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Canada's Illusions of Grandeur

The Frog that Wished to Be as Big as the Ox

– Fable by Jean de La Fontaine –



The tenant of a bog,
An envious little frog,
Not bigger than an egg,
A stately bullock spies,
And, smitten with his size,
Attempts to be as big.
With earnestness and pains,
She stretches, swells, and strains,
And says, 'Sis Frog, look here! see me!

Is this enough?' 'No, no.'
'Well, then, is this?' 'Poh! poh!
Enough! you don't begin to be.'
And thus the reptile sits,
Enlarging till she splits.
The world is full of folks
Of just such wisdom; --
The lordly dome provokes
The cit to build his dome;
And, really, there is no telling
How much great men set little ones a swelling.

(Translated by Elizur Wright)

Prime Minister Rebuked During Informal Talks with Chinese President



Chinese President Xi Jinping calls out Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for his breach of diplomatic norms in leaking the contents of their informal meeting November 15, 2022, to the press.

The ruling elite in Canada like to refer to Canada as a "middle power," that "punches above its weight." The Trudeau government instead harbours illusions of grandeur.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's diplomacy suffered a setback which got the world's attention when he was given a dressing down by President Xi Jinping of China at the G20 for divulging the contents of a private conversation between the two to the media. Xi told Trudeau in an exchange

caught on video that such breaches of diplomatic norms are unacceptable and undermine trust which is the basis of good communication. Xi pointedly told Trudeau that his kind of behaviour can have unforeseen consequences.

Trudeau had initiated an informal meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia on November 15. A Canadian government source later told Agence France Presse (AFP) that the topics raised by Trudeau included climate change, missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, human rights, Canada's allegations that China is interfering in its elections and the conflict in Ukraine. No official press release about the meeting was made by either side.

The following day, as the G20 was wrapping up, President Xi took Prime Minister Trudeau aside and expressed his frustration with how the meeting had been handled by the Canadian side. Footage of the exchange was captured by a press pool camera operator.

"Everything we discuss has been leaked to the paper, that's not appropriate," Xi said to Trudeau through a translator. "And that's not the way the conversation was conducted," he continued.

"If you are sincere, we should communicate with each other in a respectful manner, otherwise it will be hard to say what the result will be like," Xi added.

Trudeau then said Canada believes in "free and open and frank dialogue" and would continue to look to work constructively together with China, but that "there will be things we will disagree on, and we will have to..."

"Let's create the conditions first," Xi replied, before shaking hands with Trudeau and taking his leave.

President Xi conducted nine formal bilateral meetings during the G20, none of which included Canada.

China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning, at a regular press conference on November 16, fielded a question from AFP about the meeting between Xi and Trudeau on November 15. The exchange went as follows:

AFP: Can you confirm that President Xi met with Canada's Prime Minister yesterday? And can you share any details of the conversation?

Mao Ning: I have nothing to share at the moment.

Trudeau later spoke at a press conference about his November 16 exchange with Xi, where he insinuated that China is secretive and dictatorial: "Canada trusts its citizens with information about the conversations that we have in their name as a government," he said, adding that not all conversations with leaders were going to be easy, but pointed out that "systems" in the two countries were different and in China "there is not always the same openness that a democratic leader can and must have with his citizens."

India's *Business Standard* reported that "Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly also confirmed that she discussed the same topics with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi" at the G20. Neither Global Affairs Canada nor Minister Joly's twitter account have deigned to inform Canadians about what took place at this meeting. Whatever the reason, this lack of transparency seems to be par for the course for Joly and her ministry. A meeting in July between Joly and Wang, at Joly's request, also did not seem to merit that Canadians be informed about it, while China's Foreign Ministry published the remarks made by both sides shortly after the meeting.

For his part, the Prime Minister's pretensions to moral authority only confirmed his illusions of

grandeur about Canada's international role. It was in sharp contrast to the measured response from President Xi, whose own moral authority comes in no small part from leading a party and country whose affirmation of human rights includes lifting more than 800 million of its people out of poverty.

Foreign Minister's Provocative Remarks Against China

Foreign Minister Joly, in a November 9 speech at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs, about Canada's forthcoming Indo-Pacific Strategy, said: "China is an increasingly disruptive global power. It seeks to shape the global environment into one that is more permissive for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours.

"China's rise as a global actor is reshaping the strategic outlook of every state in the region, including Canada."

On November 10, China Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian fielded a question from a Reuters reporter on the matter. The exchange went as follows:

Reuters: Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly said on Wednesday [November 9] that China is an "increasingly disruptive global power." Does the foreign ministry have any comment on this?

Zhao Lijian: These remarks by the Canadian side run counter to facts, smack of ideological bias, and blatantly interfere in China's internal affairs. We firmly reject them and have made solemn démarches to the Canadian side. I would like to emphasize the following points:

First, China is committed to peaceful development, openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation. We have always been a force for world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order, a fact that has been widely recognized in the international community. China's development brings opportunities to the world and strengthens the world's forces for peace. No matter what stage of development we reach, we will never seek hegemony or engage in expansionism.

Second, peace, development and win-win cooperation are the trend of our times and the shared aspiration of countries in the Asia-Pacific. The formulation of an "Indo-Pacific strategy" is Canada's own affair, but no matter what kind of regional strategy Canada comes up with, it should be guided by the vision of mutual benefit rather than zero-sum game. Those who cling to the Cold War zero-sum mentality, practice group politics and stoke bloc confrontation will find no support and get nowhere.

Third, relations between countries can only be built on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. China-Canada relations are no exception. Taiwan, Xinjiang and Hong Kong affairs are purely China's internal affairs and brook no meddling from any country. The China-Canada relationship is at a crossroads now. Its future course hinges on whether Canada can return to the rational and practical trajectory and view China in an objective and unbiased light.

CSIS Fearmongering About Chinese Interference in Canadian Elections

Trudeau's accusations about Chinese interference in Canada's political affairs, including its elections, seem to have been prompted by propaganda the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) is promoting at the behest of the Five Eyes intelligence agencies in the service of U.S. and British war aims. The influence of the spy agency on political affairs is increasingly seen in parliamentary proceedings. In November, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) held two sessions to study foreign interference in Canada's elections.

Adam Fisher, CSIS director general of intelligence assessments, told PROC that Russia and China "tend to be the two big players" and that "China is the 'foremost aggressor' when it comes to foreign interference in Western countries and 'works within' their political systems 'to corrupt' them," the *Globe and Mail* wrote.

A few days later, Canadian media outlets reported that beginning in January, officials with CSIS delivered a series of briefings and memos to the Prime Minister and several cabinet members that alleged that China has been "targeting Canada with a vast campaign of foreign interference, which includes funding a clandestine network of at least 11 federal candidates running in the 2019 election." *Global News* reported that "those efforts allegedly involve payments through intermediaries to candidates affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party, placing agents into the offices of MPs in order to influence policy, seeking to co-opt and corrupt former Canadian officials to gain leverage in Ottawa, and mounting aggressive campaigns to punish Canadian politicians whom the People's Republic of China views as threats to its interests."

Media reports cite former CSIS officials who claim that the alleged interference is due to lax legislation that has left "loopholes" for interference to take place, which should be closed with new legislation. Various examples of such Chinese "influence operations" are given.

Nonetheless, the fearmongering appears to be just that, and neither the remarks of CSIS to PROC nor the media reports square with the experience of Elections Canada and the Commissioner of Canada Elections, who were not given any instances of offences under the *Canada Elections Act* to address.

Chief Electoral Officer Stéphane Perrault appeared before PROC on November 22. When asked by MP Michael Cooper whether "the Prime Minister or anyone in his office reported to Elections Canada any particulars concerning a campaign of interference by Beijing?" Perrault stated, "I'm not aware of any specifics regarding campaigns of interference by Beijing other than what I've read in the [*Global News*] article." When asked to further clarify "that no report has been made by the Prime Minister or anyone in his office," he stated, "Madam Chair, that is what I said. I would like to remind the committee that the mandate of the Commissioner of Canada Elections, unlike my own mandate, is to investigate cases of non-compliance. If there is evidence to support an investigation regarding an offence under the *Canada Elections Act*, that information should go to the Commissioner of Canada Elections." He further added, "I've not received any reports regarding specific instances of non-compliance with the legislation or specific instances of Chinese interference in the election" and was also not aware that the Commissioner of Canada Elections had received such a report either.

Nonetheless, CSIS fearmongering continued to be the reference point for PROC members. During further questioning, MP Ryan Turnbull asked Perrault, "In your opinion, was the election in 2019 fair and free in Canada?" To this the Chief Electoral Officer replied, "I have no reason, Madam Chair, to believe that the election overall was not a free and fair election." He answered a follow-up question about the 2021 election, saying, "In my opinion, there's no reason to believe that [the 2021

election] was not a free and fair election."

In response to further questioning along these lines, Perrault advised PROC members, "We have to be careful about newspaper articles and the media. I don't want to question the journalistic work, but there was no investigation. We don't know what happened or which constituencies are affected. We don't know if money was given to candidates for their campaigns or for personal use. Are we talking about corruption of individuals or influence in the financing of elections? I don't have that information.

"So we have to be careful when reading a media article before making a statement about the fairness of an election and the consequences that may result."

Asked by MP Marie-Hélène Gaudreau if the *Canada Elections Act* is sound, he replied, "I think we have an excellent regime. Having said that, some things could be improved. I've shared that with the committee and I can elaborate on it as needed. All in all, I think our political finance regime is the envy of just about every other regime in the world."

The Commissioner of Canada Elections' website lists charges laid under the *Canada Elections Act* and *Referendum Act* since February 2011. The last outcome listed is for December 10, 2020. The last press release, dated November 7, relates to "Seven Administrative Monetary Penalties and an Undertaking for *Canada Elections Act* violations." These violations concerned:

- the leader of a political party for failing to register as a third party immediately after having reached \$500 or more in election advertising expenses for election advertising messages transmitted during the election period, and for failing to appoint a financial agent;
- a candidate for a registered party who failed to appoint an auditor after having received more than 10 per cent of the votes cast in their electoral district;
- a candidate for a registered party who failed to appoint a replacement official agent; and
- three official agents who failed to produce a candidate's electoral campaign return within the required deadline following the 2019 general election.

