there is a looming sense of unravelling “the established order.”

While an objective view of foreign interventions would come to the conclusion that seldom have they produced the expected results, no definite judgment can ever be made – the alternative to an intervention remains unclear. While Iraq is a mess today and it can be mostly blamed on the US/British invasion, other variables since 2003 have intervened, including the Arab Spring which altered the fragile equilibrium in the region. Each case of intervention has its own characteristics which make generalizations difficult. The intervention in Iraq was done with troops on the ground, without significant boots on the ground in Libya, and there was no intervention in Syria while a call was made for regime change in Damascus. It is clearly Syria which is the worst case. Such an outcome may even justify





the early imposition of a no-fly zone in such cases, or at least more preventative measures.

As to Afghanistan, in previous iterations of *Strategic Outlook*, we predicted that it would also go down the proverbial tube once the Western coalition forces left. Today, despite the continued (albeit much reduced) NATO presence, the Taliban are increasingly regaining ground. As Jonathan Marcus puts it in light of recent Taliban advances in Helmand province, “the crisis in Afghanistan raises broader question about the whole trajectory of Western military interventions over recent years. While the exact circumstances differ, many of the questions and dilemmas remain the same from Afghanistan, to Libya, Syria, and beyond. There has frequently been an inability to define clear and achievable strategic goals and then to provide the necessary resources to achieve them. The attention span of Western powers and their publics is limited. Rhetoric greatly exceeds commitment.”<sup>63</sup>

While somewhat interconnected, conflicts can be entirely different: the Taliban in Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda spreading across the Maghreb, and ISIS’s rampage across Syria and Iraq. The fact they overlap should not entail “one-shot-fixes-all” responses. Indeed, given the problematic record of previous interventions, it would be prudent to assess the circumstances in which we should intervene in post-conflict situations, whether under R2P or other rationales, and whether more preventative security sector reform measures should be prioritized.

### Canadian Foreign Policy Priorities

Although it is still too early to speak of a vision or even a full-fledged foreign policy framework, there is a striking distinction one can already highlight between the previous government and the present one. While the Harper government’s foreign policy was all about Canada, with a strong fixation on what it termed “economic diplomacy,” as revealed in a 2013 DFATD report,<sup>64</sup> Trudeau’s approach and pronouncements reflect an overarching concern about the fate of the world within which Canada must play a part – a noble approach, yet leading to reasonable questions about what can Canada really do given the limited resources (financial and otherwise) the country has at its disposal. As Denis Stairs writes: “Canadian foreign policy debates have long been coloured by a tendency to exaggerate Canada’s international influence and accomplishments.”<sup>65</sup>

In previous editions of *Canada’s Strategic Outlook*, we listed some of the issues on which Harper’s government might have considered working but failed to do. These are low-lying fruits very much in tune with refurbishing Canada’s image internationally. They would fit well with our contribution to COP 21 in Paris. Indeed, it would be interesting to see if Canada will rejoin the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The government is already committed to sign the Arms Trade Treaty and, as noted earlier, has indicated a renewed interest pushing for a FMCT at the UN Conference on Disarmament.

One of the most vexing issues was the refusal by the previous government to sign on to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People; a symbolic gesture with no formal obligation. A positive sign has already been given with Canada rejoining a UN working group on international aboriginal issues. There are several other UN resolutions which Canada could sign on, such as the right to safe water and sanitation. Among the UN treaties that Canada could consider ratifying soon, are those affecting, among other things, the rights of children, of persons with disabilities, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as on enforced disappearances and on migrant workers.



More broadly, whenever Canada is due to reappear on the list of countries going through the Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Canada may wish to have a more open-minded approach and respond substantively to any sensible recommendation. Canada could easily reverse its diffident approach to UN Special Rapporteurs coming to Canada to review our record on issues such as the right to food or the rights of children. David Petrasek and Alex Neve have made a series of concrete proposals, including ratifying the American Convention on Human Rights and convening the Federal, provincial, territorial ministerial human rights meeting (the last one was in 1988!) to provide impetus and leadership at home on commitments we make abroad.<sup>66</sup>

But, even as the Prime Minister extols the value of the UN, the government will need to address what multilateralism means today, in light of what is seen by many as a withering away of a dated institution. UN reform has been a leitmotif for decades but as former UN Deputy Secretary General Louise Fréchette has said on many occasions, “The UN will, for the foreseeable future, continue to be a tool in the hands of its Member States. And like all tools, it will not do the job if its owners do not want to use it.”<sup>67</sup> It will be an uphill battle for Canada’s new government to convince the other “owners” to use it better. Rekindling our faith in the multilateral framework conceived in 1945 will not be enough. The War on Terror has complicated terms like humanitarian interventions and R2P, while our multilateral institutions have not fully adapted to non-state terrorist actors. Yet today’s UN peacekeeping missions are unprecedented in both scale and scope – 125,000 peacekeepers are deployed to four continents, and 98 percent are mandated to protect civilians. The demand for UN peacekeeping is at an all-time high for increasingly inhospitable, volatile, and dangerous environments.

Of note, Military Adviser to UN peacekeeping Lieutenant-General Maqsood Ahmed outlined priorities very much in sync with that of the Prime Minister. As LGen Ahmed states: “Our highest priorities are capable, highly-trained and motivated personnel, niche capabilities, enabling equipment such as air assets, and engineers, medical personnel and specialized units that can be called upon to deploy rapidly to new operations or reinforce existing operations.”<sup>68</sup> Prime Minister’s Trudeau emphasis is on niche expertise: “Canada actually has specific skills that many of the countries that are doing peacekeeping don’t necessarily have, whether it’s engineer corps, whether it’s medical, whether it’s officers and bilingualism or even French speaking.”<sup>69</sup>

In the Commonwealth and La Francophonie, a considerable emphasis is ascribed to the four pillars of democracy – freedom of expression, rule of law, respect for human rights, and participatory political life. Each institution has its own mechanism to put pressure on member countries failing to abide by these. They represent a functional/geographic model of diplomatic action that needs strengthening and deepening to remain credible. Considerable amount of work has been done on “human security,” conflict prevention, and R2P – and more work could be done on the idea of pluralism. Canada hosts the Global Centre for Pluralism established by the Aga Khan in Ottawa. In paying tribute to the first, hectic, two months in office of the Prime Minister, Jeremy Kinsman says that “Canada’s best international brand ... has been our ability to manage pluralism, which Trudeau articulated impressively.”<sup>70</sup> With today’s mounting nationalism, illiberalism, radicalism, and religious fanaticism, a pluralist approach might be the most effective against the growing exclusivism of our societies.

The mandate letters also refers to UN post-conflict reconstruction efforts. A great idea was generated at the UN Summit of 2005: the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to rebuild states recovering from conflict. Its



role is aptly described by the UN: “The Peacebuilding Commission plays a unique role in (1) bringing together all of the relevant actors, including international donors, the international financial institutions, national governments, troop contributing countries; (2) marshalling resources; and (3) advising on and proposing integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery and where appropriate, highlighting any gaps that threaten to undermine peace.”<sup>71</sup> “Unfortunately,” wrote Canada’s Carolyn McAskie, who launched the PBC at the UN, “the truth is that members of the Commission, including Canada, have simply not made their promised contributions.”<sup>72</sup> One would hope that Canada will champion the PBC given its essential role in preventing countries and regions in conflict from falling back into conflict.

In that context, one would assume that the official development assistance budget will not fall any further with this government. But, to use a military expression, that is a program that needs “less tail and more teeth.” The government will have to decide where to put most efforts, adjust the ratio between field and headquarters, define the priorities and the emphasis, choose the best delivery models and mechanisms (bilateral or through multilateral financial institutions), and confirm the number of beneficiaries (sprinkling has already been discarded in favour of going deep). There will never be satisfactory responses to all these, but a “right” balance is required between development priorities and foreign policy interests.

Aside from a renewed commitment to the UN, the current government had also noted its decision to maintain existing defence commitments in North America (NORAD) and Europe (NATO). Its decision to do so is not surprising, given that both institutions have become long-standing leitmotifs in Canada’s security and defence policy. They also reflect the relative importance of key foreign policy partners, not least the United States, which is a binational partner in NORAD and the only extra-regional (aside from Canada) member of NATO. Yet there are avenues by which the government could strengthen, rather than simply maintain, its commitments to both institutions. More detailed proposals will be outlined in Part 4. But, suffice to say, Canada diplomatic heft could be reinforced by refocusing its foreign policy attention on both venerable alliance commitments and towards our most important strategic ally.

The mandate letters also included an important recommendation, calling for “a close link between defence policy, foreign policy and national security.” Yet, while instructing the MND to issue a replacement for CFDS, there is no equivalent recommendation about a foreign policy review or a clear guidance on national security. This is quite critical as Canada transited into a post-Afghan period with little rethinking of its defence posture or even an extensive lessons learned process. Thus, suggesting replacing CFDS with a new defence strategy without reference points – or indeed a joint review of our foreign and defence policy or an overarching international policy – might be a dangerous shortcut. It is high time that Canada develops a broader concept of security and defence more akin to Britain’s National Security Strategy and the Strategic Defence and Security Review,<sup>73</sup> France’s White Paper on Defence,<sup>74</sup> or Australia’s brilliant equivalent.<sup>75</sup>

#### **4. ELEMENTS OF A CANADIAN NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**<sup>76</sup>

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s call for a new defence strategy augurs well for the future, so long as it is carried out in a holistic manner. It should emerge from an overarching vision for Canada, taking into account the strategic imper-



atives stemming from the world around us and the multiple threats alluded to earlier in this review. No one would argue against “the requirement for a close and enduring connection between the government’s strategic policy, the force posture of the military and the preparation of military capabilities.”<sup>77</sup> The mandate letters, valuable as they are, cannot be construed as forming a full strategic policy.

