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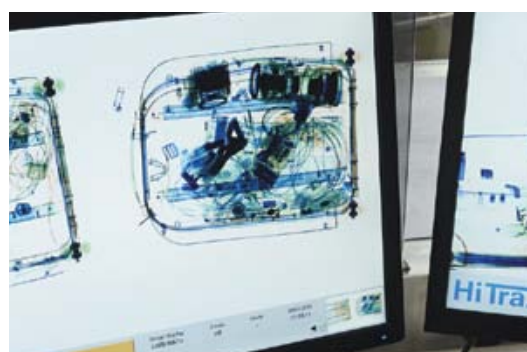
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Jennifer Campbell

## Bright spots in a troubled world

**A** new year is always filled with promise and, after such a year as 2016, for many of us, it also likely brings hope that humanity can do better in 2017.

But amid the turmoil of 2016 — wars, refugee crises, divisive election campaigns — there were good things happening in small but measurable ways around the world. In the spirit of New Year optimism, *Diplomat* brings you 10 global reasons to celebrate. Global literacy is on the rise — rates have increased from 83 per cent to 91 per cent over the past two decades. And though Hillary Clinton failed to smash the world's most impervious glass ceiling, there are encouraging signs for women as well. There are more female entrepreneurs, for example, with rates jumping seven per cent since 2012 in 61 of 83 economies surveyed by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. Finally, maternal mortality rates are falling. Between 1990 and 2015, the number of deaths per 100,000 live births fell by 44 per cent.

There's other good news, too. Climate change is being slowly mitigated, as reported in the journal *Science*, which explains that measures taken to slow the rate of ozone depletion have "put the planet on a path to heal." Some once-endangered plant and animal species are also coming back from the brink. But that's not all: Global poverty and crime rates are down. To see the rest of the list and read about each encouraging sign in detail, see Wolfgang Depner's cover story on page 43.

Also, in our Dispatches section, we have a story by Johannes van der Klaauw, former United Nations High Commis-

sioner for Refugees ambassador to Canada. He has spent time in Yemen and reports on the civil war there and what UNHCR has seen and done in the field. Turning to Africa, columnist Robert Rotberg brings news from the cities, which are growing exponentially. Uncontrolled and unplanned growth will threaten stability on the continent, Rotberg writes.

Up front, columnist Fen Hampson gives us his take on the victory of Donald J. Trump and what effect it will have on global affairs. Hampson writes that Trump's condemnation of NAFTA, the TPP and his views on defence spending are concerning for Canada and predicts global turbulence and a potential recast of the western alliance. He says Trump's victory will mark a new way of doing business between Canada and the U.S.

Also in *Diplomatica*, Costa Rican Ambassador Roberto Dormond Cantú tells us how his small country produces 99 per cent of its electricity with renewable sources.

We have my interview with professor Janice Stein about how she sees 2017 unfolding. Her worries? Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

In our Delights section, books editor George Fetherling brings us titles on Israel and Afghanistan, while food columnist Margaret Dickenson brings us the lively history of Polish cuisine.

Culture editor Margo Roston takes us on a rare tour of the residence of Saudi Ambassador Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy. She saw his pool, exercise room and terrace overlooking the Ottawa River. He also opened up his palatial home to guests at his annual national day event this year.

Wine columnist Pieter Van den Weghe explores the art of blending grapes to make world-class wines. Did you know Dom Perignon was a legendary blender?

Finally, in our Destinations section, we have a feature on the wonders that await you in Bolivia. Ambassador Pablo Guzman Laugier lists the many and varied attractions in his country and invites readers to visit to see for themselves.

Jennifer Campbell is editor of *Diplomat*.

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### Tom Jenkins



Tom Jenkins is chairman of the board of OpenText Corporation and the National Research Council. He is also the 10th chancellor of the University of Waterloo. Jenkins is an officer of the Order of Canada for his contributions to education and innovation in Canada. He is a member of the board of Manulife Financial, Thomson Reuters Inc. and TransAlta Corporation. He is a director of the Business Council of Canada, the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary and a member of the advisory council at the Royal Canadian Air Force.