None of these most recent violations pertain to any sort of foreign interference in elections.

Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Russia

Forum Takes Up "Path to a Multipolar World"

The Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) held its annual proceedings in Vladivostok, Russia from September 5-8, under the theme "On the Path to a Multipolar World." The four-day event was attended by more than 7,000 participants and media representatives from 67 countries and territories, in addition to host country Russia, with around 1,700 business representatives from 700 companies.

The EEF is organized by the Roscongress Foundation, a state institution of the Russian Federation that organizes "nationwide and international conventions; exhibitions; and business, public, youth, sporting, and cultural events." The Roscongress website explains that the EEF was established by Decree of Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 19, 2015 "to support the economic development of Russia's Far East and to expand international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region."



Geographically, Russia's federal Far East district has an area of 6.953 million square kilometres, more than one-third of Russia's total area. It shares borders with Mongolia and China to the south, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan to the southeast, and Alaska to the northeast. It is rich in natural resources, producing 98 per cent of Russian diamonds, 80 per cent of its tin, 90 per cent of borax materials, 50 per cent of gold, 14 per cent of tungsten and 40 per cent of fish and seafood. About one-third of Russia's coal reserves and hydro-engineering resources are located there.



EEF events typically include "panel sessions, roundtables, televised debates, business breakfasts, and business dialogues devoted to Russia's relationships with various countries. The Forum business program includes a number of business dialogues with leading partner countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and with ASEAN [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations], a key integration organization uniting dynamically developing nations in Southeast Asia."

This year's forum also had cultural and sporting events, as well as programs for youth and Indigenous peoples.

The EEF informs that this year, "The largest foreign delegations consisted of representatives from China, Myanmar, Mongolia, India, Armenia, and South Korea." It also notes that several countries took part for the first time, namely, Algeria, Ghana, the Dominican Republic, the Donetsk People's Republic, Zambia, Cameroon, Liberia and Uganda. The forum highlighted the participation of 15 "high-ranking" foreign officials, including several Prime Ministers, as well as 11 heads of diplomatic corps. More than 50 government officials attended from host country Russia.

The theme of this year's EEF is a reflection of the desire of Russia and other countries to exercise sovereignty over their own affairs, free from coercion over which countries they can and cannot maintain trade and diplomatic relations with. Russia in particular at this time is facing stepped up pressure from U.S. imperialism and its appeasers, including Canada, in the form of economic sanctions aimed at cutting off Russia from other countries.

The key event of the forum was the plenary session, with various world leaders taking part in person or by video link. President Putin, in his remarks to the plenary, focused on Russia's international relations. He noted that "Irreversible, one might even say, tectonic changes have recently taken place in the entire system of international relations. The role of dynamic, promising

states and regions of the world, and above all, of course, the Asia-Pacific region, has grown significantly. Its countries have become new centres of economic and technological growth and points of attraction for human resources, capital, and industries."

Putin elaborated on what is meant by the multipolarity promoted at the EEF versus the "rules-based international order" espoused by the U.S. and its allies. He also addressed Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, its food and energy exports and the damage to European countries from sanctions aimed at Russia, among other topics.

Other world leaders consider the EEF a venue to develop international relations based on mutual respect and benefit. For example, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh underlined the significance of the forum, saying that it helps boost international cooperation, contributing to maintaining stability, cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific region and the world. In light of the difficulties and challenges facing the global economy and trade, Vietnam advocates building an independent and self-reliant economy and actively and substantively integrating into the international community, he stressed. He added that Vietnam attaches great importance to the comprehensive strategic partnership it has with Russia.

In addition to the plenary, some 100 sessions also took place as part of the EEF's business program, under six broad topics, called pillars:

- **Russia's Place in the World -- Diamonds Are Made Under Pressure:** concerning the current state and future of international relations and the development of the economy, investment, industry, and other spheres of life in Russia.

- **The Global Division of Labour -- From Old Connections to New:** concerning the future of individual sectors of the Russian economy and "the scale of the strategic tasks that the country faces as the new architecture of the world order emerges."

- **Financial Markets: What holds Value When There Is a Loss of Confidence?:** concerning the search for "effective solutions in the banking sector, the development of digital finance, the creation of anti-crisis portfolios to ensure the stability of the regional budgets of the Far East, and the balance of world currencies in the new realities."

- **Creating a New Quality of Life for People:** concerning education, health care, sports and culture. Speakers stated that human resources are the main capital of the Far East and that their potential must be developed. A notable part of the fourth pillar is tourism, specifically the opening up of eastern Russia to tourism, with "Vladivostok [becoming] Russia's international tourist gateway to the Asia-Pacific region."

- **Everyone Has Their Own Route -- The Logistics of a Changed World:** concerning the development of the Baikal-Amur Mainline and Trans-Siberian Railway, a new supply system to ensure deliveries to northern Russia, the Northern Shipping Route, and the development of airport infrastructure to ensure the air transport accessibility of the Far East and Arctic.

- **Patriotism over Tolerance:** speakers looked at such issues as educating Russian patriots in new schools of the future, outlined anti-crisis guidelines for training professional staff and mastering new skills for the future economy, as well as effective support for networking, leadership projects, innovations, and teacher initiatives.

Other bodies also held some of their proceedings as part of the EEF, including a meeting of Russia's Supreme Mining Council. The Arctic Council also held several sessions. Russia holds the chair of the Council (2021-2023), a body which also includes the U.S. and Canada.

Other notable discussions at the EEF covered the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a Eurasian body dealing with cooperative relations between China, Russia and the Central Asian

states, as well as ASEAN, on the front of politics, economics and security.

The EEF reports that this year's event saw the signing of a record number of investment agreements, as well as memorandums and agreements of intent. A total of 296 agreements were signed, worth RUB 3.272 trillion (U.S.\$54 billion), including agreements on infrastructure and transport projects, the development of large mineral deposits, as well as construction, industry and agriculture.

In terms of the highest number of agreements by sector, they were:

- Socioeconomic development of regions: 80
- Education and science: 35
- Transport and logistics: 33
- Industry and construction: 29
- Investment and banking: 17
- High technologies and telecommunications: 16
- Environment and nature protection: 15
- International cooperation: 15

The EEF is yet another example that the attempts of the U.S. imperialists and their collaborators to impose their narrow and anti-human worldview and hegemonic aims on the peoples of the world, including embroiling them in war preparations and aggression directed at countries it considers its rivals, will not fly. The peoples are seeking out and creating alternatives that serve their own interests.

Key Remarks from Russian Government on Current Events

Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the plenary session of the Eastern Economic Forum on September 7. He used the occasion to present the Russian government's view on several matters of significance, including this year's forum and its theme, in both his speech and in the question and answer period that followed.

President Putin noted the increasing significance of Russia's Far East region internationally: "Russia has seen the world divide into friendly and unfriendly nations. It so happens that there are many more friendly countries in the East, and the Far East now has a more important role to play. We should probably revise its importance. The Far East is now a gate to Russia for all eastern countries. Today, we will look into whether the region is ready for the quick changes that are on the way -- in line with the title of our forum -- on the path to a multipolar world." He spoke extensively of the programs and practical measures the Russian government is implementing to attract workers from all sectors to its Far Eastern region and speed up its social, economic and cultural development.

The President gave the opinion that while last year the world was preoccupied with the coronavirus pandemic and the recovery from it, that situation "has given way to new challenges, global ones that are threatening the world as a whole. I am referring to the Western sanctions frenzy and the open and aggressive attempts to force the Western mode of behaviour on other countries, to extinguish their sovereignty and to bend them to its will. In fact, there is nothing unusual in that: this policy has been pursued by the 'collective West' for decades."

He decried the arbitrariness and self-serving nature of the "rules-based international order" promoted by the U.S. and other countries, saying that they seek "to preserve yesterday's world order that benefits them and force everyone to live according to the infamous 'rules,' which they

concocted themselves. They are also the ones who regularly violate these rules, changing them to suit their agenda depending on how things are going at any given moment. At the same time, other countries have not been forthcoming when it comes to subjecting themselves to this dictate and arbitrary rule, forcing the Western elites, to put it bluntly, to lose grip and take short-sighted, irrational decisions on global security, politics, as well as economics. All these decisions run counter to the interests of countries and their people, including, by the way, the people in those Western countries."

"[Russia's] vision of a multipolar order is that of a world that must be more just, a world that shouldn't be based on the diktat of one country, which imagines itself as God's representative on Earth, or perhaps even higher, and builds its entire politics on its alleged exclusiveness," he elaborated.

Regarding Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, President Putin described it as a tit-for-tat response to the U.S.-backed coup in Ukraine in 2014 and other hostile activity directed at Russia from Ukraine since then. "I would like to emphasize once again that we have not started anything in terms of military operations. We are only trying to end the hostilities," he said. He gave the assessment that Russia's main gain from the operation is "stronger sovereignty."

"Russia is a sovereign country, and we will always protect our national interests while pursuing an independent policy course," Putin said. Russia appreciates the same qualities in those of its partners who have proved reliable and responsible over years of cooperation in trade, investment and other spheres, he added, referring particularly to the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

Putin said that "the overwhelming majority of Asian-Pacific nations find the destructive logic of sanctions unacceptable, and business relations [within the region] are based on mutual benefit," and this is "the region's huge competitive advantage and the key to its dynamic, long-term development."

Regarding the sanctions aimed at Russia as part of the conflict in Ukraine, President Putin stated, "Russia is coping with the economic, financial and technological aggression of the West."

In general, "the most difficult situation [in the country's economy] has been passed. The situation is normalizing," although some problems remain in place "in several industries and regions, at individual enterprises in the country, especially those that were related to supplies from Europe or supplied their products there."