Without clear policy objectives to underpin defence planning, defence arrangements, and apportioning between national, continental, and (somewhat more flexible) expeditionary capabilities, we are left to a guessing game. Strategic imperatives are security and foreign policy-driven and thus require strategic policy direction at the political level,<sup>78</sup> especially where decisions are taken on the use of military force. As Michel Roi puts it, “The development of strategic policy and force posture direction necessitates ongoing dialogue between civil decision-makers and their military advisers to ensure the coherence between the government’s defence priorities and the preparation of military capabilities.”<sup>79</sup>

If “constructive leadership in the world” is the baseline, the twin enablers of that leadership are prosperity and security (underpinned by vision, influence, and capabilities). International influence is closely related to both our ability to contribute effectively to sustainable development abroad, and to our defence capabilities when these are required at home, in support of North American defence, and for expeditionary missions internationally.

A security strategy does not come from a void. Our military and non-military engagements abroad, under any government, have rested upon a clear sense of the values we wish to uphold, in fighting oppression, extremism, authoritarianism, and exclusion. The implementation of the emerging international R2P norm has met with a number of failures in the recent past, due to both undue haste to engage militarily and to a lack of post-intervention planning. But the foundation of its idealistic vision of democracy and good governance remains – protection of people, of their freedom, rights, and liberties, reestablishment of the rule of law and promoting tolerance, inclusion, pluralism, and accountability. Equally important, Canada’s security and prosperity depend on a stable international environment, conducive to unfettered trade and commerce.

A few important considerations must be reflected upon in developing such an approach. A security strategy is based on a country’s values, interests, and ambitions, its economic health and essential military and non-military capabilities. At least in peacetime, if there is a down-turn in the economy, the defence budget is likely to suffer. Yet, as outlined in Part 2, global threats are only growing – maybe not to the level of the Cold War but certainly much more than was expected after the fall of the Berlin Wall. As part of an international policy review, Canada needs to determine the extent to which its interests and security are affected, in what circumstances (and with which allies) it should find itself engaged militarily abroad, and what level of commitments adequately matches envisioned ends.<sup>80</sup>

It is never easy for a government to determine how much it should invest on security. Defence procurements are a particularly long-term investment, with the equipment being used for decades into the future. One need only look at HMCS *Athabaskan*, which was launched in the midst in 1970 and was most recently deployed last year to NATO military exercises overseas. But it also means that some procurement decisions can be postponed until more clarity emerges on the options, costs, and challenges. We should be wary of ideal or lofty targets expressed in overly simple terms, such as an increase to 2 percent of GDP on defence expenditures in the next decade, as pledged in the 2014



NATO Wales Summit. The symbolism of such a target can at times trump the quality of these expenditures and degree to which capabilities acquired meet defence requirements and broader foreign and security policy interests. The same applies to Official Development Assistance target of 0.7 percent of GDP, an equally powerful (albeit symbolic) international moral “norm.” For a country like Canada, a security strategy must also establish a link between defence contributions and economic/trade interests – for instance, possible linkages between a greater naval presence in Asia, our role in key Asia-Pacific institutions (e.g., East Asia Summit), and our credibility as a trading partner in the region.

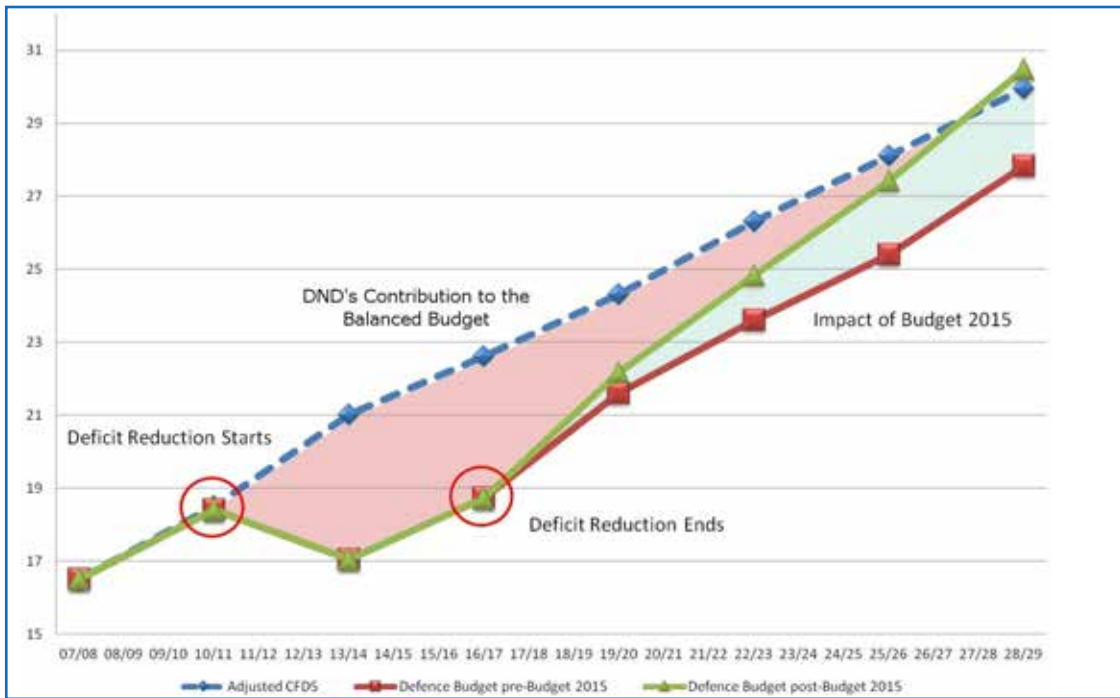
Even when looking more narrowly on defence policy itself, we need to go beyond its financial and procurement aspects. Debates on the previous government’s CFDS, and more recently on possibilities of a reset, were largely limited to such issues. We referred last year to “financial constraints driving strategy.” Instead, defence policy needs to be driven by the fundamental choices of what is needed and what is not. A real defence policy review has to question and ultimately support force structure fundamentals; for instance, why do we need 12 frigates, three destroyers, nine battalions, 65 planned fighters, and a robust Special Forces capability? This is not to say all these are not needed, nor that the CFDS was not based on specific scenarios. But the nature of the requirements must be informed by our nation’s foreign policy and defence objectives. And those requirements must be based on some perspective on the expected warfare environment over the next 2-3 decades, so that force structure continues to be capable of meeting future mission requirements and platform design flexibility provides for possible improvements, not just refits – as the successful modernization program for the Halifax-class frigates demonstrates.

The defence tool-box has hardly ever been altered, notwithstanding changes to both the security environment and fiscal latitude. This does not necessarily mean we should do things differently. But it does force us to think about whom we are (or aim to be) and what we plan to accomplish. Is NATO more the heart of our defence policy today, in light of Russian revanchism, or should we let the Europeans take care of Eurasian affairs? Are we in the “neo-deterrence” business? With NATO membership expanded to the East, is our real comfort level more with our “Five Eyes” partners (e.g., US, UK, Australia, New Zealand)? The Prime Minister has rekindled our commitment to the UN as the ultimate instrument of peace. But what does this entail and what means should we devote to fulfill his commitment? Are we really Pacific players? If that is what Canadians want, how do we go about it from a security perspective? It was quite surprising the 2015 IPSOS survey showed that “protecting ocean trade routes” preoccupied 53 percent of Canadian respondents. How do we go about it? And then there is the whole issue of counterinsurgency, which raises the question on the nature and size of our ground forces and our expeditionary requirements? Unless we ask these questions and try to respond honestly, we will be tinkering at the margins while thinking we are meeting the remit of the new government.

Last year’s Parliamentary Budget Officer report on *Fiscal Sustainability of Canada’s National Defence Program*<sup>81</sup> refers to the fiscal gap between the status quo defence budget allocations and the cost of sustaining Canada’s status quo force structure; it basically leaves three choices: increase money, reduce assets, or find efficiencies and design changes.<sup>82</sup> Before choosing one or the other of these options, questions need to be answered. For instance, when will we have the courage to look at base closing and infrastructure rationalization – not from a political but from a value for money perspective, given the huge savings to be made there?<sup>83</sup> Indeed, even the recent change in govern-



FIGURE 9: Defence Budget Projections, \$B Nominal



"This graph shows the change in time to the original CFDS funding, before and after Budget 2015. The dotted blue line "Adjusted CFDS" is the original CFDS funding plan, adjusted downward to account for the creation of Shared Services Canada and the Communications Security Establishment as independent agencies. The red line "Defence Budget pre-Budget 2015" shows the impact of all of the budget cuts, operating budget freezes, and capital re-profiling that occurred since 2010. The green line "Defence Budget post-Budget 2015" indicates the impact of Budget 2015 to defence. The area shaded in grey represents that additional \$11.8 billion in cumulative funding provided to the Department of National Defence (DND). The area shaded pink represents the portion of the CFDS funding that DND appears to have permanently lost and represents DND's contribution to the balanced budget." (Source: David Perry, "Defence Budget 2015: A Long-Term Funding Increase...Maybe," *CGAI Policy Update*, 1 May 2015)

ment has not altered the financial outlook, insofar as the mandate letter on defence calls for: "[m]aintaining current defence spending levels, including current planned increases." Thus it retains the 2015 budget with its 3 percent escalator as of 2017-18. As David Perry shows (see Figure 9), while this promised amount will close the funding gap that emerged in 2010 between current funding and the original CFDS funding, "the pledged \$11.8 billion will only restore about one quarter of the money that was removed from National Defence during deficit reduction." Major procurement projects are bound to suffer and a recent report by Perry "suggests two-thirds of all defence procurements he studied are behind schedule — some by decades."<sup>84</sup>

### Canada's Overarching National Objectives and Strategic Policy Choices

While the mandate letters provide a sense of what the government wants to do and will be held accountable for, they do not constitute "national, security or strategic objectives" per se. Canada's national objectives should relate to the contribution the government and the country as a whole must make to ensure that *its people are safe, that they prosper, and that the country maintains its political independence, security, and a role on the international stage consonant with the pursuit of that security and that prosperity*. The last point is important to underline; the



notion of “projecting influence” in the world has nothing to do with “feeling good,” and everything to do with our security and prosperity. Our contribution to UN missions, in addition to our existing role in NORAD and NATO, is also clearly in Canada’s national security interests. Investing in relationships is critical, including meeting and talking to both friends and foes. Our sovereignty and territorial integrity are directly tied to our defence. The level of our engagement, the importance of our economy, and the strength of our capabilities, all ensures us a seat at the tables that matter. The quality of our diplomacy and the equanimity of our development assistance program contribute to goodwill and long-term relationships – and to winning a UN Security Council campaign.