### Johannes van der Klaauw

Johannes van der Klaauw is the UNHCR representative in Canada. Between 2014 and mid-2016, he was the UNHCR representative in Yemen, and during 2014 and 2015, he served as the humanitarian co-ordinator for Yemen. Between 2010 and 2013, he served as senior resettlement co-ordinator at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva. He was UNHCR's representative in Morocco between 2005 and 2010, headed UNHCR's office in Mashhad, Iran, between 2003 and 2005, and served as UNHCR's senior liaison officer for relations with European institutions at its Brussels office from 1995 to 2003. He has a master's in divinity and comparative religion and a bachelor degree in arts and philosophy from Leyden University in the Netherlands.

## UP FRONT

2016 was a terrible year, but there is still much to celebrate as we head into 2017. Our investigation revealed that life expectancies are rising, infectious diseases and maternal mortality are both declining, crime rates are down, climate change measures are working and females are playing a bigger role in business and politics. See these and more in our story on page 43.





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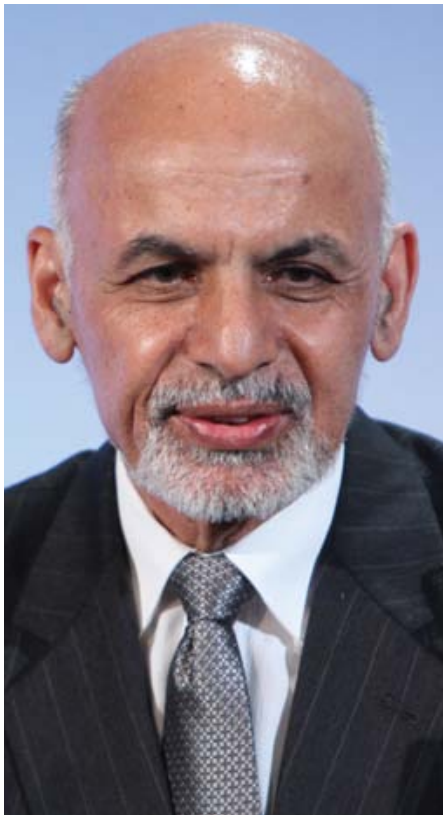
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## Pushtuns aren't stateless

Re: "Strong stateless minorities" Oct.-Dec. 2016

**T**he basic criteria to determine stateless nations are that they do not have a sovereign state of their own, do not form a majority in any sovereign state and are part of one or more autonomist or secessionist movements. None of this is true for the Pushtuns living in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Instead of relying on data provided by James Minahan's encyclopedia, the writer could have researched the facts, such as who has ruled Afghanistan for the last



Afghan President Ashraf Ghani is a Pushtun.

many decades? It has always been a Pushtun, as is the current president, Ashraf Ghani.

Pushtuns constitute about 45 per cent of the Afghan population and the rest are smaller ethnic groups. Pushtuns are clearly the majority in Afghanistan — they are the ethnic group with the highest percentage of population in the state.

Pakistan is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic society that has a rich

cultural mix. The population is made up of different ethnic groups including Pushtuns, Punjabis, Saraikis, Sindhis, Baloch, Urdu-speakers, Brahvis, Kashmiris, Hazaras and dozens of smaller ethnic groups.

Another gross misstatement of fact is that "Pakistan resisted being a federal state," as asserted in the article. The fact is that Pakistan is a federal state having four provinces and, according to its constitution of 1973, all the federating units have sufficient autonomy to run their own affairs. The Pushtuns are scattered all over the country; however, they form a majority in Pakistan's northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP.) There are other ethnic and linguistic groups in the province, but in terms of the majority, the chief minister or the governor of the province has always been a Pushto-speaking person.

The claim that most of the country's Pushto-speaking region remained out of Islamabad's control in the 1950s and 1960s is ridiculous. The people of the KP and Baluchistan voted overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan at the time of partition and since then, there has never been any serious secessionist demand or movement. The claim that a separate Pushtun state is a demand or de-facto reality is not heard of by anybody within Pakistan. Even the international media, which remained engaged in the region for the last three decades, never noticed or came across the movement noted by the writer.