Regarding visa restrictions against Russian citizens, as part of sanctions against Russia following its special military operation in Ukraine, President Putin claimed that Russia should not respond in kind. Thus, Russia will not be cutting contacts with Western countries, including those in culture, education and sport. "Those who do [so] are not isolating us, they are isolating themselves," Putin said.

Speaking to the issue of European price caps on Russian gas imports, President Putin also decried this as another short-sighted decision. Russia has no problems with exports of its energy resources, as the gas delivered from Russia via pipelines "is many times more competitive than the liquefied natural gas shipped across the ocean," he said.

Regarding support for sanctions against Russia by the EU and some other European countries, President Putin remarked that "Europe is about to throw its achievements in building up its manufacturing capability, the quality of life of its people and socioeconomic stability into the sanctions furnace, depleting its potential, as directed by Washington, for the sake of the infamous Euro-Atlantic unity. In fact, this amounts to sacrifices in the name of preserving the dominance of the United States in global affairs."

Regarding the agreement reached with Turkey in July to facilitate grain exports from Russia and

Ukraine, President Putin explained:

"Officially, the sanctions on our fertilizers and food have been lifted, but in reality certain restrictions remain. This is a complicated and insidious situation. It appears that there are no direct sanctions affecting our products, and yet there are restrictions concerning logistics, chartering ships, money transfers and insurance. Many of these restrictions persist, although credit should be given to the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and the United Nations in general: when it comes to chartering ships, many restrictions are being lifted despite the sanctions imposed on the ports we ship cargo from. Nevertheless, this sector is being released from the restrictions and the vessels can already call at our ports. So, the situation is improving.

"There are still certain restrictions that prevent us from ensuring that the interests of all consumers in global food markets are being served. As a result, prices on the global markets are going up. But we hope that the remaining restrictions will be lifted."

He went on to say that the restrictions affecting these grain exports mean that African countries that Russia had promised to supply with grain have been also been misled by these arrangements.

(With files from TASS and Office of the President of Russia.)

Discussion Concerning Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Multipolarity

Posted below are excerpts from an article by Pepe Escobar regarding discussions of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that took place at this year's Eastern Economic Forum. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a Eurasian body that deals with matters of the mutual political, economic and security concerns of its member countries.

Escobar writes:

"Taking place only two weeks before another essential annual gathering -- the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Samarkand -- it is no wonder some of the top discussions at the EEF revolve around the increasing economic interpolation between the SCO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

[...]

"[A]rguably the top discussion this Tuesday [September 6] at the forum was centred on the role of the SCO.

"Apart from the current full members -- Russia, China, India, Pakistan, four Central Asians (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan), plus the recent accession of Iran -- no less than 11 further nations want to join, from observer Afghanistan to dialogue partner Turkey.

"Grigory Logvinov, the SCO's deputy secretary general, stressed how the economic, political and scientific potential of players comprising 'the center of gravity' for Asia -- over a quarter of the world's GDP, 50 per cent of the world's population -- has not been fully harvested yet.

"Kirill Barsky, from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, explained how the SCO is actually the model of multipolarity, according to its charter, compared to the backdrop of 'destructive processes' launched by the west.

"And that leads to the economic agenda in the Eurasian integration progress, with the Russian-led

Eurasia Economic Union (EAEU) configured as the SCO's most important partner.

"Barsky identifies the SCO as 'the core Eurasian structure, forming the agenda of Greater Eurasia within a network of partnership organizations.' That's where the importance of the cooperation with ASEAN comes in.

"Barsky could not but evoke Mackinder, Spykman and Brzezinski -- who regarded Eurasia 'as an object to be acted upon the wishes of western states, confined within the continent, away from the ocean shores, so the western world could dominate in a global confrontation of land and sea. The SCO as it developed can triumph over these negative concepts.'

"And here we hit a notion widely shared from Tehran to Vladivostok:

"Eurasia no longer as 'an object of colonization by 'civilized Europe' but again an agent of global policy.'

"Sun Zuangzhi from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) elaborated on China's interest in the SCO. He focused on achievements: In the 21 years since its founding, a mechanism to establish security between China, Russia and Central Asian states evolved into 'multi-tiered, multi-sector cooperation mechanisms.'

"Instead of 'turning into a political instrument,' the SCO should capitalize on its role of dialogue forum for states with a difficult history of conflicts -- 'interactions are sometimes difficult' -- and focus on economic cooperation 'on health, energy, food security, reduction of poverty.'

"Rashid Alimov, a former SCO secretary general [...] stressed the 'high expectations' from Central Asian nations, the core of the organization. The original idea remains -- based on the indivisibility of security on a trans-regional level in Eurasia.

[...]

"As Central Asia does not have an outlet to the sea, it is inevitable, as Alimov stressed, that Uzbekistan's foreign policy privileges involvement in accelerated intra-SCO trade. Russia and China may be the leading investors, and now 'Iran also plays an important role. Over 1,200 Iranian companies are working in Central Asia.'

[...]

"Sergey Storchak of Russian bank VEB explained the workings of the 'SCO interbank consortium.' Partners have used 'a credit line from the Bank of China' and want to sign a deal with Uzbekistan. The SCO interbank consortium will be led by the Indians on a rotation basis -- and they want to step up its game. At the upcoming summit in Samarkand, Storchak expects a road map for the transition towards the use of national currencies in regional trade.

"Kumar Rajan from the School of International Studies of the Jawaharlal Nehru University articulated the Indian position. He went straight to the point: 'India wants a 21st Asian century. Close cooperation between India and China is necessary. They can make the Asian century happen.'

"Rajan remarked how India does not see the SCO as an alliance, but committed to the development and political stability of Eurasia.

"He made the crucial point about connectivity revolving around India 'working with Russia and Central Asia with the INSTC' -- the International North South Transportation Corridor, and one of its key hubs, the Chabahar port in Iran: 'India does not have direct physical connectivity with Central Asia. The INSTC has the participation of an Iranian shipping line with 300 vessels, connecting to Mumbai. President Putin, in the [recent] Caspian meeting, referred directly to the INSTC.'

"Crucially, India not only supports the Russian concept of Greater Eurasia Partnership but is engaged in setting up a free trade agreement with the EAEU [...].

"In all of the above nuanced interventions, some themes are constant. After the Afghanistan disaster and the end of the U.S. occupation there, the stabilizing role of the SCO cannot be overstated enough. An ambitious road map for cooperation is a must -- probably to be approved at the Samarkand summit. All players will be gradually changing to trade in bilateral currencies. And creation of transit corridors is leading to the progressive integration of national transit systems."

Arctic Council Events Held at Forum

Russia holds the chairmanship of the Arctic Council from 2021 to 2023. The other council members are Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the United States. The Eastern Economic Forum hosted several Arctic Council events as part of Russia's chairmanship. Among them were:

- **Conference on Investment and Trade in the Arctic:** A brief report on the website Arctic Council Russia's Chairmanship[1] states, "Experts from leading Russian companies and key agencies discussed prospects for Russian and foreign partners to cooperate in the Arctic and opportunities for the development of the Northern Sea Route while building new logistics chains. The other question was the regime of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation that had been specially developed for the Far North."

- **Meeting of the Arctic Economic Council:** The Chairmanship of the Council informs: "The expanded meeting of the Russian chapter of the Arctic Economic Council focused on key areas of cooperation with partners from Asia, including for the development of transportation along the Northern Sea Route, energy, and mining."

- **Conference on "Creating a Healthy Society in the Far East and Arctic":** The Chairmanship informs, "The conference program consisted of two thematic pillars. The first one: 'Demographic Development of the Country -- Strategies for Preserving the People of the Far East and Arctic' focused on the demographic agenda, increasing the birth rate, as well as strengthening family health and traditional family values. The other thematic pillar 'Human Health as the Top Priority: Guidelines for Developing Medicine in the Far East and Arctic' focused on the quality, accessibility, and safety of medical care."

Note

1. On March 4, the seven other council members took a decision to boycott all meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies held under Russia's chairmanship. The Arctic Council website, which is administered by the Secretariat based in Norway, contains a note on its home page stating that all Arctic Council meetings have been paused until further notice.

77th Session of UN General Assembly Called "Watershed Moment"

UN Session Hobbled by Global Crises

The 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) took place at the UN headquarters in New York City September 13 to 26 under the theme "A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges." The UN notes: "The theme stems from the recognition that the world is at a critical moment in the history of the United Nations due to complex and interconnected crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine,

humanitarian challenges of unprecedented nature, a tipping point in climate change as well as growing concerns about threats to the global economy." While the UNGA was in session, besides the high level general debate September 20, various UN Committees reviewed and set their work for the coming period.



UN General Assembly President Csaba Körösi addresses the opening of 77th session.

More than 150 countries participated in the UNGA including Canada, represented by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly and others. Each day various heads of states or their representatives addressed the General Assembly on matters of concern.

In his address, prior to the start of the high level general debate on the issues which began on September 20, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres noted "Let's have no illusions. We are in rough seas. A winter of global discontent is on the horizon. A cost-of-living crisis is raging. Trust is crumbling. Inequalities are exploding. Our planet is burning. People are hurting -- with the most vulnerable suffering the most." He added that the world is "gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction." He said, "The international community is not ready or willing to tackle the big dramatic challenges of our age. These crises threaten the very future of humanity and the fate of our planet." He added that "no power or group alone can call the shots. No major global challenge can be solved by a coalition of the willing." He called for the unity of the nations and peoples in a "coalition of the world" so as to cooperatively solve the problems facing humanity.

The comments of Secretary-General Guterres reflect the crises in which the UN is mired. When the UN was founded in 1945, with an original membership of 51 countries, its aim was to enable the nations of the world to work together in "maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights."

From the get-go, the Anglo-American imperialists did not permit the UN to function and set up their own organizations such as NATO to dominate the world and enslave the peoples. This is the main obstacle which has led to the UN being crisis-ridden and dysfunctional today.