A security strategy is the architecture presiding over the application of the country’s various means and assets to achieve the country’s objectives of peace, security, and prosperity. A national security strategy is not simply a response to outside events or possible outcomes. It is a living concept made as much of initiatives as of possible responses. The assets (i.e., the elements of national power exploited to produce specific effects) underpinning the strategy include:

- The Armed Forces of Canada – for which the Prime Minister has instructed the Minister of Defence to reset or replace the CFDS.
- Our Public Safety agencies/organizations dealing with counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, border strategies, crime prevention, and emergency management.
- Our intelligence agencies – Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC).
- Our diplomatic service – a role which the Prime Minister recognized from day one.
- Our development assistance programme – for which the Prime Minister called for a new policy and funding framework.
- The NATO Alliance, but also our bilateral arrangements with the United States, not least NORAD.
- Our police and law enforcement institutions.
- A major economy of the world for a relatively small population and a country rich in natural resources.
- More importantly than anything else, our Canadian essence – ethics, openness, multiculturalism, generosity, lack of colonial past (although our treatment of our own indigenous people is a scar in our collective conscience). These qualities help us understand better the world out there and prepare for both its challenges and opportunities, as well as the image we project abroad. Canadians have both the resiliency of their multiple cultures and very different outlooks which may at times affect the commitment which a situation requires. What it gains in diversity it loses at times in unity. Leadership is therefore the most important ingredient to unify perspectives and engagement.

The need for a coherent foreign policy is clear as its absence would be detrimental to the pursuit of peace, prosperity and influence. Similarly, Doug Bland reminded the author last year of the danger of “the absence of a defence policy



aimed at providing an adequate armed force for Canada's use in any number of areas – including foreign, domestic, allied, international, and humanitarian missions.” As he goes on to say “With a reasonably and adequately structured CF [Canadian Forces], Canadian governments will be well positioned to undertake most missions where military capabilities are required and/or appropriate; on the other hand, without such capabilities any number of future missions in any policy field will fail.”<sup>85</sup>

### **In Quest of a Foreign Policy Framework (including trade and development)<sup>86</sup>**

As then Prime Minister Paul Martin wrote in the 2005 *International Policy Statement*,<sup>87</sup> “Foreign policy is how a nation best expresses itself to the world.” A foreign policy review is a comprehensive examination of the effectiveness of the present foreign policy framework, its consistency and congruence with and impact on the world around us. It involves an assessment of how that world has evolved and impinges on our lives. It eventually offers confirmation of, or alternatives to, existing policies and recommendations in specific areas of critical importance. A foreign policy strives to offer a focused vision of challenges and opportunities but also needs a clear view of our strengths. The result must provide a path to how best to promote Canadian values and defend our interests in the world. Despite ongoing debate about the dichotomy between values and interests, there are no incompatibilities between the two. Henry Kissinger reiterates this point: “the real issue is to establish a sense of proportion between these two essential elements of foreign policy.”<sup>88</sup> Hence the importance of contributing to both the strengthening of internationally recognized values and to manage cooperatively issues of peace and security.

Both the Liberal Party Platform of 2015 and the ministerial mandate letters provides the underpinning of a foreign policy review. What appears as a dominating feature of the government’s approach is a desire to move away from a reactive state and towards a more forceful, inclusive global engagement. A summary of the broad trends alluded to earlier could provide the foundations of such a review:

- Shifts in global economic and military power towards Asia, with China set to challenge US dominance in East Asia but still being a number of years away from attaining parity as a full peer-competitor.
- Growing multipolarity with “revisionist powers” contesting an already eroding rules-based international order. China and Russia are the key revisionist players but India and others might follow suite unless different opportunities emerge for them to align with the existing order and contribute to its restructuring (e.g., a change in the composition of the UN Security Council).
- Competing trade agreements across oceans and continued withering away of the World Trade Organization (WTO) governance, as major economic powers like the US and the EU are increasingly conducting their trade diplomacy outside of the WTO.
- Old, value driven, bilateral ties less effective in managing issues in an increasingly multipolar world.
- Intractable conflicts and war weariness among Western countries in a post-Afghanistan, post-Iraq, and post-Libya period, with a reluctance to put the necessary means to fight pressing security threats like ISIS.
- Non-state actors, terrorist groups, and organized crime (e.g., Los Zetas, Sinoloan cartel) altering the nature of





conflicts.

- The Middle East in quasi-total disarray due to the legacy of the Iraq War and the failure, for now, of the Arab Spring.
- A continued degradation of the situation in Afghanistan
- Extremism, ethnic and religious radicalism forcing agonizing reappraisals of conventional civilizational beliefs in quest of a moral compass.
- Cyber threats and geometrically progressing technologies with obsoleting consequences for military capabilities and strategies.
- Instability in practically every continent, representing a large number of different kinds of threats against Canada, and creating opportunities for our engagement.

Scenarios and possible strategic policy responses can be ascertained for each of these trends:

- The *renewed commitment to peacekeeping* is only a subset of what should be a broad agenda of strengthening the Global Commons through the reinforcement of the multilateral system and the renewal of international institutions. Global Affairs Canada should launch a process of “Rethinking the United Nations” to define areas where more effective and cooperative approaches can be fostered. Clearly, the prevalence of terrorist groups, organized crime, and cross-border refugees call for “people-centered peacekeeping.” In this light, Ottawa will want to review the recent report of the High Level Panel on Peace Operations,<sup>89</sup> for which the UN Secretary-General has tasked a team led by former Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette to develop an implementation agenda. As with all UN reports, only a minority of recommendations find their way into the agenda.<sup>90</sup> But the change of the guard with a new Secretary-General and new team at the UN in 2016 should provide for some renewal which Canada could help promote. Canada will want to be careful in selecting the crises or issues in which it wishes to engage.
- On a related issue at the UN, the government will want to add Canada’s voice to those who wish to eliminate the recourse to the veto power by the permanent members of the Security Council on humanitarian issues.
- We have seen the Prime Minister engaged with the leaders of China and India. If Canada wishes to play a role in the management of growing tensions in the Western Pacific, it will require a clear *Canadian policy towards China*. This would call for closer consultation with the US, already begun with the Canada-US Asia-Pacific Defence Policy Cooperation Framework and “strategic defence dialogue on the Asia-Pacific” under auspices of the Canada-US Permanent Joint Board on Defense, as well as early engagement with China through military staff talks and such mechanisms as the Defence Coordination Dialogue and Cooperation Plan Initiative.<sup>91</sup> That said, Canada is a “bit player” in the region at the political and military level. Canada simply does not have any realistic means to counter any Chinese military expansion or adventurism. Participation in both the East Asian Summit and the ADMM-Plus group could provide a means for Canada to strengthen our diplomatic and economic engagement in the region while learning more about the strategic dynamics at play. To gain a seat at



the table, ASEAN members will have to be convinced that Canada can go beyond its episodic engagement to become a reliable partner.