Nadeem Haider Kiani  
Press counsellor  
High Commission for Pakistan

## Kilgour's incorrect points on Turkey cannot go unanswered

Re: "Turkey's Current Crisis" Oct.-Dec. 2016

**T**urkey is hosting almost three million victims from Syria and Iraq, not 750,000 as your writer, David Kilgour, wrote. Turkey has been fighting DAESH since its inception. DAESH [ISIS] started to attack Turkey in March 2014, not recently, as Kilgour alleged. Turkey declared it a terror organization in 2005, way before our allies. We banned 52,000

foreigners from entering Syria and Iraq through Turkey, deported 3,700 foreigners and jailed 1,000 foreign terrorist fighters. Turkey has been in the international coalition since the beginning and pounding DAESH targets in Syria for a long time. As a result of Turkey's active support to the moderate Free Syrian Army, 1,605 square kilometres and 205 towns were freed from DAESH. In addition, approximately 10,000 Syrians returned home. Turkey has captured millions of litres of illicit oil and reported to the UN that 300 kilometres of illegal pipelines were destroyed. Kilgour does not mention the oil trade between DAESH and the Syrian regime.

Another omission is the PKK, a terrorist organization enlisted by Canada. Kilgour claimed Turkey "deliberately increased tension" by omitting PKK statements to end this process since 2014 (senior PKK figure Cemil Bayik said on Dec. 20, 2014: "PKK could organize a new uprising soon.")

Kilgour displays a typical *bon vivant* mixture of Kurds in all countries in the form of "Turks vs. Kurds." But he makes no mention of Turkey's good relations with the Iraqi Kurds, complaints of other Syrian Kurdish groups about PYD/YPG, Amnesty International reports on PYD's ethnic cleansing in Syria or PKK terrorists trained in PYD camps who took part in two bombings in Turkey. Saying that only PYD is fighting DAESH, but omitting why they attack Turkish tanks dealing with DAESH where PYD was not even present, is noteworthy. This myth of PYD's fight against DAESH is now confirmed to be a mirage — reaffirming their hidden agenda against Syria's territorial integrity.

He also portrays the coup attempt incorrectly. Members of Fethullah Gülen secretly infiltrated Turkey's army, judiciary, law enforcement, education, academia and health institutions. They not only infiltrated departments and established their own hierarchy within, but also organized their criminal networks through business and the media. Several investigations have started on compromised entry examinations for jobs in the bureaucracy and authorities had been trying to identify and suspend those who serve in the now-declared terror organization FETÖ (Fethullahist Terror Organization) even before their coup attempt in July. After the attempt, it became urgent to take action against elements of FETÖ. However, competent authorities are carefully considering any claims of wrongdoing. Boards have been established at the offices of prime minister, ministries and governors



who believe they have been wrongfully suspected. Reinstatements and releases also took place in certain cases.

On the ill-treatment allegations, let me remind readers that Turkey has adopted a “zero-tolerance policy against torture” since 2003. Turkey is party to all international conventions for the prevention of ill treatment and is one of the rare countries that has fully abolished the statute of limitations regarding this offence. All detention premises are open to periodic and ad hoc visits by national and international mechanisms. The minister of justice has called for specific allegations to investigate.

Kilgour’s allegation that “Gülen is a handy scapegoat” does not present an accurate picture. The Gülen cult was well armed with 74 tanks, 37 helicopters, 35 planes, 24 fighter jets, 3 frigates and 246 armoured vehicles. Kilgour also failed to mention the 251 killed and 2,200 injured in the first bombing of our Parliaments since its establishment in 1878. (Let us remember the reaction to the terror attack in Parliament Hill.) The Gülen cult’s involvement in this coup attempt then became undeniable by evidence emanating from the judicial process. Obviously, we will await the outcome of the legal processes, as Turkey is committed to the rule of law. But nobody is discussing whether or not this group was involved anymore.

Kilgour mentions that “Gülen has always resisted the coups.” However, public quotes prove the contrary. He could have checked his statements on 1980 and 1997 military interventions, where Gülen supported them to protect his cult’s interests. And his reaction to this coup attempt appeared on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blGA11LYSDk>) where he referred to Turkish people demonstrating against coup plotters, simply saying that “those millions of fools protesting, they think they will succeed.”

These are times when one must avoid building false images and distorting facts. Kilgour, if writing a serious article, should have been aware of the above facts. One thing he is right about, however: The Turkish people demonstrated an unprecedented reaction in resisting the coup. Three weeks after the coup attempt, approximately three million people from all parties, carrying only Turkish flags, rallied in İstanbul in defence of democracy and to protest FETÖ and its coup attempt. Instead of asking Turkey “to learn a lesson,” this is the lesson Kilgour could learn.

Selçuk Ünal  
Ambassador of Turkey



David Kilgour portrayed Turkey's coup attempt incorrectly in his article in the Oct.-Dec. issue, according to Turkish Ambassador Selçuk Ünal.