What is required is for the peoples of the world, including Canadians, to renew the UN and re-establish the aims of the UN and its Charter in today's conditions. This means opposing Anglo-American imperialism, aggression and war in the interests of diplomacy and peaceful relations between nations and peoples based on equality and respect.

Already, many of the countries of Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America are challenging the hegemony of the U.S. and its allies at the UN on matters such as the war in Ukraine, and in other ways. This reflects the striving for a new world order based on peace.

(With files from UN.)

Canada Postures to Cover Up Negative International Role

According to information posted on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's website summing up his participation at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), in session September 13- 26, he is a man of action. "Prime Minister delivers action at the United Nations General Assembly" is the title of the press release issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

"[H]e worked closely with our global partners to address the world's biggest challenges and make life better for people. He advanced action in key areas including health, food security, and climate action and worked with partners to continue standing up for Ukraine in the face of Putin's illegal and unjustifiable invasion and countering Russian false narratives and disinformation," the press release says.

What follows is a list of how much money he threw at what, all of it indicative of what the Trudeau government is pushing in the current parliamentary session which got underway September 15. None of it bodes well for the people of Canada in whose name the government is concentrating more and more powers in its own hands to decide everything on behalf of narrow private interests and the U.S. war machine. The press release states:

"On the margins of UNGA, Prime Minister Trudeau announced \$1.21 billion in new funding at the pledging conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria's Seventh Replenishment, hosted by the President of the United States, Joe Biden. This funding, a 30 per cent increase from the last pledge, will fight these diseases and help meet the Global Fund's goal of saving 20 million lives over the next three years.

"The Prime Minister also allocated \$100 million from previously announced funding to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response Mechanism, to support countries in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria programs and initiate urgent improvements in health and community systems. He also announced \$55 million has been allocated for partners to help mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and advance action on global health and sexual and reproductive health.

"Prime Minister Trudeau also participated in the Global Food Security Summit where he highlighted Canada's ongoing efforts to tackle the global food security crisis and announced the allocation of \$245 million in humanitarian funding to UN, Canadian, and international organizations working to ensure no one goes hungry. ...

"[He] hosted a meeting with Caribbean and regional partners to continue to advance ways the international community can help support Haiti's stability and sustainable development. At the meeting, he announced \$20 million to the UN Development Programme's Multi-Donor Trust Fund Contribution for Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Efforts in Haiti."

He is also said to have confronted "the rise of hate and violent extremism" and "highlighted Canada's strong leadership on climate action and the global biodiversity crisis."

It turns out the Prime Minister is also co-chair of the "UN Sustainable Development Goals Advocates group." At that meeting, he "underlined Canada's commitment to making life better for people, including by advancing gender equality. He announced a \$10 million contribution over three years to Invest in Childcare to ensure access to quality and affordable childcare in low- and middle-income countries worldwide, which addresses a main barrier to women's participation in the economy."

All of this posturing as a responsible member of the international community seems to have garnered him a one-on-one meeting with the Secretary-General of the UN, António Guterres.

"Canada's pledge of \$1.21 billion in new funding to the Global Fund is a 30 per cent increase over our last pledge," the PMO press release writes. Canada's support for the U.S. war machine gave Trudeau pride of place at "a welcoming reception for heads of delegation hosted by the President of the United States of America, Joe Biden, and Dr. Jill Biden and an event with the Clinton Global Initiative -- Executive Roundtable on Unlocking and Realizing the Benefits of Inclusive Job Growth hosted by Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton."

Trudeau also met with the President of Moldova, the President of the Republic of Suriname and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen.

Given the very serious problems facing humankind, Trudeau's posturing to look important and of consequence merely serves to expose how trite a character he is. Canada is not playing a positive role at the UN or in the international arena. So long as the U.S. is calling the shots and Canada is on its destructive bandwagon, this will be the case. Like the U.S. administration, no matter who is in power, Canada is concentrating police powers in very narrow private hands. It is desperate to serve the U.S. war machine with resources, weapons, air space, territory, money, armed forces -- whatever it says it needs.

The government lives on the edge, hoping nobody will notice or that those who do can do nothing about it. Nobody is supposed to discuss the problem that the constitutional order inherited from the past no longer serves the powers that be which have no intention of bringing in a new one. It is clear that those in positions of power and privilege are desperate to make hay while the sun shines, and the world can go to hell for all they care.

Humankind, however, has another plan and it is fighting on all fronts for its right to be. It is One Humanity, One Struggle with a single consciousness of its right to be and to prevail!

Tech Against Terrorism Initiative a Further Assault on Right to Conscience in Name of High Ideals

– Peggy Morton –

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took part in the "Leaders' Summit" of the Christchurch Call Community in New York on September 20. The Summit brought together "governments, online service providers, civil society, and partner organizations."^[1] It was closed to the press.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office on September 21, "Prime Minister delivers action at the United Nations General Assembly," stated, "To confront the rise of hate and violent extremism, the Prime Minister also participated in the Christchurch Call Leaders' Summit 2022, where he underscored Canada's pledge to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online. He announced up to \$1.9 million in new funding over three years to Tech Against Terrorism for Phase Two of their Terrorist Content Analytics Platform (TCAP), a secure online tool that helps small and medium-sized online platforms identify and counter terrorist content."

"This funding is made available through the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence's Community Resilience Fund (CRF), which supports partnerships and innovation in countering radicalization to violence in Canada," a press release issued by Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety, said.

Trudeau tweeted the same day that, "We need to confront the rise of hate and violent extremism. At the Christchurch Call Summit, I announced that Canada will fund a new tool that helps small and medium-size online platforms better identify and counter content related to terrorism and violent extremism."

Tech Against Terrorism is an initiative launched and supported by the United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate, working with the global tech industry to tackle terrorist use of the Internet while respecting human rights, Canadians are told.

The press release states that the funding targets "verified terrorist content." The press release says, "With information so easy to access, the Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that social media and other online platforms are not used as tools to incite, publish and promote terrorism, violence, and hatred." Elsewhere Trudeau also refers to preventing "on-line harm." None of this is discussed with the public.

The additional funding provided by the Trudeau government for Phase Two of the platform will expand the capabilities to identify and assess more types of content across a wider range of platforms, and help develop a content moderation tool to assist smaller tech companies in quickly removing this terrorist content, the press release said. No information is provided as to what is meant by "more types of content."

The issue here is not whether terrorist, racist, misogynist, homophobic acts should be prosecuted and punished. Of course they should, whether committed by individuals, organizations, or the state itself. The issue is who decides, based on accepted definitions, criteria and process, that an act of an individual or organization constitutes terrorism or incitement to terrorism. Further, to conflate terrorism with violence, hatred or harm as if they were identical is a declaration that the TCAP is to be used to outlaw whatever speech state entities and powerful private interests decide. This is the "rules-based international order" in which those who make the rules decide the crime and the punishment, and claim that what are grave violations of the right to speak through arbitrary decisions over which people have no control will keep Canadians safe.

Obscenely powerful private interests such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, and Microsoft are given authority to decide who and what speech should be outlawed based on secret criteria over which Canadians have no control. Even who is being declared an outlaw and on what basis remains secret. There is no appeal, never mind redress for organizations and individuals defamed and wrongly accused of such crimes. To permit such designation using police powers over which the people exercise no control is a serious violation of the right to conscience. To say, as the government does, that this makes Canadians safe and strengthens the rule of law is a travesty.

Tech Against Terrorism

Tech Against Terrorism is described on its website as the second phase of a joint project between the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Swiss NGO ICT4Peace, with the support of ICT [Information and Communications Technology] industry leaders.

The TCAP website states its purpose as: "We track, verify, analyze and alert terrorist content across the internet. Assembling the world's largest database of verified terrorist content collected in real-time from verified terrorist channels on messaging platforms and apps. Supporting smaller tech platforms improving content moderation...."

"The TCAP automates the swift detection and removal of verified terrorist content on tech platforms, through work by our open-source intelligence experts and AI-driven processes. The TCAP primarily focuses on small tech platforms who may not have the capacity to moderate terrorist content through automated processes, meaning terrorist content is more likely to stay online and disseminate further. The TCAP archive seeks to maintain a record of all content to protect human rights and support academic research."

The website states that since its inception, TCAP has issued 20,258 alerts to 72 tech platforms about 34 terrorist entities as of October 8.

Adam Hadley, executive director of Tech Against Terrorism, was quoted in *Global News* about how the TCAP operates. Hadley stated that terrorists typically share their content on smaller platforms first, and these platforms have limited capacity to handle "terrorist use" of their services. TCAP alerts smaller platforms to this content quickly to prevent its spread before it becomes viral, he said. The platforms will receive an automated alert of "verified" content and can then decide if they want to block the content.

Information is obtained through a team of open source intelligence (OSINT) analysts, and "automated scrapers" who extract data from the platforms the OSINT identify, uploading relevant links to the TCAP.

TCAP archives the content it gathers for what its website describes as "academic and human rights purposes," Hadley stated. In fact there is no access to the archives. Instead the website states that, "In the future, verified academics, researchers, and civil society members will have access to certain TCAP content to support quantitative and qualitative analysis, contributing to empirically grounded counterterrorism research to inform theoretical development and policy decisions.

"Tech Against Terrorism seeks to build bridges between public and private partners, ultimately leading to the development of a normative framework of self-regulation that can guide responses to terrorists' use of the Internet, in compliance with international law standards," it is stated elsewhere.

Such mind-numbing jargon is intended to mislead people as to what is going on. For example, what does it mean to "build bridges" between public and private partners? Behind closed doors, obscenely wealthy and powerful monopolies including Facebook, or Meta as it is now known, Microsoft, Twitter, Google, etc. are entrusted to decide who can be deprived of their right to speak and right to conscience. Under the guise of fighting "terrorism" the Canadian government has added "violence," "online hate," "ideologically motivated violent extremism," "extremism," and even "online harms."