- On the *issue of trade*, it is critical that we conclude a trade agreement with India, which is not a member of the TPP but remains an essential market for Canada. Similarly, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union must be implemented before the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement is completed. One assumes Canada will remain in the TPP. A new trade and export strategy has been mandated, which should include a review of our air transport policy.
- Canada remains fully committed to NATO assurance measures in Central and Eastern Europe (Operation *Reassurance*) and the multinational training mission in Ukraine (Operation *Unifier*), but these initiatives do not resolve our *long-term relations with Russia*. Not talking to Russia is not a policy. We might wish to rethink supporting Ukraine's eventual joining NATO in future, which is a needless provocation with little positive impact on Russian behaviour. But any such decision must be taken in consultation with the US and our key European partners. We might want to put more pressure on Ukraine to adopt the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mandated reforms to help stabilize the country's economy. Engagements also means talking with Russia about Syria and deciding if its role could be made to contribute to peace.
- Canada's policy towards the *Middle East* requires a major overhaul. The Prime Minister has already given a clear signal of a more balanced approach on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It should start by harmonizing official ministerial statements with the long-standing policy enunciated on Global Affairs Canada's website, as well as with a review of our voting patterns on UN resolutions on the conflict, recognizing that few UN resolutions – other than foundational ones (Resolutions 181, 242, 338) – have had any real impact on the ground. We should be able to resume a role within the peace process and regain the confidence of our European partners while reconfirming our commitment to the security of Israel and the creation of a Palestinian state. Our new contribution to the fight against ISIS should be such as to reassure our allies on the strength of our commitment.
- *Conflict management* in Afghanistan, Syria/Iraq, Libya, and even Israel-Palestine seems to follow a strange “two-track” approach – big powers injecting themselves with their own often clashing or uncoordinated interests, and haphazard multilateral diplomacy, such as by Lakhdar Brahimi in Syria, Martin Kobler in Libya, and Nicholas Haysom in Afghanistan. Canada might wish to create better synergies between these tracks through multilateral groupings, such as the G7, G20, Commonwealth, La Francophonie, and others.
- We have done little in *Africa* in the last few years. We might wish to consider lending more support to the French in Mali or the Central African Republic. Alternatively, our support could be extended through the UN. We will need to make choices as to how much effort we can dedicate as well to deal with political crises in both Francophonie and Commonwealth countries, notably through the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) and its francophone equivalent – both mechanisms need strengthening.
- Canada should be at the forefront of the struggle against *extremism, ethnic and religious radicalism*.<sup>92</sup> Recent socio-political developments in the US in the context of the Republican presidential primary have illustrated that the US may have lost its moral compass in moderation and openness. While multiculturalism is denounced



in Europe and rampant nationalism is on the rise, Canada remains a beacon of hope institutionally and culturally. The present Foreign Minister of Canada is also the creator of the Forum of Federations, an institution which to this day continues to help multi-ethnic countries to transit towards new types of political relations and institutions.

- Clearly *non-proliferation* has taken a new salience, in a positive manner with the Iranian nuclear agreement but deeply negative with North Korea's continued development of missile delivery systems and its recent nuclear test. Canada can support the results of the former by renewing relations with Iran, fully aware it is not deserving as yet of being a full partner. On North Korea, Canada should engage fully in the expansion of sanctions, taking notable advantage of China's growing irritation towards its worst ally. The previous government had lost faith in Pakistan. As the US knows better than most, Pakistan has been both unpredictable and unreliable. Today, however, there is a real effort on the part the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to engage India and to sort out problems with Afghanistan. Yet as a nuclear power with expanding capabilities (warheads and delivery systems), a strategic position in the Middle East-South Asia nexus, and internal terrorism-induced instability, Pakistan needs all the help we and others can provide.
- *Cyber threats* are a major security issue. In the last three *Strategic Outlooks*, we argued for "cyber-confidence building measures" or a set of rules of the game.<sup>93</sup> Leadership on this issue was expected to follow from the Obama-Jinping summit of June 2013. At best, it remains a work in progress. Given the integration of the Canada and US economies, not to mention deep interoperability of our militaries, it has to be part of Canada's ongoing effort to reinforce cooperation with the US.

### International and National Security Challenges

Despite our differences in size and capabilities, Canada's perception of security threats is most often in sync with that of the United States – with the exception being the Iraq War. Former US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey's perspective provides a lesson in awareness: "Globalization, diffusion of technology, and demographic shifts are driving rapid change as state actors and trans-regional networks challenge order and stability."<sup>94</sup> Not surprisingly, he concludes "the most likely scenario is prolonged campaigns rather than short, intense battles" and that "globalization complicates security strategy, allowing people and technology to move around the world in a way never seen before, complicating an already complex security situation... it also can exacerbate social tensions, cause competition for resources and may engender political instability. Technology speeds everything up."<sup>95</sup>

Our review of the trends in the international situation confirms that perspective. From a security and defence vantage point, these trends translate into a series of specific *international threats or challenges*.<sup>96</sup> The great lesson from the recent decade and a half is that even a middle power like Canada cannot afford to focus on one threat to the exclusion of all others because they are so intertwined. Nor can it rely on one single defence mechanism or engagement. The following list of scenarios is neither exhaustive nor based on priority. But these examples should form the heart of any *integrated* geo-strategic thinking about foreign policy, security, and defence.

- *Further Russian incursions in Ukraine and pressure on neighbouring NATO countries*. From a defence perspective, could we do more under Operation *Reassurance*? Do we have the means if asked? A case can be made



for European countries to shore up their efforts, along the lines of recent British and French reinforcements. More broadly, were Eastern Europe or the Baltics to become under more pressure from some form of Russian hybrid warfare or destabilization, would Canada want to engage more forcibly (i.e., fight for Eastern Europe) again? Whatever Canada does, it has to be geared towards and in sync with our NATO allies. For now, given the limited savings accrued, we might wish to review the decision to withdraw from NATO's AWACS and AGS program.

- **Russian pressure on the Arctic.** Security might not be within the purview of the Arctic Council, but there is a need for its members to communicate on issues pertaining to military development, if only to strengthen confidence between the parties. Russia failing to advise on their massive military manoeuvres is more than just a minor irritant. Some informal mechanism ought to be created to allow consultation. Of course, any pressure requiring a forceful response would entail automatic consultation and response within NATO, particularly between the four Western Arctic countries – Canada, US, Denmark, and Norway.
- **North Korean nuclear tests, threats and possible aggression against the US, Japan or South Korea.** As one of the combatants in the Korean War, Canada became member of the United Nations Command (UNC) following the 1953 armistice. Were war to break out again in the peninsula, “the UNC structure would be used as a means of force-generating and receiving and tasking any contributions that UNC Sending States may choose to contribute in the event of a crisis.”<sup>97</sup> Of course, the role of the UNC will likely quickly take a back seat to a US-led coalition-of-the-willing, due to both American coalition preferences and a possible China and Russian veto at the UN. Irrespective, Canada should assess what contribution and force generation effort might be necessary in such a scenario.
- Alternatively, a **regime collapse in North Korea** could lead to civil war and nuclear “diversionary” attacks abroad. The only answer is to hope or assume that the US, its regional allies, and possibly China and Russia would take coordinated, preventive, defensive, and/or offensive measures to counter the possibility.<sup>98</sup> It is unlikely Canada would be directly involved but it could provide full support.
- Given the **dangers of “rogue states” armed with nuclear weapons** and long-range delivery systems, as the example of North Korea illustrates, Canada should open discussions with the US on joining continental BMD. This point has been reiterated in previous editions of *Strategic Outlook* and in presentations in 2014 to the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence and House of Commons Standing Committee on Defence.<sup>99</sup>
- **ISIS in all its ramifications/partners/competitors.** The Prime Minister’s decision to substitute our CF-18 bombing mission of ISIS targets for a strengthened training mission is part of the response. The Prime Minister has clearly vowed to prioritize assistance for civilian police training operations, particularly Francophone officers, who are in great demand in French-speaking countries with peace operations. African countries threatened by terrorists could also benefit from such a program. We also need to reinforce our intelligence sharing with key NATO partners, notably France which could potentially become part of our “Five Eyes” community.
- On the **Israeli-Palestinian conflict**, in the event of a peace agreement, we would want to volunteer military observers along the Jordan River, which both parties would consider more acceptable than alternatives. This



would be in line with our commitment to beef up peacekeeping. Although not a “niche” operation, we would be justified having a full complement of Canadian peacekeepers with an extremely precise mandate and rules of engagement.

- **3rd Intifada** exploding out of control. Our only role would be at the UN through some “good offices.” We would join diplomatic efforts to move the only process capable of bringing peace – a Palestinian state. Canada should support any effort to bring Hamas out of the equation<sup>100</sup> in a peaceful way with the assistance of the Arab countries, by defanging their ability to hit Israel with rockets and forcing them to the negotiation table.
- Any failing on the part of **Iran** in the implementation of the nuclear agreement, which would provoke a chain reaction pitting the former partners against one another. Canada would be among the first to urge the re-imposition of sanctions.
- **Iran’s** use of new accruing resources to expand its terrorist sponsorship in the region, notably in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon. While we have little leverage on Iran, Lebanon is one country which we should support more actively, given its large number of refugees per capita, dating back to 1948 – a situation which adds to the institutional instability of the country.
- Tension in the **South and East China Seas**, as it could affect freedom of navigation in crucial sea lanes. At present we can do little other than being supportive of the US efforts. But we can and should build our credentials with the other countries of the region.<sup>101</sup>
- Crumbling of the **Afghan government** at the hands of a resurgent Taliban with implications for security and stability of Pakistan. Canada can contribute to strengthening the anti-terrorist capabilities of the Pakistani law enforcement institutions.
- Failure of fledgling peace talks between **India and Pakistan**. Any action would be through the Commonwealth, but by re-establishing or upgrading our relationship with Pakistan, we can certainly encourage them to realize their country’s economic development and social progress is hampered by the continuing dispute with India.
- **Proliferation of Pakistan nuclear weapons** into the hands of terrorist groups.<sup>102</sup> This would become an international crisis, where China might take the lead owing to its close relationship with Pakistan, in cooperation with Russia and possibly the United States; although tensions may arise owing to the US global role on nuclear security and China’s past support for the Pakistani nuclear program. A UN-mandated action would likely follow, which could involve a Canadian contribution. Canada should try to prevent such an outcome by strengthening its involvement in the Proliferation Security Initiative and continuing to work alongside its allies – not least the US – on other nuclear security initiatives.
- **Evolution of military technologies**, from cyber threats and autonomous vehicles. For instance, we could see cyber-attacks of greater magnitude than what has been happening so far, with possibly lethal effects. Canada would work in tandem with the US, perhaps the most probable target. Strategic and ethical considerations also need to be made about increasingly autonomous weapon systems and the growing “ease of making war.” As Patrick Tucker puts it in the US Department of Defense document *Battlefield 2050*: “Flying military robots



armed with high-energy lasers? It's a future that is exciting, terrifying — and perhaps just two years away.”<sup>103</sup> This is not only a development affecting states; individuals and non-state actors will likely be prime beneficiaries of increasing military lethality owing to the democratization of technology and miniaturization of weapons.<sup>104</sup>