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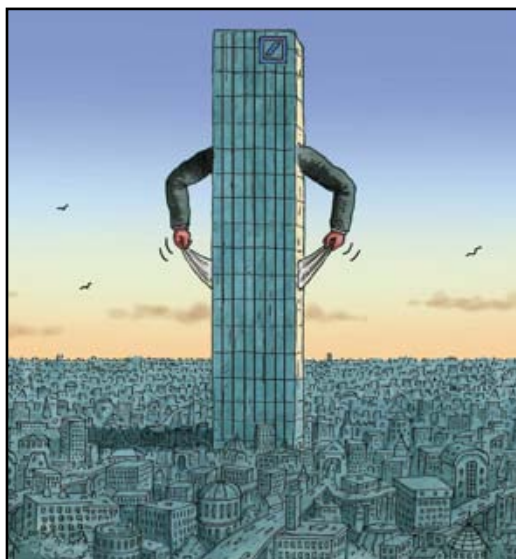
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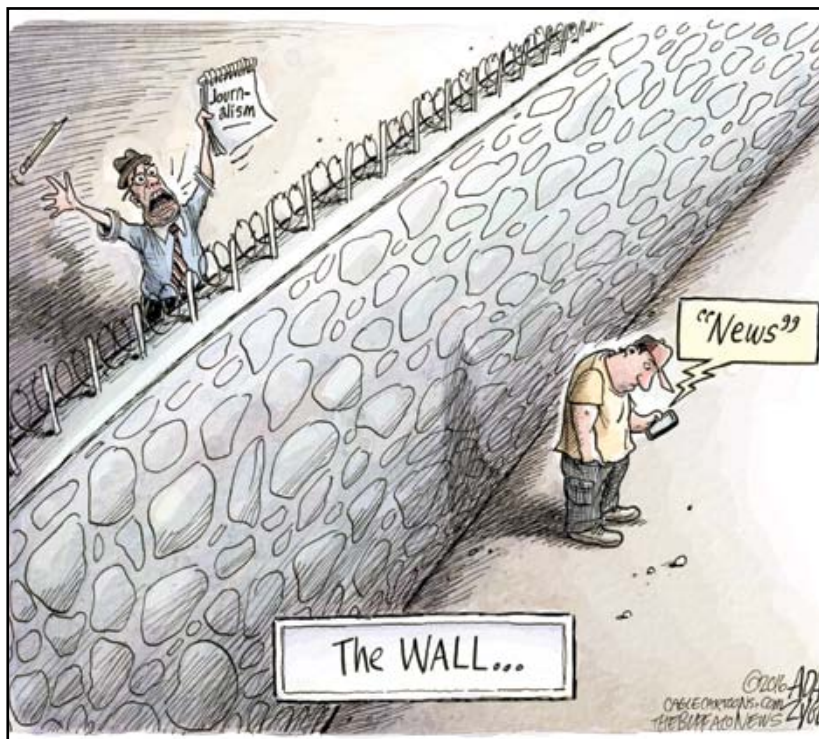