Canadians have certainly not given their consent to the use of police powers by the state, arbitrary powers by the tech giants and now the smaller tech platforms as well, to decide who and what is to be outlawed. It is an absurdity to claim that rule of law exists in Canada in the face of the exercise of police powers, where the rulers get to decide the crime and the punishment.

Facebook, Twitter and others have been thoroughly exposed as permitting bots and fake accounts with the aim of encouraging violence and the destabilization of entire societies, as was the case with the attempts to foment counterrevolution in Cuba. It is well documented, as well as people's experience, that the algorithms Facebook uses serve the promotion and "amplification" of hatred and incitement to violence, including communal violence, racist, misogynist and homophobic content, conspiracy theories and division of the people. Those who fight for the New, those who challenge, for example, the existing narrative that the U.S./NATO forces are defending freedom and democracy in Ukraine, and much more, are banned and cancelled. While the algorithms are secret, people have lots of experience in the results they produce.

Trudeau has repeatedly declared that all who do not accept the existing constitutional order and rule of the cartel parties are "extremists." For example, he declared that he would not introduce a system of proportional representation as promised because it would allow "extremist" parties to win seats in the House of Commons.

Again and again the role of the police and security agencies in Canada in organizing, infiltrating and participating in right-wing extremist organizations has been exposed. Canada, along with the U.S. and NATO, has armed and trained the neo-Nazis in Ukraine. Their Nazi salute, *Glory to Ukraine, Glory to the Heroes* has been taken up by Canadian official circles. Police and security agencies are equating opposition to NATO with disloyalty to Canada and even subversion.

State violence is used against the Indigenous peoples, today especially against the Wet'suwet'en

who are defending their territory and who have been subjected to RCMP violence for more than three years in their fight to stop the Coastal GasLink pipeline. All of this is carried out in the name of "national security" and the "national interest."

The anti-democratic measures being taken by Canada and others violate the right to conscience and the human right of speech, and form part of the broad anti-social offensive against the peoples' fight for empowerment and in defence of rights. They cannot and will not be accepted.

Note

1. The Christchurch Call was adopted following the terrorist killing of 51 people with many more injured in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019. The assaults were livestreamed on Facebook.

Disinformation About Canada's Strong Leadership on Climate Action

At the opening of the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Trudeau is said to have "highlighted Canada's strong leadership on climate action and the global biodiversity crisis ahead of the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity taking place in Montreal this December." The information posted states that Trudeau "made a call to action for renewed commitments from leaders for an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular to address the financing gap for nature."

Trudeau also "announced \$10 million in funding over four years for the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative to improve emergency preparedness in developing countries, particularly the small island developing states." The specialized CREWS is a multi-million dollar project delivered through the World Meteorological Organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. Its stated aim is to provide countries with early weather warnings and risk information. This project is involved in providing such services in 44 Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. It is funded by private sector, civil society and governments.

This is yet another project used by the U.S., Canada and former colonial powers to claim they are helping the economies of poorer countries, in spite of all evidence to the contrary as seen, for example, in the U.S. treatment of natural disasters in Puerto Rico and islands of the Caribbean.

Trudeau also announced that Canada will join the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership. This is a scheme the British government launched at COP26, the UN Climate Change Conference held in Glasgow in November 2021. At the UNGA on September 21, COP26 President and British Conservative MP Alok Sharma called on "world leaders to join the launch of the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership at COP27, to scale up action to protect, conserve and restore the world's forests while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation."

The failure of the federal government to protect Canada's forests and create a sustainable forestry industry underscores the posturing going on at the UN. As if the link of forests to climate is just a matter of planting trees, not the relations between humans and humans and humans and nature which reveal the need for people's empowerment, Trudeau said: "There is no path to fighting climate change and building a healthy future that does not involve forests. At home, Canada is working in partnership with Indigenous communities, while taking historic steps like our commitment to plant 2 billion trees over the coming decade. To bring this work to the world stage, we are pleased to be joining the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP). Together, we can

maximize the role of forests in the fight against climate change and in our shared work to build a bright future."

No mention of trampling underfoot the hereditary rights of the Indigenous peoples on their territories or that "working in partnership with Indigenous communities" is a euphemism to cover up that the "partners" are the band councils which are pushing private interests and do not represent the hereditary chiefs. The FCLP is another pay-the-rich scheme to enable private interests to lay claim to the forest resources of the world's people including here in Canada, in the name of forest conservation and the green economy.

The "working in partnership with Indigenous communities" and "commitment to plant 2 billion trees over the coming decade" that Prime Minister Trudeau touted at the UNGA was not lost on the youth and the thousands of Canadians who marched for climate justice on Global Climate Strike Day, September 23. One of the main focuses of the action was to denounce Trudeau and his government for lack of action to protect the natural environment and for criminalizing Indigenous people who are in the forefront of protecting Mother Earth.

The wrecking of the forest industry in Canada which contributed to the recent flooding in BC, the criminalization and targeting of Indigenous people and environmental activists defending the irreplaceable old growth forests on unceded Indigenous lands, the projects to extract critical minerals for the U.S. war machine from the "Ring of Fire" on Indigenous land in Ontario which will cause massive environmental damage in the James Bay lowlands, and pushing through the Coastal GasLink Pipeline on Wet'suwet'en sovereign territory all give the lie to the Trudeau government's claims and actions at the UNGA and show who these actions serve. They deserve nothing but contempt.

(With files from COP26, Prime Minister's Office.)

Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit, Cambodia **Development of Regional Cooperation in** **Southeast Asia**



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) held its combined 40th and 41st summits in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from November 10-13. ASEAN summits are typically held twice a year and this year, as in 2021, the two summits were combined into one event.

Canada was represented at the proceedings by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly. They used the occasion to promote and further reveal the government's Indo-Pacific Strategy. Notably, the aims of the U.S. and Canada in the region run counter to the spirit of cooperation and regional integration on which ASEAN was founded in 1967.

ASEAN has 11 members: Brunei, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. East Timor's membership was approved in principle on November 11. Based on 2021 figures, the combined population of ASEAN countries is 714.841 million, about 8.9 per cent of the world's population.

Several related summits were held in Phnom Penh in parallel with the main ASEAN summits. These included the ASEAN-Canada Commemorative Summit, the 10th ASEAN-U.S. Summit, the 25th ASEAN-Japan Summit, the Second ASEAN-Australia Summit, the 19th ASEAN-India Summit, the 25th ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan and the Republic of Korea) Summit, the 12th ASEAN-UN Summit, the 25th ASEAN-China Summit, and the 17th East Asia Summit.

ASEAN's theme this year, under the chairmanship of Cambodia, was "Addressing Challenges Together (ASEAN ACT)" In the introduction to ASEAN's 2021-2022 Annual Report, Secretary-General Dato Lim Jock Hoi highlighted certain aspects of the organization's work in the past year. He noted, "Regional peace remains our goal as ASEAN works steadfastly for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea."

Economically, he said, "ASEAN has forged ahead with its regional integration agenda" and has embraced digital transformation "as a new driver for the region's inclusive, innovative and sustainable growth" with the aim of "transform[ing] the region of 463 million internet users into a leading digital economy." On the socio-cultural front, he states that ASEAN's work "continues to pivot on the well-being and empowerment of our people. Development programs, including 25 health-related initiatives, have been designed to adequately respond to the current as well as future pandemics."

An ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on the ASEAN ACT Summit was issued November 11. It reiterates the basis of "regional cooperation in the spirit of equality and partnership and to secure peace, freedom and prosperity for its peoples and region" on which ASEAN was founded in 1967. It reaffirms "the importance of regional solidarity, continuity and sustainability in ASEAN's endeavour to realize an ASEAN Community that is politically cohesive, economically integrated, and socially responsible as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter." It goes on to state that "togetherness emphasizes an action-oriented approach that is based on openness, honesty, good faith, solidarity, and harmony within ASEAN in addressing common challenges facing the region timely and effectively to realize a harmonious ASEAN Community that is peaceful, stable, and prosperous."

Amongst the priorities it outlines, it calls on member nations to:

"Promote cooperation and partnerships within ASEAN and with external partners through ASEAN-led mechanisms based on the principles of consultation and consensus, equality, partnership, and mutual respect, while maintaining ASEAN Centrality, in order to achieve harmony and sustainability in all dimensions of ASEAN Community-building and in promoting regional and international peace, stability and prosperity;

"Maintain ASEAN as a region of peace, freedom, stability and security, where differences and disputes are resolved by peaceful means; and free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including through the effective implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty and its Plan of Action.

It goes on to say that member countries will reinforce the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, the Economic Community Blueprint, the Social-Cultural Blueprint, and implement plans for integration and connectivity.

The statement concludes with a focus on external relations, saying in part that the organization will:

"Continue to expand ASEAN's external relations based on shared interest, constructive engagement, and mutual benefit which could contribute to ASEAN's community-building, regional integration and development cooperation efforts, as well as strengthen and deepen cooperation with external partners through ASEAN-led mechanisms for comprehensive and sustainable recovery, and promote peace, stability and prosperity through mutually beneficial cooperation for ASEAN Community building efforts and socio-economic development through ASEAN-led mechanisms, while maintaining ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture;

"Strengthen ASEAN-led mechanisms, including ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three, East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus, which are significant multilateral platforms that enable countries in the region and beyond to engage in open, transparent, inclusive and constructive dialogue while remaining actively engaged and forward-looking;

"Encourage constructive engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, and leverage the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific as a guide and framework for mutually beneficial relations to promote mutual trust and respect and mutual benefit, thereby contributing to regional peace, stability, and long-term prosperity and sustainability."

The ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement is indicative of the striving for peaceful, friendly relations of mutual benefit between ASEAN member nations, the broader Asia-Pacific and the world as a whole.