- **An attack against an Alliance member**, for instance ISIS or Syria against Turkey. If Article 5 of the NATO Charter was invoked, any contribution would be decided collectively and Canada would play the part it would feel capable of providing.
- **Organized crime** and human trafficking. Considerable efforts have been made to fight this scourge, which has made extensive inroads in parts of Mexico, Central America, and South America. Yet it seems civilized nations are always a step behind given the growing sophistication of the networks and their cooperation with terrorist groups. The Charbonneau inquiry in Quebec has provided lessons worth reviewing and expanding.<sup>105</sup>
- **Piracy at sea**. Canada made a stellar contribution with its naval deployments to the Combined Maritime Forces coalition patrolling the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Gulf of Aden. Concerted counter-piracy operations have helped reduce pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia significantly with considerable improvements in levels of safety, as reflected by the increased shipping through the area. The focus now is on enhancing the capabilities of local coast guards, which is something Canada might consider engaging in. Training could equally apply to counter illegal fishing, pollution, and related crimes at sea.
- **Major natural catastrophes** such as a volcanic eruption preventing travel or movements, environmental disasters due to climate change and desertification, or health crises such as Ebola and other infectious diseases. While Canada contributed significantly to the fight against Ebola, and we retain a significant niche capability through the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), we lack the strategic sealift to rapidly bring a full search and rescue (SAR) capability in any major natural disaster and could benefit from a more developed whole-of-government response capability to such scenarios.

At the *national level*, domestic challenges that Canada must confront include:

- **Multiplicity of threats**, especially to the 2 million-plus Canadians living or travelling abroad. Canada has made tremendous progress and mobilized considerable resources in terms of consular assistance in the last 10 years with then DFATD. A minister was dedicated to the function and missions abroad had reinforcements in time of crisis and special mission consular training. Military support was available when it came to decide if a military team was required.<sup>106</sup>
- **Home grown terrorism** and the risk of Canada falling into the trap of exclusion, Islamophobia, nationalism, and reduced generosity towards legitimate refugees. Importantly, the risk of home grown terrorism in Canada and among our allies does exist. Considerable efforts have been made to reinforce our domestic capacity to thwart terrorist networks, although “lone wolves” constitute a highly probable risk. It is very likely that most protection provisions of Bill-51 will be retained while intelligence oversight and accountability are strengthened.
- **Major flooding or other environmental man-made/natural disasters**, such as industrial damage or health related catastrophes. Although our armed forces are rapidly mobilized for any major crisis, it seems there has not



been much development since the 2008 *National Disaster Mitigation Strategy*. A coordinated, “whole-of-government” approach still has not been implemented. The Prime Minister has instructed Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale to “work with provinces and territories, Indigenous Peoples, and municipalities to develop a comprehensive action plan that allows Canada to better predict, prepare for, and respond to weather-related emergencies and natural disasters.”

Most of the threats and challenges listed above would require a combination of all our capabilities, including at a minimum military forces in tune with such threats. Canadians need to be engaged to understand the stakes and to participate in the decision-making process about what matters. Public diplomacy is essential as the foundation of a consultation process. There are areas that have not been touched here, like the Caribbean or Latin America. Other options left largely unexplored include a more focused approach in our defence engagement with select nations in NATO, like the UK, France, and the Netherlands. Any swing in our international operations focus from Europe, the Middle East and Africa towards the Pacific Rim would entail a complete re-examination of capital/capacity investments in all three services.

Any national security strategy should not focus first on how much is available for national defence and related security agencies, but rather on what would be a coherent foreign and defence policy in response to envisioned threats and challenges and what is necessary for a government to meet its responsibilities towards its citizens. But not all threats are equal and some challenges may be too big for us to take on. While existing assets and commitments are very much part of the equation, it is first and foremost a question of choices. But these choices or range of choices must be made before putting a final dollar figure on the table, hence the appropriateness of reviewing Canada’s assets – non-military and military.

### Canada's Non-Military Assets

A national security strategy must be able to answer a simple question: are the means and assets sufficient to deliver on the broad national objectives, assuming there is clarity on the latter in all their ramifications, which includes dealing with those specific threats that present the greatest risk for Canada. Following is a broad overview of Canada strengths and weaknesses, some of the latter having been already alluded to by the Prime Minister.

#### *The Economy:*

- An economy that went in technical recession in early 2015 and with a weak growth rate, for which a commitment to entertain a deficit has been made in order to invest in infrastructure. It is unlikely that any of the additional infrastructure funds will be dedicated to defence, but an effort is likely to be made to prevent one quarter of the funds allocated for defence procurement to remain unspent every year, particularly given the annual 7 percent inflation rate often associated with military equipment.
- A low productivity growth and heavy employment losses in the manufacturing sector (10,000 in 2015, according to a recent statement by the Governor of the Bank of Canada).
- A resources sector suffering from a fall in global demand, creating a downward pressure on the Canadian dollar.



- An economy still strongly integrated with the US, with an excessive trade dependency for a country relying on trade for over 30 percent of its GDP. We suffer from a certain timidity on distant markets.
- An economy marked by growing inequality in levels of income.

#### *The Social Fabric:*

- Canada is still adjusting to the shift of economic power from eastern to western Canada, a shift only temporarily slowed down by the economic downturn in commodities
- Quebec continues to have a less positive attitude towards foreign military engagements and has suffered from a certain estrangement from the rest of Canada, particularly at the federal level. This has resulted in a growing solitude and reduced unity of national purpose. The new government appears committed to alter course.
- The resilience and openness of Canadian society has been affected by lone-wolf attacks in Canada and by terrorism abroad, but not to the level of American society. The decision to conduct security screening of refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey eased the concern about terrorists infiltrating the flow and allowed a rallying around the government's decision to bring in 25,000 refugees.
- In rekindling the federal-provincial consultative network, the federal government is likely strengthening the societal fabric, even though any consensus will be hard to establish over specific issues
- The reinforcement of the capabilities of our security and intelligence agencies has strengthened the confidence of Canadians although there is concern about the reach these organizations now have in Canada, which a revised Bill-51 might resolve.

#### *"Global Affairs" Network:*

- We have a very strong core of diplomats who need to be re-energized in the pursuit of a more active foreign policy. It has developed a very strong consular service to protect/defend our citizens abroad. Global Affairs Canada's prime function is to strengthen the rule-based international order and to carry negotiations on a range of issues. The network abroad, adjusted according to requirements, has been meted serious cuts by the previous government and it will take time and money to rebuild it fully in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Yet Canada has more than 260 offices in about 150 countries around the world. Bilingualism is an asset, although the Foreign Service has lost some of its advantages on that score. Progress has been made in foreign languages training.
- Our official development assistance level has dropped to 0.3 percent of GDP against a world target of 0.7 percent, while many Canadian non-governmental organizations have seen their support cut-off. Hence the Prime Minister's demand for a full review of our development assistance.

#### *Key Relationships:*

- The strategic bilateral relationship between Canada and the US is unique and is foundational for both our security and economy. Our cooperation covers defence, diplomacy, security, intelligence and is based mostly on common values. We are partners in continental defence, NORAD, and military research and development.





- We share the continent with the US and Mexico through NAFTA.
- Canada is part of the Five Eyes community (with the US, UK, Australia, and New Zealand) on intelligence-sharing and partnership. Given the global fight against terrorism the Five Eyes could benefit from being expanded to include France.
- Our traditional bilateral relations with our founding nations France and UK remain strong.
- Canada is the second North American member of NATO and has had a shared destiny with the European members of the Alliance, from the days of the Cold War to recent operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya.
- In Asia, our key relationships are with Australia and Japan; although filled with uncertainties, the relationship with China is on a good start.
- Through La Francophonie and the Commonwealth, we are uniquely linked to a group of countries from all five continents.

#### *Other International Institutions:*

- Canada is a member of most of the world's significant institutions, including the G7, G20, IMF, WTO, APEC, World Bank, Arctic Council, and all UN agencies and regional development banks. Our contribution and influence in most of these is in terms of norm- and rules-setting or strengthening and promotion of our values – good governance, anti-corruption, rule of law, and free trade. One would assume that these memberships will define Canada's return to a more internationalist/multilateralist approach to foreign policy.

### **Canada's Military Assets**

The structure of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is based principally on three services – Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), and Canadian Army, with a Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) and a Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM). Last year's *Strategic Outlook* dealt extensively with the state of the three services, with the RCN facing serious capacity and fleet-replenishment problems but also turning some corners, the Army still missing complements, and the RCAF mired into the CF-18 replacement conundrum. Among the worst problems is the fact that close to one-quarter of defence procurement money is not spent in any given year; with an annual inflation rate of 7 percent for military equipment, the loss of purchasing power is considerable. The procurement issue was discussed at length in the document and has been further studied in 2015 by many authors.<sup>107</sup>

Concern has grown over the “made in Canada” premium on defence acquisition. Yet when DND Chief of Research Services examined this cost in 1999 for the Canadian Patrol Frigate, it concluded that Canada spent no more than 7 percent over what other Western navies were paying for like warships.<sup>108</sup> Since 1999, a great deal has obviously changed in procurement and especially so with the introduction of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy's (NSPS) continuous build process meant to replace our traditional “boom and bust” approach. Today, it would



be entirely prudent for the government to reassess this “made in Canada” premium the Canadian taxpayer is now paying.