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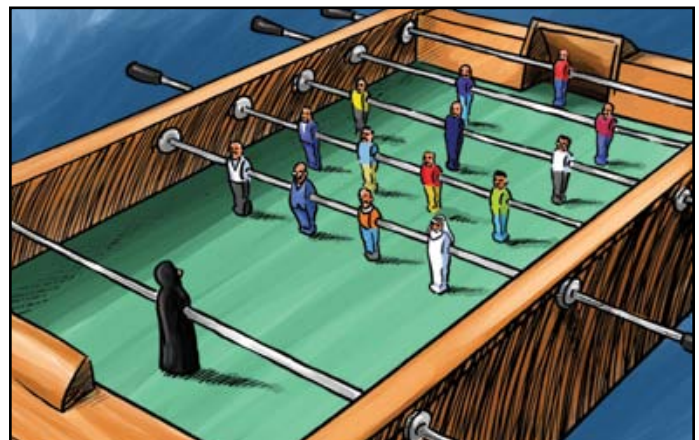
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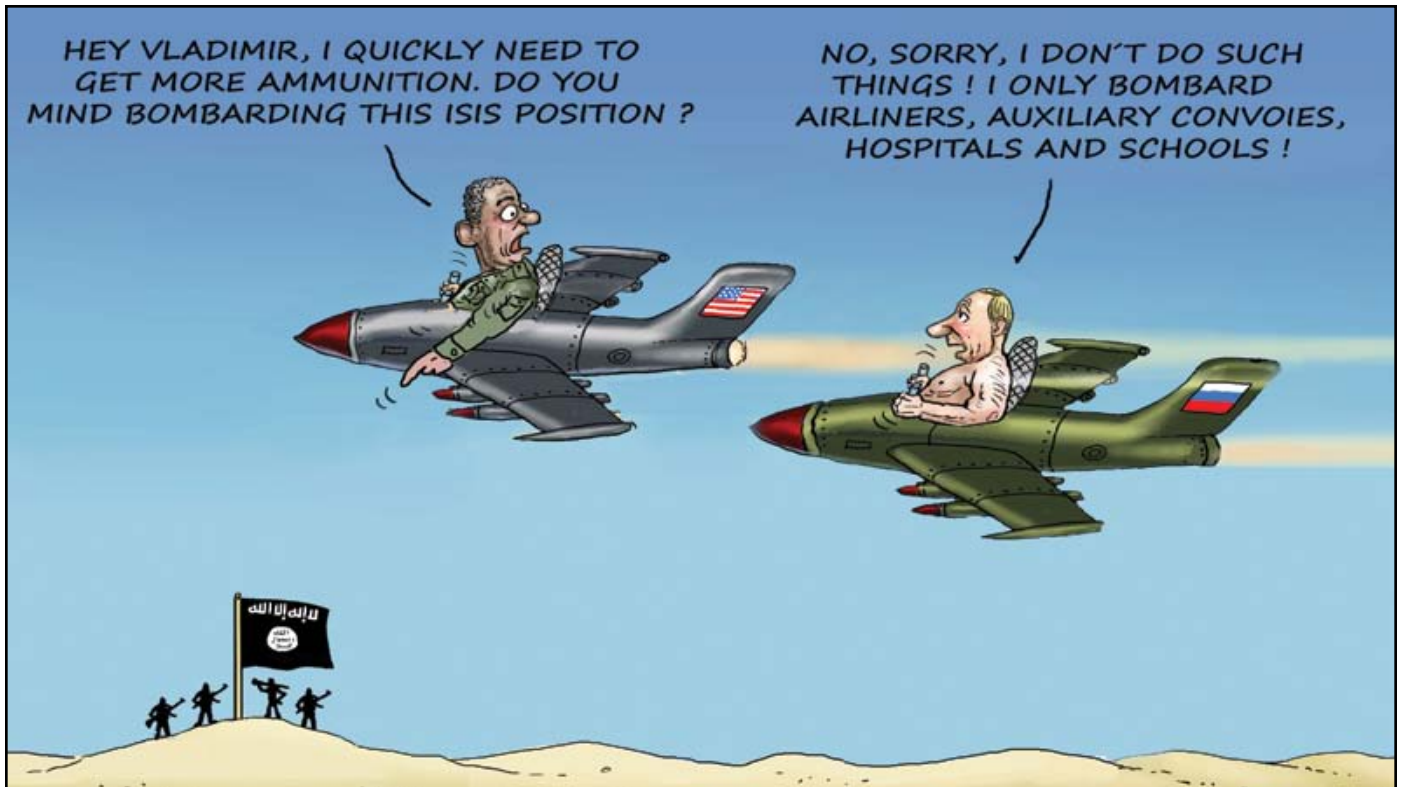


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## The infrastructure boom

## Building a more efficient world

By Rebecca Keller

**A**t its heart, geopolitics is a study of relative advantages. Geographic features can hinder or empower a country in pursuing its imperatives such that, as Halford Mackinder put it, there is “no such thing as equality of opportunity for the nations.” Nevertheless, geography is not deterministic; advances in technology can even the playing field or turn the tides for even the most geographically disadvantaged nation.

Infrastructure offers a prime example of this phenomenon. Throughout history, infrastructure has been central to a nation’s cohesion and economic growth, connecting countries to themselves and to one another. In fact, despite their many bitter differences, the two major-party candidates for the U.S. presidency found a semblance of common ground in the need to update their country’s aging infrastructure.

Though the need for interconnection has been a constant, it has manifested in different ways over time. As the global economy changes with the advent of new technologies, so, too, does infrastructure. Inland rivers, railways and highways have all played a role in increasing the efficiency of moving goods and people through the years, taking advantage of or augmenting existing geographic features. Even seemingly small technological advances, such as the container ship, can revolutionize long-standing modes of transportation. Now, as the fourth industrial revolution unfolds, the demands on infrastructure will shift again, and with them, the global order.