It is a sharp contrast to the striving of U.S. imperialism and its coterie of appeasers like Canada, according to whose outlook the world is all about spheres of influence, domination and exploitation, in which the people should play no role. It is also a sharp contrast to other proceedings at the ASEAN summit where the U.S. attempted to impose its narrow aggressive aims in the Asia-Pacific.

Despite ASEAN having its own logic, principles and considerations, the NATO-instigated conflict in Ukraine was a notable feature of this year's summit, with the U.S. and its allies, including Ukraine, calling on other countries to take up their chauvinism and warmongering by supporting Ukraine as a necessary stand for all ASEAN countries to take.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba took part in the Summit and used the occasion to present disinformation about the conflict in his country. At a news conference on the sidelines of an ASEAN summit on November 12, said, "I call on all ASEAN members to take every method possible to stop Russia from playing hunger games with the world," the implication being that the conflict is causing global food shortages for which Russia alone is responsible. He made further baseless suggestions that Russia's implementation of a grain shipment agreement should be scrutinized and measures should be taken to ensure that the Russian side acts in good faith. Kuleba had earlier put the matter to ASEAN leaders that adopting neutrality and not condemning Russia was against their interests.

Similarly, the White House on November 13 released the "Phnom Penh Statement on Trilateral Partnership for the Indo-Pacific" coming out of its meeting with Japan and the Republic of Korea during the ASEAN Summit. Besides targeting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the three countries state that they "affirm their commitment to stand with Ukraine against Russia's unprovoked and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine that has shaken the foundation of the international order. They recognize that the Indo-Pacific cannot be stable and secure while aggression rages anywhere; threats to territorial integrity and sovereignty undermine the fabric of the entire international order."

According to the outlook espoused by the U.S., which calls itself the indispensable nation, it can

carry out its aggression, wars and occupations around the world, over years and decades, and this does not represent such a threat to the international order.

Imperious and Divisive Role of U.S. at East Asia Summit

The East Asia Summit (EAS) took place on November 13 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, as part of this year's ASEAN summit. Participants included the ASEAN member countries plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea (ROK), the United States and the Russian Federation. This year's EAS included the EU as a guest, with Ukraine also participating for the first time.

ASEAN describes the EAS as "a premier Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in East Asia." It has six priority areas of cooperation: environment and energy, education, finance, global health issues and pandemic diseases, natural disaster management, and ASEAN Connectivity.

Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen, in his openings remarks to the EAS, called for unity, respect and multilateralism, saying current global tensions have created hardships for everyone. He said he hoped leaders would embrace a "spirit of togetherness in upholding open and inclusive multilateralism, pragmatism and mutual respect in addressing the existential and strategic challenges we all face."

Despite Cambodia setting the tone for the summit, the EAS ended without a joint statement due to disagreements between Russia and the United States because of the latter's imposition of its anti-Russia agenda on the proceedings.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told the press at the end of the working sessions that the U.S. and its allies insisted in using language about the situation in Ukraine that he called "totally unacceptable." He referred to the intervention of the U.S. and NATO in the Asia-Pacific region as promoting formats that go against the inclusive structures under the umbrella of ASEAN, and that this interference leads to militarization of this region in order to check China and Russia's interests. He noted that other countries like New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Australia and the UK are becoming embroiled in these activities.

Some notable meetings took place on the sidelines of the EAS, in which the narrow and divisive agenda of the U.S. was made evident.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and U.S. President Joe Biden had a closed-door bilateral meeting. The White House reported, in its usual imperious manner, that Biden lectured China about "the need to respect freedom of navigation and overflight in the East China and South China seas," as well as saying that the U.S. would "compete vigorously" with China and "speak out regarding the PRC's human rights abuses, while also keeping lines of communication open and ensuring competition does not veer into conflict." In practice, the supposed distinction that the U.S. makes between competition and conflict takes the form of breaching its agreement with China to respect the One-China principle, naval brinkmanship in the Taiwan Strait, in which Canada is now taking part, and aggressive economic measures against China. None of these activities conform to established norms of diplomacy, through which peace is maintained and differences resolved through negotiations. Nor do they have the aim of avoiding conflict or ensuring security and stability in the region.

The U.S. and its military allies Japan and the ROK also met during the EAS. Recent meetings of these three countries have the aim of establishing an aggressive Asian war alliance akin to NATO, and stepping up war preparations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Following their meeting, they issued a statement that hailed "the unprecedented level of trilateral coordination" they had achieved, vowing to forge even closer ties, especially in the military sphere. This is all part of spreading disinformation about the DPRK to deny the fact that its development of its nuclear deterrent and self-defensive weaponry is due to relentless U.S. aggression and sabotage of peace negotiations since the end of the Korean War.

On the basis of such disinformation the statement goes on to justify the unacceptable presence of U.S. nuclear arms in Asia and more generally the necessity for Japan, the ROK and the U.S. to form a military bloc in Asia. The U.S. is responsible for introducing nuclear arms into the Korean Peninsula, which the ROK has hosted for decades, while the late Shinzo Abe, a leading proponent of the remilitarization of Japan, earlier this year called for Japan to also consider hosting U.S. nuclear weapons.

The statement says, "President Biden reiterated that the U.S. commitment to defend Japan and the ROK is ironclad and backed by the full range of capabilities, including nuclear. As the regional security environment grows more challenging, President Biden reaffirms that the U.S. commitment to reinforce extended deterrence to Japan and the ROK will only strengthen. Our recent joint exercises demonstrate our resolve to maintain peace and stability and defend the rules-based international order." The rest of the statement continues in a similar self-serving vein.

On the previous day, Biden stated that ASEAN is at the heart of the U.S. Asia policy "and promised closer collaboration on major regional challenges" including the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, where the U.S. has no claim yet gives itself the right to intervene as world gendarme.

Indonesia takes over as ASEAN chair in 2023 and Indonesian President Joko Widodo told the EAS that in taking up the chair, Indonesia would not let Southeast Asia become the front lines of a new cold war and would not let ASEAN become "a proxy to any powers."

(With files from news agencies, ASEAN, White House.)

Canada's Announcements

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took part in this year's summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including the ASEAN-Canada Commemorative Summit on November 12, where he made several announcements about how Canada will work with ASEAN in the coming period. Financially, they amount to \$333.08 million in commitments.

A notable theme of the announcements is the repeated attempts by the Trudeau government to give itself credibility as a "feminist" government, as part of the imperialist practice of imposing so-called universal values on other peoples and nations. In such a scenario, Canada is offering its "expertise in promoting gender equality and ensuring the integration of intersecting identities which impact those most at risk of being left behind" and about "ensuring women can participate equally with men in decision-making, including in matters of peace and security." Where exactly Canada's credentials on such matters come from is anyone's guess. Working people who fight to affirm their rights everyday can attest that in Canada women's rights are not provided with a guarantee, and that all except the cartel parties and the factions of the ruling elite they represent are excluded from decision-making power in all matters that affect them, especially women.

Trudeau's participation is in keeping with Canada's shifting emphasis in its foreign policy in Asia

toward the Indo-Pacific region, with several of the announcements denoted as being part of its Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS), that at that time had yet to be revealed. In doing so, the Trudeau government is following the U.S. lead, with the aim of serving the international financial oligarchy and their need to confront and isolate China and seek dominant advantage over others in a region they refer to as "the fastest growing economic region in the world."

G20 Meeting in Bali, Indonesia
U.S. Fails to Impose Its Agenda at G20
– Philip Fernandez –



The 2022 G20 summit was held on November 15-16 in Bali, Indonesia under the theme "Recover Together, Recover Stronger." It was the 17th meeting of the G20, the world's biggest economies, whose members currently are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. Ten additional countries including Spain, the Netherlands, Cambodia and Singapore, and 11 international organizations including the UN, World Bank, African Union and ASEAN were invited as guests. It was chaired by Indonesia.

Leading up to the G20 meeting, the host nation, Indonesia, called on "leaders to focus on shoring up health systems and boosting food and energy security" and to focus on "consensus instead of division." Indonesia asked G20 members who had been "vocal against Putin to tone down the rhetoric in order to focus consensus on other issues."

While the host country and others tried to speak to and address the main theme of the Summit, the U.S./NATO bloc focused on pushing all present to sanction Russia for causing the crisis caused by NATO's eastward expansion and proxy war aimed at isolating and crushing Russia. Matters of food security, building on public health, climate change, debt and international tax reform, among others, took a back seat to the U.S./NATO barrage of disinformation. These countries had initially lobbied to bar Russia from attending the Bali meeting but did not succeed. Prior to the Bali summit, Prime Minister Trudeau told the media, "My focus is going to be making sure that the world comes

together to reinforce that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin made a terrible, terrible choice when he decided to invade a peaceful neighbouring country."

In light of their failure to bar Russia, side-meetings of NATO and G7 leaders issued a joint statement against Russia which only underscores their failure to dictate the consensus they sought.

The final communiqué of the G20 meeting stands as testimony to that failure. More sober heads prevailed and derailed that onslaught into a more generic acknowledgment of fact, that the Ukraine crisis is having negative consequences globally. Item three of the Bali Summit Declaration states: "Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy -- constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks. There were other views and different assessments of the situation and sanctions."

Prior to the start of the G20 meeting, there was also a three-hour meeting between President Xi of China and President Biden of the U.S. where the two leaders discussed issues of contention including the One-China Policy, security in the Indo-Pacific region and other matters.

The U.S. and its retinue are trying to use the G20 as an instrument to further the private interests which are driving their policies. Immediately prior to the G20 meeting, something called the B20 was convened in Bali on November 13-14. The B20 was established in 2010 to be a key "influencer" in G20 proceedings. It brought together some 2,000 financiers, business executives and owners from the biggest global monopolies from the G20 countries representing some 6.5 million businesses around the world. They gathered to set out the policy recommendations they expected the G20 to address.

With such a powerful business lobby, the pressing issues facing humanity such as the increasing number of people facing food insecurity, global unemployment, climate change and other critical matters were sidelined.