While the electoral platform of the Liberal referred to “building a leaner, more agile, better equipped military,” previous budget trimming has already resulted in a leaner and possibly meaner force. Yet, one could argue, the real transformation process initiated years ago leading to the Leslie Report call for “more teeth and less tail” remains to be implemented from a “why” or “for what” perspective.

The key question for the CAF, beyond short-term expedient decisions, is what will be the defence and security objectives of the government. At the present stage, capabilities are meeting what can be called “baseline requirements,” and not even all CFDS objectives. While force structure can be adjusted over time, at a certain stage with no procurement decisions, further delays, and consequently rising capital funding shortfalls, the gap between ambitions and capabilities will continue to grow – at least absent substantial increase in funding or more radical solutions to increase capital funds, whether by rebalancing personnel-capital funding in favour of the latter and/or minimizing the CAF’s infrastructure footprint. Yet, the hypothesis of continued conflict and instability over the next decade is pretty much assured. Rapid response capability and continuing interoperability with our allies, especially the United States, will remain essential.

In simple terms, there is a need for long-term policy guidance, beyond what is being done today. The CAF are already participating in the fight against ISIS, in Operation *Reassurance*, providing military assistance to Ukraine and training to Iraqi forces, as well as command and forces to the Multinational Forces and Observers in the Sinai, countering Russian activism in the Arctic, modernizing NORAD, fighting piracy, and reinforcing our cyber defences. Most of these contributions, while valuable responses to crises, are not actions based on a long-term strategic perspective. A new defence policy might not be sufficient without a clear sense of what is it that Canada wants to be and should be doing.

*The Royal Canadian Navy* is facing a capacity/capability challenge but remains more than able to provide excellence at the tactical or unit level. It is not as if the Navy’s difficulties were not known years ago. As Drew Robertson notes, “trading longer procurement times for marginally lower procurement risk is self-defeating if the operational risk to Canada’s sovereignty and security from aging warships and capability gaps in resupply and air defence continues to grow inexorably over the next decade as a result.”<sup>109</sup>

That being said, the Halifax-class frigates’ modernization and life extension, to be completed in 2017-18, will be both on time and on budget. Despite limited means, we have managed to regularly employ naval assets internationally, as evidenced by our efforts in the Gulf, the Mediterranean, and the Baltics. But creativity was required in terms of crew rotations. We should not ignore the real fragility at the operational level, in terms of both equipment and personnel levels. As part of our efforts to enhance our already high-level cooperation with the US, and given the Prime Minister’s desire to “renew the focus on surveillance and control of our territory, notably in the Arctic,” the new government may wish to seriously consider the possibility of expanding NORAD’s maritime role into the Arctic.

The recent uproar about the growing cost of the NSPS also requires a thorough analysis, with a particular focus on the Canadian Surface Combatants (CSC):



- a) First, considering the recent concerns about cost-overruns, the NSPS's "erratic costing figures" can be partly explained by Treasury Board policies, requiring "only rough, plus-or-minus-40-percent costing estimates for projects in the early 'definition' phase, with much more precise costing becoming available as the project goes into 'implementation.'"<sup>110</sup> While 40 percent is a huge range, even the Auditor General recognized "It is not realistic to expect that the original budget cap will remain the same from a project's conception to completion."<sup>111</sup>
- b) Secondly, it should be clear that shipbuilding is not specifically a "Navy process" but dependent on a complex mix of government, Navy, and industry actors. It is up to the government to figure out how to get the best ship on the best terms for Canada. The RCN has no say in how the builders are to work with the design firms or the combat system integrators – and this is the area that has cost significant time over the last four years, and is still to be resolved.
- c) Commodore Eric Lerhe (Ret'd) explains that: "the Conservative government mandated the opening of both the warship design [WD] and the combat systems integrator [CSI] tasks to competition, with the government casting the deciding vote." As a result, the largest shipbuilders offered their latest warship designs for competition, while other companies competed for the combat system integrator role. However, as Lerhe goes on to say, increased competition also carried the possibility of delays: "Negotiations could drag on, and there could be holdups in then integrating the winning warship design with the winning combat system integrator's intentions and the shipyard's building plan."<sup>112</sup>
- d) Where we are today is a somewhat different kind of competition with Irving being designated prime contractor. According to a former senior Canadian official,<sup>113</sup> the government will apparently choose the CSI, and Irving will choose the best ship design firm/platform. While this could work, the risk of further delays is real; although, once selected, the commercial firms selected for WD and CSI can be expected to have an interest in working together. Although several firms have expressed concerns about the split, they all know how to do the former to get the latter. The Spanish F100 was a strategic marriage of the Spanish hull design and the LM Aegis system done over the course of a week or so, and it has worked very well.
- e) In January 2015, the government announced a further delay of up to six months in the development of the evaluation criteria and requirements for the CSI and WD. Given the ongoing work on requirements, one would assume that they were likely to be sufficiently defined to move ahead. While the whole process has been skewed *ab initio* the moment Irving was chosen both as builder and general contractor, the hope is that Irving will be fully accountable to the government for the entire project.
- f) Right now Canada has no supply ships (beyond temporarily leased ships), and only one destroyer still operating, meaning it has little in the way of an area air defence capability (although refurbished frigates can at least compensate for the destroyers' command and control systems). The longer the government takes to finalize its procurement approach, sign contracts and build ships, the wider the gap will become. As David Perry writes, "there now appears to be a gap of almost two years between the completion of the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ship project and the start of Canadian Surface Combatant Project construction."<sup>114</sup> The extension of the procurement times may have reduced some of the procurement risk, but procurement gaps will widen further over the coming



decade. As a result, there will be further compression on the recapitalization of the country's fighting fleets into the same 2025 space.

Currently, there is a pause in the procurement plan, as the new government decides whether it is fully satisfied with the approach being taken on this most complex undertaking. The NSPS is progressing, but suffering from delays and an initial failure to provide adequate funding. Yet, at the very least, ships are now being built in extremely modern shipyards. However the program is also attracting criticism, some informed and some not. The final customer, in this case the RCN, must get ahead of this problem in order to "explain what the ships are for and how they will meet Canada's maritime security challenges over the next three decades."<sup>15</sup>

The NSPS does not provide for the replacement of our submarines. With three Victoria-class submarines now operational, the RCN has finally regained an important undersea capability – one that is equally useful for surveillance, intelligence, water space management, and ultimately deterrence, while bringing certain advantages when it comes to range and endurance. This platform could be especially useful if Canada plans on reinforcing its naval presence in the Pacific – especially in light of its interest in joining Asia-Pacific diplomatic and security institutions. This is especially true in light of our limited independent logistical capabilities and capacity shortfalls pending the completion of its frigate modernization upgrades. The successful long-term overseas deployment of HMCS *Windsor* demonstrates that the RCN is continually developing its capacity to deploy submarine assets to distant waters. Our conventionally-powered diesel submarines would certainly be seen an asset by the US Navy, especially as it confronts China's deployment of a growing number of sub-surface assets.

There has also been little serious discussion about an amphibious capability, although the government did apparently show some interest before the 2015 election on French-built Mistral amphibious ships. Such vessels would be ideal to support a humanitarian response to natural disasters, while also providing a minimum battle-group stand-off capability. Yet more thought also needs to be made on the feasibility of incorporating such a capability – including personnel requirements and enabling platforms needed to maximize their utility (e.g., helicopters), the impact they may have on the naval force structure, especially if it entails opportunity costs, and the role of such vessels in Canadian naval and broader defence strategy.

*The Army*, having benefitted in terms of equipment and material during the Afghan campaign, is the service that has suffered the least from recent budget cuts. Yet it does face significant issues in filling gaps in training, delays in purchasing new equipment, and the need to adapt to different conditions of warfare. The overall strategic environment facing the Canadian Army has not changed much in the past year. The main driver remains insufficient operations and maintenance (O&M) funding. This limits collective training and has resulted in vehicle fleets being restricted for use. From an operational perspective, the Army remains able to train and deploy its high readiness brigade headquarters and battle group. Presently, it has modest commitments with Operation *Unifier* in Ukraine and Operation *Reassurance* in Eastern Europe.

The challenges have not changed from a year ago: the reduction in collective training will have a long-term institutional impact. This reduction of long-term readiness is compounded by an increased number of non-deployable personnel or LOB (left out of battle). These factors highlight the Army's difficulty in contributing significantly to a



major, complex, and sustained operation. The second challenge is the Army's ability to articulate its essential operational capabilities in relation to the global security environment. This would help create a benchmark for the Army's capabilities that should be taken into account in any departmental effort to reduce the Army's limited strength to offset new CAF capabilities.

In terms of opportunities, the Army has the capability and capacity for additional international engagements. This must be tempered with the enhanced training mission under Operation *Impact* – Middle East Stabilization Force (MESF). To put it bluntly, the size, make-up, and timeframe of this training mission will determine what the Army can provide for future international engagements. These new missions, whether bilateral or multilateral, need to be well planned in terms of costs, resources, and "relative success." It would be advisable for DND to conduct a high-level fact-finding mission to the UN to determine if any of the present or contemplated UN missions fit these criteria. Finally, the Army Reserves strength should be slightly increased. This would clearly signify the importance of the Army Reserves in a post-Afghanistan era. It would also increase flexibility for the Army to commit to potential international commitments and enhance its capacity for domestic operations. In a sense, the bottom line is a need for increased O&M funding to retain the Army's institutional core competencies. Moreover, its present capabilities and strength need to be maintained in order to offer the CAF the required strategic flexibility for future international operations.