**Rivers: A traditional advantage**

For centuries, inland rivers were the lifelines of nations and empires. Cutting from the top of Minnesota to the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, the Mississippi River is literally central to the United States and its enduring influence in the world. Along with its rich historical and cultural significance, the Mississippi River Basin offers the United States a wide swath of fertile land and navigable rivers, allowing the country an inexpensive means to transport goods within and beyond its borders. Inland waterways also underpinned the success of Northern European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, though, unlike



The Mississippi River is central to the U.S.’s enduring influence on the world.

in the United States, the rivers and the economic competition they inspired divided the continent rather than uniting it.

Regardless of their differences, the waterways in Northern Europe and the United States share an important feature: their average depth. To efficiently carry goods, particularly in the era of large freighters and barges, rivers must be deep — at least 2.75 metres (9 feet) — for craft of more than 500 metric tonnes. The United States and Europe each benefit from rivers deep enough to accommodate large ships, giving them a natural advantage over other countries. For example, because many of Russia’s rivers are too shallow to be of use in transporting goods, and since many of them run to the Arctic — hardly a trade hub — the country has had to rely on railways and pipelines for economic growth. Similarly, Brazil’s navigable rivers are either inaccessible — situated in the seemingly impenetrable Amazon rainforest — or inconvenient flowing to other countries rather than to the coast. Consequently, the country has had to depend on inefficient and capital-intensive highways to transport the agricultural goods it exports.

**Making inroads**

Nevertheless, rivers do not make or break a country’s economic success. With time and the advent of new technology, even

the mighty Mississippi River ceded its central role in U.S. infrastructure to some of the nation’s other geographic and technical features. The rise of rail and road infrastructure redirected the flow of trade in the United States, linking its east and west coast by land and transforming North America’s land-based supply chain. The container ship took the revolution to a global scale and ushered in a new era of international trade over the past 30 years.

Since the ascension of the container ship, the world’s nations have had an alternative avenue to economic growth. They are no longer wholly dependent on their internal infrastructure, but on their access to the global system. For some developing countries, such as China, this change has been a significant boon. Interior infrastructure has long posed a challenge for Beijing, whose major manufacturing powerhouses are concentrated on the coast. In recent years, China has experienced astronomical economic growth, thanks to booming maritime trade. Container ships enable Chinese manufacturers to ship their goods abroad without having to contend with the country’s inadequate transportation infrastructure. But China’s newfound prosperity has not extended much beyond the coast; though maritime trade has linked its urban centres to the rest of the global economy, internal con-



nectivity is still lacking. The Yangtze River, China's equivalent of the Mississippi, plays a crucial role in uniting China's urban and rural communities, an imperative for the central government. To ensure its social and economic stability down the road, Beijing will have to turn its attention to developing and connecting the country's interior.

Meanwhile, Southeast Asian countries, from Vietnam to the Philippines, are following in China's footsteps on the path to economic growth. These countries can take advantage of their small size, populous urban centres and deep-water ports, as well as sustained global demand, to increase their export revenue without fully developing internal transportation infrastructure. The window of opportunity is closing, however, giving way to another phase in economic and infrastructure development.

#### A new era

Today, a growing portion of the economy is based on services and intellectual property, not goods. This sector, which includes digitization and automation, requires special infrastructure. Instead of roadways and waterways, software, for instance, relies on high-speed servers and internet

connections for transport. As software and other intellectual property occupy a larger share of the global economy, the infrastructure necessary to process data will become more important, especially in developed countries. Traditional goods and infrastructure will not become obsolete, obviously. But for countries such as India — which has a large services sector, but still struggles with infrastructural integration, quality and efficiency — this burgeoning industry could be a boon.

In the meantime, countries will keep making smaller adjustments to infrastructure at specific points in the supply chain. Consumers are putting more and more emphasis on fast delivery — something water-based transportation methods have never been able to provide — and the prevalence of e-commerce and on-demand shipping will necessitate changes to the last leg of the supply chain. To ensure that goods can be delivered quickly and efficiently, distribution centres will need to invest in technological improvements such as automation to help limit congestion, which remains a problem even in many developed countries.

