

Summit on Canada's Global Leadership

Developing a vision for a comprehensive Canadian foreign policy at the nexus of trade, security, diplomacy and aid.

Ottawa Conference and Event Centre
November 27-28, 2019

Despite decades of economic growth, innovation and social progress, ongoing international pressures are posing critical challenges which Canada cannot ignore. Climate change, access to strategic resources and rising economic inequality are contributing to mass migration and increased insecurity around the globe. The rise of populism, trade protectionism, and human rights violations are but some of the most pressing global challenges. The effects of these global trends are already being felt in Canada and have implications for the prospects of both domestic and international prosperity.

Canada is a respected global player, recognized for historic and continued contributions to a global rules-based order and to a fairer, more sustainable and safer world. Our country invests widely outside our borders to advance a world view that aligns with its values and interests. Collectively, Canadian interests in trade, diplomacy, aid and security reach nearly every corner of the globe. Viewed together, these interests, resources and networks offer a powerful vehicle for contributing to global change; but, more often than not, they are considered, debated, and addressed separately.

Stronger coordination, or at least coherence, of approaches to trade, aid, diplomacy and security offer the potential to maximize Canada's influence towards a safer and fairer world. Security, reliable institutions and legal systems impact access to markets and trade opportunities. Addressing global poverty and inequality can also only be achieved through cooperation and partnership beyond the international aid community.

From a federal government perspective, policy coherence across diplomacy, aid, trade and security has advanced in recent years; supported in part by the 2013 amalgamation of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade with the Canadian International Development Agency into a single department; now known as Global Affairs Canada. This amalgamation has provided a framework for a more coherent and cohesive international engagement for Canada in the inter-related realms of international security, development, diplomacy and trade, allowing for greater impact and effective responses.¹

Even as improvements are possible and needed to strengthen policy coherence within government,² it is also evident that other stakeholders in Canada's global engagement – from corporations, to academia to civil society – have a long way to go to advance their coordination, or even shared understanding, on issues affecting their interests. As a result, these stakeholders have had a limited ability to collectively

¹ Canada, Global Affairs Canada, *Departmental Plan 2017-18*, Ottawa, 2017, p. 10. https://international.gc.ca/gac-amc/assets/pdfs/publications/plans/dp-pm/dp-pm_1718_en.pdf

² The 2018 OECD Peer Review of Canada states that the integration of Global Affairs Canada has not clearly resulted in greater commitment to policy coherence in foreign policy. In particular, the report outlines the "omission of a clear statement [...] for sustainable development in Canada's new feminist international assistance policy"² as a missed opportunity to ensure policy coherence across the three branches and improve the impact of Canada's policies in developing countries.

engage or influence government at a cross-sectoral level, or advance cohesive and coherent Canadian international policy, goals and actions.

On November 27-28, 2019, the ***Summit on Canada's Global Leadership*** will bring together diverse voices across sectors to discuss and analyze the gaps, successes and opportunities for a balanced approach to policy coherence. In the Fall 2019 post-election context and nearing the 10-year mark to reach the SDGs/Agenda 2030, this Summit provides an opportunity to understand where Canadian state and non-state actors stand at the nexus of international trade, security, diplomacy, development and humanitarian assistance.

Together, they will contribute to a shared vision for a comprehensive Canadian foreign policy.

Building on Global Affairs Canada's expressed commitment to consultation, discussion and cooperation with non-state experts, academics, private sector organizations, and Canadian civil society organizations (CSOs), the Summit is also a platform to challenge one another to engage in reflexive cross-sectoral analysis of Canada's foreign policy goals, strategies, and actions. Leaders from the security, development, humanitarian and trade sectors will convene to examine possibilities for aligning interests and efforts to improve understandings of the relationships between sectors. Our objective is improved collaboration and impact and more effective responses to international socioeconomic, security, humanitarian, human rights, environmental and development challenges.

The Summit will serve as a jumping off point towards achieving more integrated approaches to Canada's global cooperation priorities and enhance collaboration across sectors and with the Government of Canada.