One of the most disquieting issues was the rate of suicide in the CAF, particularly the Army. A recent report concluded that "suicide rates did not appear to be increasing, and were not statistically different from suicide rates of Canadian men overall, although it did not include veterans or reservists."<sup>116</sup> Nor did it try to distinguish real and bogus cases of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) given the sensitivity of the issue. There were two worrisome additional findings: mental illnesses such as depression and PTSD were linked to "most cases," and higher rates were particularly apparent among men "in the combat arms trades." Both the MND and senior military brass are taking the issue very seriously. The review of the nearly eight-year-old Joint Personnel Support Unit was ordered by General Jonathan Vance two weeks after he assumed the role of Chief of the Defence Staff in mid-July 2015. The government plans to re-open several Veteran's Affairs offices in smaller communities that were closed by the previous government. There is also a very serious effort made to address the problem of sexual misconduct. These measures will, hopefully, strengthen the confidence of our men and women in uniform.

*The Royal Canadian Air Force's* major issue is the CF-18 replacement. It is reassuring to note the government's new call for bids did not exclude any fighter aircrafts, such as the F-35. Yet the whole prior process leaves a bad taste in the mouth. This decision is one of the most important military procurement choices for the government. It is imperative that the new defence policy shows absolute clarity about the specific needs for a fighter aircraft, the desired capabilities, and the general prospective uses. At the end of the day, the power of the analysis rests on its honesty, including assessing requirements, what those mean, and cost benefit of each, thirty years down the road.

A critical dimension is the timing of the replacement of the CF-18 fleet. That the F-35 is the best aircraft on the market, as argued by many, is likely true. The fact that both Russians and Chinese have desperately tried to copy these aircraft can be seen as evidence. One should simply think of the Norwegian decision to purchase 52 F-35 for a country 1/25th of our size but with similar Nordic features to realize that a decision was made based on a clear assessment of



the requirements and with the cash to boot. But similarity does not necessarily equate with identical requirements. Seeing US Air Force F-22s (not available for purchase) used for air cover for the bombing of ISIS targets is like going to the corner store in a Ferrari. In fact, for most missions in the recent past, any fighter aircraft would have done the job – Rafale, Eurofighter, CF-18, or the Super Hornet. Irrespective of which aircraft is selected, Canada needs to ensure that it retains continuing high-levels of interoperability with the Americans, not only for expeditionary missions abroad but also for interception/patrol mission closer to home

A clear definition of future missions and all other relevant factors have to be put out in the open, including the Independent Panel's conclusions, to erase the bad memories of secretive decisions. As explained in last year's *Strategic Outlook*, there is no question that the cost of the F-35 will go down.<sup>117</sup> Recently, the US Navy decided to extend the life of its Boeing aircrafts while awaiting the F-35: "With F/A-18C Hornets staying online years past their originally planned sundown, and F/A-18E-F Super Hornets rapidly approaching their 6,000 flight-hour limits, aviation leadership is working to keep the aging airframes in service while it waits for reinforcements in the form of the F-35C Lightning II."<sup>118</sup> Although our CF-18 were marked for retirement around 2020, they could be extended to 2025, admittedly at a greater maintenance cost, and maybe limiting them to air defence duties while excluding them from weapons delivery. Maybe such a delay would allow the F-35 to have reached full rate of production, at its lowest cost point, and with all so-called bugs ironed out. But we should be wary of having a Joint Supply Ship (JSS) story repeating itself in the air, to say nothing about a repeat of the Sea King saga!

Other elements of our forces include *Canadian Joint Operations Command*, which was created as a cost-saving measure which saw the country's overseas command, domestic command, and support services headquarters merged into CJOC. It has certainly succeeded in bringing savings and efficiency, but its success in ensuring operational jointness between the services remains more uncertain. *Canadian Special Operations Forces Command*, a formation capable of operating independently, has the primary role to generate Special Operation Forces and direct special operations under the command of the Chief of the Defence Staff. There are several units attached to CAN-SOFCOM, such as CSOR and Joint Task Force 2 (JTF-2).

A full review of Canada's defence policy could go so far as looking into the possibility of primarily relying on Special Forces for expeditionary operations abroad. In fact, the review should include army doctrine. As General Dempsey explained, the wars of the future will evolve in duration, nature and technology. With the new posture of Russia declaring NATO an "enemy," are we back into a "near-equal" forces debate? Army doctrine developed over the past decade has focused heavily on asymmetric warfare, primarily against insurgent or non-state forces (i.e., army doctrine would have CAF personnel not engage unless either engaged first or we outnumber them 3:1). After ten years in Afghanistan (and that mindset) is Canada actually ready to contribute once again to a frontline conventional role in combatting 21st century threats? Can policy-makers establish clearly that fighting ISIS is a greater priority than Russia's adventurism in Ukraine and possibly the Baltics and Eastern Europe?

Similarly, it is not enough to rekindle our faith in United Nations peacekeeping. How to go about it is critical. The nature of UN-sanctioned peacekeeping has changed and Canada has not really been at the forefront of this evolution for the better part of the past decade. If the government is serious about its commitment to the UN peacekeeping program, then it needs to detail how and what it is willing to contribute. How will this affect the make-up of the



CAF? Does Canada need as many regular force personnel as it does right now? Is the force development process – i.e., the process that defines military capabilities, designs force structures to provide these capabilities, and translates organizational concepts based on doctrine, technologies, materiel, manpower requirements, and limited resources into a trained and ready Army – in tune with the evolving requirements of our time?

### Learning From Others?

In previous *Strategic Outlooks*, we made frequent references to the Australian model. Yet, as Adam Macdonald notes, Australia is noticeably “better at conceptualizing their security and defence perspectives, formulating them into strategies and policies and actually spending the capital determined by these guiding documents for defence procurement and renewal.”<sup>119</sup> As he goes on to argue, there are several reasons to explain this difference, with the most significant being geography – in which Australia operates in an environment marked by numerous traditional and non-traditional threats, with its key great American strategic ally far away, while Canada is situated in a relatively benign geo-strategic environment and enjoys an ‘involuntary security guarantee’ from the United States.

Despite such differences, Canada has an opportunity to learn from how countries like Australia – but also close allies such as the UK and France – have undertaken defence or national security reviews and white papers. Indeed, there are several components of Australia’s Defence White Paper (DWP) process from which Canada could learn in formulating its own new defence policy within an overarching national security strategy process:

- a) The establishment of a team dedicated exclusively to the drafting process, from community and external/public consultations to the final product.
- b) A CAF posture review similar to that of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), to “assess whether the [CAF] is well positioned geographically to meet [Canada’s] security challenges.”
- c) A detailed defence budget with provisions that are realistic and tied to the economic well-being of both the country and the international global system. As the Australian Government noted in 2013, “our capacity to invest in defence will be governed by the strength of the Australian economy and fiscal circumstances.”
- d) The identification of specific capabilities that Canada wants to develop in the coming years. In Australia’s case, they have highlighted the importance of: undersea warfare, ASW, surface maritime warfare, air superiority, strategic strike, special forces, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), and cyber security as the core capabilities of a future ADF.
- e) The establishment of a publicly-available scholarship developed in the build-up to a White Paper, which not only analyzes different facets of DND’s organization, but also the whole-of-government approach to national security.
- f) A more detailed vision of how it is that DND envisions industry participating in the development of current and future military capabilities. Canada has a similar Defence Capability Plan already in place. That kind of continued dialogue with industry, however, should be sustained and supported by documentation articulating the need for such capabilities (likely provided by Defence Research and Development Canada [DRDC]).



- g) The Australian DWP commits an entire chapter to science and innovation advancement by their version of DRDC.

One of the greatest lessons to derive from the Australian approach would be for Canada to establish a *national maritime strategy*, given that we are also a maritime nation whose economy and sovereignty is dependent on stability in the global maritime commons.

In terms of process, the Australian Government's community consultations that resulted in the External Panel of Experts on the 2015 DWP's report<sup>120</sup> also had some key recommendations that Canada could explore, including:

- a) Ensure that DND's and the CAF's role in Canadian counter-terrorism strategies is appropriately explained in the White Paper.
- b) Ensure that the government includes an approach to deal with the impact of extreme weather events and environmental degradation.
- c) Ensure that DND/CAF remain able to operate on the 'high end' of military capability and also have the capability to lead in regional stabilization missions, if and when applicable.
- d) Offer a detailed public explanation of Canada's interest in enhanced cooperation with the United States, including the US 'force posture initiative,' if applicable.
- e) Develop Canada's defence engagement, aligned with its strategic interests.
- f) Use the DWP to explain how key capability acquisitions, in the context of the overall CAF, are the most cost-effective way to maximize CAF capability.
- g) Ensure that the appropriate priority is given in the DWP to DND's people, both military and civilian.
- h) Ensure that the appropriate priority is given to defence science as a critical enabler of innovation and military capability.
- i) Develop a Defence Industry Policy Statement that has a clear path to implementation.
- j) Publish a Defence Capability Plan that clearly communicates the scope, budget, and, most importantly, schedule information of projects.