Already, new technologies such as drones are being considered to enhance or replace parts of existing infrastructure.

South Korea, for example, has proposed “drone highways” in the air to meet the growing demand for ever-faster deliveries. In addition to physical infrastructure, technological leadership, combined with open and flexible policies, will be equally essential for this kind of development.

Though the means have changed over time, infrastructure — whether water, rail, road or electronic — remains a critical component of a country's economic success, one that some nations come by more naturally than others.

As the global economy continues its evolution from the current era of globalization to one of increased automation and digitization, new developments will supplement existing infrastructure, hindering or facilitating countries in their efforts at economic growth. Even the United States, notwithstanding its geographic advantages, will have to adapt to the new economy to maintain its position as a world leader. Geography may be a constant, but the demands and advantages of infrastructure are not.

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# American Agenda 2017



How the U.S.'s new president handles economic and national security files will profoundly affect the future stability of the global order.



*By Fen Hampson*

**T**he next American president, Donald Trump, faces a daunting set of international challenges on the economic and national security front. How he

handles those problems will profoundly affect the future stability and trajectory of the global order.

His condemnation on the campaign trail of free trade, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), his railing against allies whom he alleged are not carrying their fair share of the defence burden and his desire to “reset” relations with Russia because he believes he can make a deal with Vladimir Putin, have rattled U.S. allies and trading partners. If he acts on his election promises, expect

more turbulence in global economic relations and a reshaping, if not fracturing, of the western alliance.

The rancorous, bruising presidential election whose debates and media coverage were largely devoid of policy substance, focusing instead on reality-style television, personal attacks and invective delivered through social media, damaged both candidates. It leaves a lasting trail of bitterness and vitriol in Republican and Democratic camps that will be hard to repair. It has also left Americans more cynical and deeply divided than before.



### Most dangerous period in decades

That the new president-elect said he would be the “President for all Americans” on election night was conciliatory and encouraging. However, it will be difficult for the new president to rally all Americans behind his policies as he confronts new problems on the domestic and global stage. The U.S.’s “soft power” credentials have been tarnished by the sordid spectacle of the 2016 electoral campaign. Worse still, its enemies, such as Russia and China, are revelling in the fact that the world’s leading democracy is a chaotic house divided. Western allies, Canada included, are even more nervous about America’s ability to lead after eight years of uncertain global leadership under the Obama administration.

In the words of former U.S. homeland secretary Michael Chertoff, who served in the administration of George W. Bush, the world has entered its most dangerous period since the Second World War. Those dangers have been accentuated by an election that catapulted someone with no government experience into the presidency.

The Cold War — despite a number of crises of which the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 was the most dangerous — was a remarkably stable period in recent world history. The nuclear standoff between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, forced them to be prudent and to manage their rivalry in a way that avoided direct armed confrontation. A succession of military confidence-building and arms control agreements contributed to that stability.

The world today is much less stable. Russia and China are challenging the global order by trying to redraw territorial maps and establish new spheres of influence. Terrorism is on the rise, but its shape is also changing. The institutions of the liberal international order that were built at the end of the Second World War — the UN, NATO and the Bretton Woods trade and investment regime — are seriously compromised. Democratic values are also under attack, even in western countries, with the emergence of a new brand of authoritarian leadership driven by chauvinism, racism, nationalist zeal and a desire to close borders. Trump’s stunning political upset is also part of that phenomenon.

### U.S. military and intelligence redesign

Terrorism has a new face. Neither the U.S. government nor other western nations are well equipped to deal with it. Trump proposed temporarily closing — pending “adequate vetting” — U.S. borders to

immigrants, refugees and visa applicants from Middle Eastern and other countries where terrorism is a particular problem. It won’t solve the problem. Terrorism has evolved from large-scale, centrally planned attacks, such as the 9/11 attack by Osama bin Laden on New York and

ing populist nationalist sentiment. Nor is this phenomenon confined to Europe, as Rodrigo Duterte’s rise to power in the Philippines attests.