U.S.-Led Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment

At the G20 summit, how the U.S. is fraudulently presenting itself, with Canada in tow, as interested in addressing the critical situation which exists in many African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean countries was further revealed. U.S. President Biden pushed forward on its U.S.-led Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) created in June 2022 when the G7 met. Biden said:

"In June, I joined my fellow G7 leaders to officially launch the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, with the collective goal of mobilizing \$600 billion in five years for quality, sustainability, and innovative infrastructure, and investments in low- and middle-income countries. As I've spoken with my Canadian friends, this is something that we have an obligation to do, it seems to me, to deal with those nations that are not the primary cause of many of our problems, but are now left with a great deal of difficulty. I want to emphasize the word "investments" -- investments that are driven by local needs, in development with our partners, and delivering real results to improve the lives of all of our people."

In this way, the U.S. is planning, along with Canada, to fleece low- and middle-income countries by making them pay the price of private pay-the-rich infrastructure projects. Their intention to block China's further development of its Belt and Road Initiative around the world that was started in 2013 is going to cause further havoc, anarchy and violence.

Another announcement made at the Bali G20 Summit was the official launching of a Pandemic Fund, ostensibly to assist low- and middle-income countries recover from the pandemic.

Noteworthy is the fact that this fund is being run by the World Bank, which itself is an instrument of Anglo-American imperialism that has caused the impoverishment of countless people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America through demanding the privatization of their economies, restructuring and so forth.

At the G20, Indonesian President Widodo announced the launch of the Fund, which currently has confirmed pledges of \$1.4 billion from 24 private and public sector donors. Widodo underscored that the amount falls woefully short of meeting its annual target of U.S.\$10 billion. No pledges were made at the G20 to commit to raising this amount except to "encourage donations."

It shows the lack of interest on the part of the U.S. and its retinue at the G20 to see their own Pandemic Fund succeed. Their alleged commitment to seeing the world "Recover Together, Recover Stronger" is basically a media campaign which serves to keep blocking providing any problem facing humankind with solutions. On the contrary, under the guise of alleviating poverty and addressing drought, human rights and democratic governance, it is the private interests affiliated with the U.S. state that continue to infiltrate everywhere to block change which helps the people.

The failure of the U.S./NATO-led attempt at the G20 to isolate and blame Russia for the Ukraine crisis and, by extension, for all the ills of the global economy, debunks the myth that the world is united behind the U.S./NATO block against Russia.

The Bali G20 Summit was another occasion which revealed that the U.S./NATO forces and their allies are in crisis. Try as it may, the U.S. is not able to simply impose its dictate on the world by blaming Russia, as well as China, for the global economic crisis and for the Ukraine crisis. The attempt to block China through the PGII will also fail because its aim is not to help the world's peoples but to impoverish and enslave them.

(With files from G20, Government of Indonesia, White House, Global TV)

Mr. Trudeau's Posturing in Bali

– Pauline Easton –

The main thrust of Prime Minister Trudeau's participation at the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia was as a cheerleader for whatever U.S. President Biden promoted. This is despite the obvious fact of one U.S. foreign policy failure after another.

Summing up Canada's participation at the end of the Summit, Trudeau stated: "Canada and our allies are united behind Ukraine."

This is patently false seen in the fact that there is no consensus in Europe on how to deal with any issue related to Ukraine. In fact, there is no consensus within the United States either.

Trudeau said that a few days earlier Canada had announced an additional \$500 million in military spending for Ukraine, doubling the amount in the 2022 budget, extending the training of recruits for the Ukraine army in Britain till the end of next year, as well as imposing sanctions against 23 individuals for "human rights violations against Russian opposition leaders."

In this regard, Canada continues to deny that it has trained and is continuing to train outright Nazis in Ukraine and that sanctions against Russia involve the theft of property which means that defence of private property has been cast aside by the U.S. so-called rules-based international order. What goes around comes around and when it is the private property of U.S. private interests in other countries which is affected, the likes of Trudeau will scream against authoritarian regimes and abuses of all kinds.

In the most irrational abandonment of any pretense at being scientific, Trudeau declared that Russia must be held accountable for inflation, supply chain snags and fuel price increases, and economic instability around the world. He blamed all of this on the war, not on the internal failures of the economic system itself which can no longer cope with the exponential increase in the productive powers of the productive forces as a result of the discoveries of the technical and scientific revolution and the need for a new direction for the economy which meets the claims of the productive forces.

Trudeau also announced \$48 million towards Indonesia's climate change initiatives including for the restoration of biodiversity in coral reefs and mangrove swamps as a contribution to reducing climate change globally.

He emphasized progress in the Canada-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement which was launched in 2021 aimed at enabling Canadian mining, natural resources, agri-food, and manufacturing companies to set up in Indonesia, to create "jobs and opportunities for people in both countries."

Trudeau spoke of his speech at the Business 20 (B20) Summit, part of the G20 Summit, to "a roomful of business people from around the world," as he put it. Revealing his smug view of Canada and its "values," he said:

"They [the business people] know that Canada is a stable place to invest because we have the values that make us a reliable partner, the raw materials, trade access and a skilled and ambitious workforce. I made it clear that Canada is rapidly becoming the energy and tech supplier that a net zero world will need. We are focusing on the whole supply chain. Auto workers building electric vehicles in Ontario with batteries built in Quebec, with nickel and lithium mined in northern Canada."

"Canada is number two in the world for battery supply chain," he declared, "because of the work that our government has done with the private sector."

At the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) event, co-hosted by U.S. President Biden, Trudeau also announced that Canada will invest \$750 million to expand the reach of FinDev Canada in the Indo-Pacific region. He said it is to "help respond to the region's massive infrastructure needs, address existing funding gaps, and support wider regional progress toward ending poverty, fighting climate change, and building a future that works for everyone."

When he speaks like this the image that comes to mind is of the little frog in Jean de la Fontaine's fable who was jealous of the buffalo and thought he could blow himself up to rival its size. How ridiculous he sounds when he thinks that the Indo-Pacific's "massive infrastructure needs" *et al* can be rescued by pittance provided by Canada based on the proviso that they must submit to "Canadian values." The ability of the Chinese state and the states of Indonesia and other countries to provide funds for infrastructure needs *et al* in the Indo-Pacific is slightly stronger than Canada's, Mr. Trudeau. What world does Trudeau live in and who besides himself does he think he is fooling?

FinDev Canada is a Crown Corporation established by the Trudeau government in 2017 to help collect funds to finance pay-the-rich schemes in developing countries. Canada is listed as a partner in the Biden administration's plan to invest \$600 billion by 2027 to fund infrastructure projects around the world under the PGII, a partnership between the U.S. and G7. The PGII aims "to deliver quality, sustainable infrastructure that makes a difference in people's lives around the world, strengthens and diversifies our supply chains, creates new opportunities for American workers and businesses, and advances our national security."

(Government of Canada, CTV News, CPAC, FinDev Canada, White House)

Development of Productive Forces in Indonesia



Track-laying construction site on Jakarta-Bandung High Speed Rail line in Bandung, Indonesia, April 2022.

Indonesia has a population of 275 million and plentiful natural resources. The economy is now in the throes of dramatic transformation from rural small scale production to mainly urban industrial mass production of goods and services for sale in the national and international markets. The economy has become the largest in southeast Asia and the seventh largest in the world in terms of Gross Domestic Product. For much of the 21st century, Indonesia has had the second fastest growing economy, behind only China. The focus of its international trade has become predominantly with fellow southeast Asian countries and China and Japan.

The urban population is approaching 60 per cent of the total. Fifteen cities have populations of well over 1 million people. The Indonesian education system is the fourth largest in the world with more than 50 million students, 3 million teachers, and 300,000 schools. Primary to high school level is compulsory. Primary and middle school is free, while in high school, small fees are required. Pre-primary education from age two is also widely available under the direct supervision and coverage of the Directorate of Early Age Education Development with around 70 per cent of children attending. Indonesia has 2,595 universities and thousands of vocational colleges with millions of students and graduates.

Given the enormous growth in both the material and human productive forces, Indonesians are looking for a place in the world without the direct dictate of U.S. imperialism and its multitude of mechanisms of control such as U.S. dollar hegemony, which invariably suck wealth from the country. In this regard, Bank Indonesia, the country's central bank, and other financial and trading institutions are employing new forms to reduce subservience of the Indonesian economy to the U.S. dollar.

According to reports from Tempo.co, Indonesia's central bank is speaking out against the use of the U.S. dollar in Indonesia's export-import transactions and actively encouraging its trading partners to participate in new forms that exclude the dollar. The bank is leading a transition to local currencies in international payments and settlements to reduce dependence on the dollar and its onerous fees and control such as U.S. imposed sanctions and boycotts.

At the present time, most of Indonesia's international trade transactions are conducted in foreign currencies, predominantly the dollar. Nugroho Joko Prastowo from Bank Indonesia says, "Ninety per cent of export-import settlements are in U.S. dollars, when in fact the value of Indonesia's direct exports to the U.S. is only 10 per cent (of the total), and the value of U.S. imports is only five per cent."

Prastowo was speaking at the opening session of a forum called "Utilizing Local Currency Settlement (LCS) to Increase the Export-Import Efficiency of the Greater Solo Region." He said transactions in foreign currencies incur conversion costs, and when they are in U.S. dollars, "the conversion fee is doubled." He said a system of bilateral payments in local currency currently underway with some countries if extended to most trading partners could solve the problem.

Halifax International Security Forum

Actions in Halifax and Toronto Demand Forum Be Banned



Toronto picket against Halifax War Conference, November 19, 2022

Spirited actions were organized in Halifax and Toronto on November 19 demanding the banning of the Halifax International Security Forum (HISF), aka the Halifax War Conference, and for Canada to get out of NATO and NORAD. No Harbour for War held its protest at the Peace and Friendship Park across from the Westin Hotel in Halifax where the HISF was taking place. On the same day, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) held a picket at the Toronto constituency office of Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. Anti-war activists, women, youth, students, workers, retirees and others participated enthusiastically at both events. Both actions paid tribute to Allan Bezanson, a stalwart of CPC(M-L) who played a decisive role as organizer and mainstay of No Harbour for War, thus making an indelible contribution to the anti-war movement in Canada.