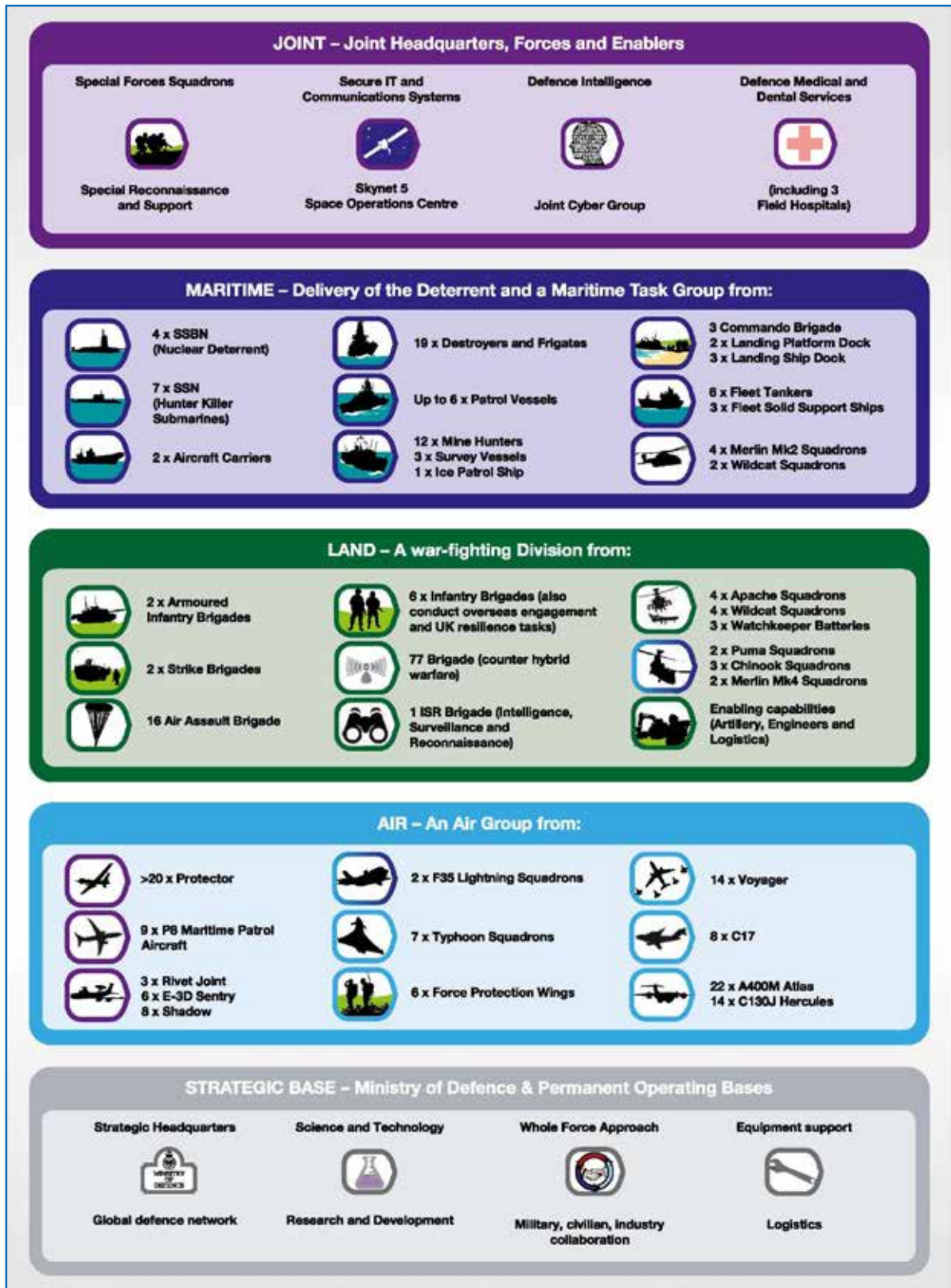
Australia is not the only country that has recently undergone a defence review process, of which Canadian policy-makers could usefully study. The UK's *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015* is an action-oriented document which states that the UK will strengthen every facet of its capabilities to tackle terrorism, extremism, cyber threats and to deter state-based threats, respond to crises, strengthen the rules-based international order and promote prosperity, all this through a major reinvestment in defence, intelligence, development assistance, diplomacy, trade and innovation. This resulted in the "Joint Force 2025," as documented in Figure 10.

The French 2013 Defence White Paper is very focused on *sovereignty* and *international security* and is based on five elements: Knowledge & Anticipation, Deterrence, Protection, Prevention, and Intervention, with a budget com-





FIGURE 10: United Kingdom's Joint Force 2025



(Source: UK, National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review, 2015)

mensurate with the strategy. The armed forces model is predicated on strategic autonomy, consistency between the armed forces and predictable scenarios of engagement, differentiation of forces according to the requirements of the five elements, and pooling of resources with partners. And of course, the defence industry is a key component of France's strategic autonomy. It is a very well written, typically logical document that blends a strong national perspective, a European focus, and a sense of unity with France's allies.

The Government of Canada would benefit from a full study of all three documents, as it prepares its own defence policy review. Commendably, Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan has indicated an interest in learning lessons from the recent British strategic defence review and the forthcoming Australian one.<sup>121</sup> Yet the new government might want to consider institutionalizing a regular process of reviewing Canada's strategic environment and ascertaining what lessons can we learn from the experience of other countries – an official and unclassified strategic outlook or forecast that could serve as a foundation for strategic policy guidance. This could be done by an organization similar to the US Office of Net Assessments or the Australian Office of National Assessment, thereby further developing the country's capacity for comprehensive global strategic intelligence.<sup>122</sup>

## **5. CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE POLICY**

The situation in the world is at best chaotic, with conflicts and crises spanning from Western Sahara all the way to Western Papua, moving through the Middle East, the Southern Caucasus, Central and South Asia into the Malacca Strait and the Western Pacific. The so-called “international order” is being seriously challenged. ISIS expansion has slowed but it is neither much degraded nor defeated. Eastern Ukraine remains a war zone and Russia has declared NATO an enemy. Syria is in its fifth year of civil war. The refugee exodus continues. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process is moribund. Shias and Sunnis are at war. China creates “facts on the ground” or actually created ground in the South China Sea. Africa is plagued with terrorist groups hampering its development. Latin America is continuing to face the scourge of drug trafficking. The global economy risks facing a recession and commodity prices are falling further down.

Given the state of the world and level of uncertainty, some of our close allies and partners in NATO and beyond, such as the UK, France and Australia, have decided to engage in a general review of their strategic security policy. The new government's agenda, as noted in the ministerial mandate letters as well as in various statements, represents a strong foundation for each minister and usefully calls for linkages between the portfolios. But these do not represent an overarching vision for Canada which would take into account the strategic imperatives stemming from the world situation and clarify how “constructive leadership in the world” will be carried out. Our nation must be given a sense of our place on the international stage and on what is needed to attain it.

Thus we argue for the need for an integrated international policy review (foreign, trade, development and defence) to be conducted within the next six to nine months, and be based on a clear definition of objectives and threats, including a prioritization of efforts, and integrating diplomatic, intelligence, military, and economic means in pursuit of those objectives. Indeed, the defence policy called for by the government cannot be spelled out without a sense of what Canada wants to be and do on the international stage. Defence policy is merely one of the “how to's.” One



needs a clear-eyes perspective on the threats Canada is facing and on the engagements we are prepared to take and those we would eschew.

Many questions need to be answered, including:

- Multilateralism: what meaning in this day and age for Canada? Should we promote a “rethinking of the UN”?
- Should Canada take a lead in redefining R2P, notably in terms of refugee policy?
- Beyond combatting ISIS, is there a revised Canadian policy towards the Middle East? Do we wish to reengage in the Middle East peace process?
- Do we have a clear sense of how we correlate with Latin America? Are we really one of them? We have a Latin American policy. Should it be updated?
- We are involved in the Commonwealth and La Francophonie. Do they really constitute a foundation of our foreign policy today? Can we make them more effective?
- Is or should Africa continue to be a priority for Canada? Can we afford it to be such?
- What does it mean to be a nation of the Pacific? What do we want to be and do in the Pacific?
- What policy towards China, a potentially indispensable partner but also a possible foe and clearly not a paragon of virtue on human rights?
- We talk about engaging with Russia. On what terms? What about Iran?
- Is there a Canadian contribution to be made to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction? Could we have an influence on Pakistan?
- Should we foster a security dialogue on the Arctic, parallel to what is currently being done by the Arctic Council?

Answers to these questions would be critical for the subsequent formulation of a defence policy which should also answer fundamental questions:

- Given the change in “rogue state” capabilities and potential threat from Russia, is it not high time we join continental BMD with the US?
- With NORAD having a decade of experience in maritime warning, is it time to undertake a reassessment on the maritime domain awareness situation facing both countries – to ascertain whether we need new structures, liaison requirements, and mandate (e.g., Arctic) for NORAD?<sup>123</sup>
- Can we extrapolate from the threats what should be our long-term defence policy in addition to answering the ancillary questions of procurement?
- What should we do to defend our sovereignty in the Arctic? Are we prepared to invest militarily on this issue,



even at the cost of reducing other elements of our defence?

- Given the growing threats from non-state actors, should we put more emphasis on our expeditionary capabilities? If the pillars of Canada's strategy remain a) the defence of Canada, b) the defence of North America in cooperation with the United States; and c) contributing to international peace and security, should the latter be the exclusive preserve of our Special Operations Forces?
- Beyond the three-prong strategy, what, in the new conditions of warfare, are the changes we need to bring in the requirements in terms of Force Development, Force Generation, Force Employment, Force Management and Force Support?

At the end of the day, governing means making choices. It is more critical when it comes to security strategy as it can signify the difference between survival and demise. Afterwards, it becomes a "dialogue" between ends and means. We hope the new Canadian government recognizes such broad linkages between various international policies and understands the need to have a dialogue that connects tools of statecraft and the objectives and needs that such means can achieve. Only then will Canada be prepared to undertake a truly integrated international policy review and formulate a national security strategy.

## NOTES

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