No Harbour for War has a proud history of opposing the HISF since it started 14 years ago. The organization represents the anti-war consciousness of the people of Halifax and Canada, drawing people from various walks of life into its activities including opposing the use of the port of Halifax for the "visits" of U.S./NATO forces and as a base for war exercises. It stands against the militarization of the city of Halifax and against U.S.-led imperialist wars and aggression abroad and opposes Canada's participation in these crimes. At this year's event, the participants denounced Canadian Defence Minister Anita Anand for her warmongering keynote speech at the HISF in support of the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine and for calling for Canada to be further integrated into the U.S. war machine.



Halifax, November 19, 2022

At the Toronto action, speaking on behalf of CPC(M-L), Philip Fernandez welcomed everyone and denounced the HISF as a gathering of warmongers and arms dealers from Canada and around the world organized by the U.S./NATO bloc to subvert humanity's drive for peace and stability. He pointed out that the Halifax war conference stands for a "security" based on the striving of the U.S. for world domination backed by U.S./NATO wars of occupation and aggression -- wars that cause displacement and insecurity for millions of people the world over and must be stopped. He also noted that plans were being hatched at the HISF this year to ramp up support for the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine, integrate Canada more firmly into the U.S. war machine, and step up attacks on China so as to enable the U.S./NATO to dominate the Indo-Pacific region.

The gathering chanted slogans including *Ban the Halifax Security Forum!*, *War Criminals Not Welcome in Canada!*, *Canada out of NATO!*, *Canada out of NORAD!*, *Not a Single Youth for Imperialist War and Aggression!*, *Make Canada a Zone for Peace!* and *Free Julian Assange, Charge the U.S./NATO War Criminals!*

Other speakers also expressed their vigorous opposition to the war conference. A high school teacher from the faith group Pax Christi denounced the CBC and the media disinformation aimed at keeping Canadians ignorant of the crimes and warmongering of the U.S., Canada, Britain and NATO countries around the world, which are the main source of human suffering and the environmental crisis. Youth activist Cory Thomas David expressed concern that the U.S. is pushing Chrystia Freeland to be the next head of NATO, condemning her family's Nazi links and her cozy relations with the Nazi-dominated government of Ukraine. He said all Canadians must hold the Trudeau government to account for crimes being committed in our name.

The Toronto action warmly received a message of support and solidarity from Dr. George Elliott Clarke, former Canadian Parliamentary Poet Laureate and current E.J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto. Amongst other things, Professor Clarke underscored that the world faces grave dangers as a result of big power geo-political rivalries instigated by the West and that those who call for militarism and war in Canada and around the world must be stopped before another World War breaks out.

Copies of an article from the *TML Daily* of November 18 opposing the HISF were distributed at the Toronto action to passers-by. The action ended with another round of slogans, a thank you to all who participated and the pledge to continue to work together on the anti-war front, to make Canada a Zone for Peace.



Toronto, November 19, 2022

Canada's Role at Halifax War Conference

Defence Minister for Canada, Anita Anand, was co-host of the 14th Halifax International Security Forum (HISF), November 18-22, along with HISF President Peter Van Praagh. Anand gave the keynote speech, entitled "Canadian Leadership for the 21st Century."



One of the key announcements in her speech was that Canada is "proposing the Halifax Regional Municipality to host the North American Regional Office of DIANA, NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic. The objective of DIANA is to facilitate cooperation between military operators and the Alliance's best and brightest start-ups, scientific researchers, and technology companies to solve critical Allied defence and security problems." She added, "With more than 300 entrepreneurial science and technology start-ups, Canadian Forces Base Halifax, Defence Research and Development Canada, and seven universities, the Halifax Regional Municipality is a natural host for DIANA." [1]

Anand claimed that Canada "is firmly on the side of liberal democracy and the international order." She cited U.S. academic Francis Fukuyama whose End of History thesis predicted "the final victory of liberal democracy." She noted, "I think we can all agree that his prediction was premature. But that is not a reason to give up hope. Last month Fukuyama wrote that liberal democracy will not make a comeback unless people are willing to struggle on its behalf."

As part of this "struggle" to shore up liberal democracy around the world and in Ukraine, where this battle is raging, Anand highlighted that "Canada is working in lock step with its partners on the security crisis in Europe" amongst other things. She announced that Canada has committed to a further \$534 million for additional military aid to Ukraine, more training for Ukrainian troops provided in Britain through Operation UNIFIER, collaborating with other NATO partners, and

working closely with the armaments industry to supply Ukraine with more weapons.

She stated: "[W]e are also closely working with the United States to bolster our continental defences. We must invest in the Arctic which is quickly becoming a place of economic and geopolitical interest for countries like Russia and China." To that end, Anand stated that in June Canada had announced that it would "invest \$38.6 billion over 20 years to modernize our NORAD capabilities."

The Indo-Pacific region was a key concern in Anand's speech. "It is the fastest-growing economic region of the world responsible for almost two-thirds of global growth over the last several years. Every single issue that will impact global security in the coming decades runs through the Indo-Pacific: from economic growth to democracy, from climate change to human rights, including the rights of women and girls," she said.

While recognizing that this region is "home to China," Anand stated that Canada would work with the U.S. and other allies to continue to monitor the Taiwan Strait through Operation PROJECTION (Canadian Naval Operations around the world to protect "Canada's interests") as well as Operation NEON, targeting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Anand also mentioned that Canada will be reviewing the Trudeau government's defence policy "Strong, Secure, Engaged" as well as increasing Canada's military budget.

Besides giving the keynote speech, Anand was busy during the HISF holding a number of bilateral meetings with various NATO allies. These included meeting with a U.S. Congressional delegation as well as with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to discuss "ongoing defence integration" between the two countries and the need to upgrade NORAD. She also met with; Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Olha Stefanishyna, and the Defence Ministers of Kosovo, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands, to enhance bilateral military cooperation and drum up support for the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine against Russia. She also met with leaders of hedge funds and the armaments industry.

As can be seen, the kind of "leadership" Canada wants to provide in the 21st century is to be a world leader in war and aggression around the world, hanging onto the coattails of U.S. imperialism. This brings no honour to Canada or Canadians. This dangerous path the Trudeau war government is pursuing must be stopped by the peace-loving Canadian people stepping up their organized efforts for an anti-war government and to make Canada a zone for peace.

Note

1. DIANA is a new front of NATO war preparations in what it calls "emerging disruptive technologies." NATO is creating two centres to oversee this activity, one in Europe and one in North America. These hubs will manage NATO directing of public and private research and development in nine areas of emerging technologies: artificial intelligence (AI), data, autonomy, quantum-enabled technologies, biotechnology, hypersonic technologies, space, novel materials and manufacturing, and energy and propulsion.

(With files from Department of Defence, NATO.)

Promotion of Canada's Further Integration into U.S. War Machine

The 14th Halifax International Security Forum (HISF), aka Halifax War Conference, took place from November 18 to 20. This meeting of U.S./NATO forces and their allies was attended by some 400 people from 50 countries including "decision-makers, military leaders, academics, and industry

to address defence and security challenges including climate change, food security, energy, technology, disinformation, as well as the future of democracy and support for Ukraine."

The overarching aim of the conference was to consolidate support for the U.S. drive for hegemony and dictate around the world as the "indispensable nation." Integral to this aim are attempts by the U.S. and its allies to criminalize and isolate Russia and China.

Canada's role in the Halifax War Conference was total appeasement of U.S. imperialism, not only as a host and sponsor of the event, but also through the agreements reached this year between the Trudeau government and the Biden administration at the conference. Of significance is the bilateral meeting between Canadian Minister of Defence Anita Anand and U.S. Secretary of State Lloyd Austin on November 19 where Anand pledged to work with the U.S. to further integrate the two militaries and upgrade NORAD. The Department of National Defence (DND) reported: "Minister Anand and Secretary Austin also discussed North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) modernization. In particular, she underlined the Royal Canadian Air Force's working with the United States Air Force to refine plans to establish a cutting-edge network of over-the-horizon radar sites in Canada and the U.S. These sites will significantly improve our ability to detect incoming threats at longer ranges -- including over the Arctic. Canadian defence scientists have been working with U.S. counterparts to identify initial priorities for research and development, including how hypersonics, quantum technology, and space-based capabilities will shape new and emerging threats -- and how NORAD can respond to them." Canada has committed \$38.6 billion over the next 20 years to upgrading NORAD.

DND reported "Minister Anand also updated Secretary Austin on Canada's soon to be released Indo-Pacific strategy. The Minister and the Secretary discussed Canada's Operation PROJECTION and Operation NEON, and Minister Anand noted that Canada will increase its military presence and enhance its defence and security relationships with partners in the region, through the forthcoming strategy."

DND reported that on November 19, Minister Anand also met with "the U.S. Congressional Delegation present at the HISF and thanked them for their continued presence at the Forum throughout the years. They discussed the close Canada-U.S. defence relationship and ways to strengthen it."

The conference proceedings reflected the growing militarization of life where key issues facing all of humanity -- such as climate change and food security -- are being coopted by the governments of the U.S., NATO countries and other allies as pretexts to ramp up military spending and to give militaries a larger and larger role in civilian affairs. This includes the role that NATO, its Parliamentary Assembly and think tanks play to interfere in the internal affairs of its member countries, to dictate military spending and foreign policy, and also to criminalize opposition to NATO.

The conference and its proceedings are important for Canadians and Quebeckers to stay abreast of, so as to know what dangerous warmongering is afoot in the name of Canadian values, focus the efforts of the anti-war movement and to not fall prey to the militarization of life carried out in the name of security, rights, values or any other high ideals.

***Make Canada a Zone for Peace!
No to the Halifax War Conference!***

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