The world’s autocrats in Russia, China and elsewhere are saying that democracy is in disarray and they offer a better model

**TABLE 2.1** TEN WORST ATTACKS IN OECD COUNTRIES SINCE 2015

COUNTRY	YEAR	ATTACK	DEATHS	INJURIES	RESPONSIBLE
France	2015	Paris attacks	137	368	ISIL
Turkey	2015	Ankara bombings	105	400	ISIL
Turkey	2015	Suruç bombing	33	104	Lone actor (ISIL inspired)
France	2015	Île-de-France attacks	20	22	Local group (al-Qa’ida/ISIL inspired)
France	2016	Nice truck attack	85	300	Lone actor (ISIL inspired)
Turkey	2016	Atatürk Airport attack	50	230	ISIL
United States	2016	Orlando nightclub shooting	50	53	Lone actor (ISIL inspired)
Belgium	2016	Brussels attacks	35	330	ISIL
Turkey	2016	March Ankara bombing	34	125	Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK)
Turkey	2016	February Ankara bombing	30	60	Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK)

SOURCE: INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

2015 was the worst year for terrorism in OECD countries for the 16 years covered by IEP’s Global Terrorism Index 2016. The number rose for the sixth year running, reaching 731 attacks in 2015. This was a 23-per-cent increase from the previous high of 592 in 2004. Twenty-one of the 34 countries in the OECD suffered an attack in 2015. (Chart covers 2015 to July 2016)

Washington, to smaller lone wolf and terrorist cell attacks by individuals who are screened and recruited online through social media and secret websites.

The attack on July 14, 2016, in Nice, France, for example, in which an individual weaponized a delivery truck to mow down a crowd of Bastille Day celebrants, including many young families and children, is an example of this new phenomenon. Terrorists have learned that you don’t need a bomb or guns to kill a lot of people.

The U.S.’s military and intelligence architecture was designed to capture the signature of centrally planned, large-scale terrorist operations. It will have to adapt in order to deal with “low signature” attacks that cannot be intercepted by spies, satellites and drones in the sky. Like the proverbial needle in the haystack, law enforcement officials need to know what they are looking for.

Trump’s threat to shed allies who don’t carry their fair share of the defence burden will only accentuate tensions in the western alliance, if not fracture it. A new group of quasi-authoritarian leaders has come to power in key, frontline states such as Turkey, Poland and Hungary by stoking

and way forward for their citizens. They are manipulating social media and traditional media to promote their cause. One of Trump’s tasks will be to figure out how to strengthen the appeal of democratic values, including strengthening the norms of political accountability and human rights in those countries where commitment and adherence to these norms are wavering. Pandering to dictators and autocrats is not in the interest of the west, or those who aspire to be free.

### The Middle East quagmire

There is no greater mess that the new president faces than in the Middle East, where years of prevarication, indecision, evaporating red lines and failed negotiations have allowed Russia and Iran to establish their own condominiums in the Levant, moves that are deeply unsettling to key U.S. allies in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and Israel. Trump may be more willing than Barack Obama to accept the fact that the ship has sailed in Syria and that its leader, Bashar al-Assad, will not relinquish power as long as he continues to enjoy Russia and Iran’s support.

The U.S.’s diplomatic and military goal



Trump promises to renegotiate NAFTA in his first 100 days in office, or he says he will withdraw from the deal under Article 2205 to secure American jobs.

should be to limit Assad's power and political reach by ensuring that Sunnis in Syria and Iraq have autonomy in their own areas of control. This may be the only way to ensure some measure of fragile stability, which is in Russian and western interests.

The impending destruction of ISIS's caliphate in Iraq also means the west and Iraq's neighbours are going to have to get ready for an exodus of foreign fighters who are going to perpetrate their campaign of destruction elsewhere. Again, American leadership is needed to deal effectively with this threat. It is not the time for the U.S. to hunker down or disengage.

Managing the continued exodus of refugees and migrants from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe will also require U.S. engagement because Europe is clearly not up to the task. If this gnawing issue is not resolved, there will almost certainly be more Brexit-style eruptions in Europe, which is not good for Europe, North America or the rest of the world.

#### U.S.- Canada-Mexico NAFTA renegotiation

Within the first 100 days of his new administration, Trump promises to renegotiate NAFTA or withdraw from the deal under Article 2205 in order to secure American jobs. Congress has a key role on trade policy (and tariffs). It is encouraging that Congressional Republican leader Paul Ryan favours corporate tax cuts as a better prescription for U.S. growth than tariffs. Others in Congress share his view. Trump may well hedge on trade even as he has already hedged on building a wall across the entire U.S.-Mexican border. It is also worth noting that there is almost \$7 tril-

lion in GDP growth to be secured by harmonizing regulations in all three NAFTA countries while eliminating outstanding barriers to trade in goods and services.

Canada should step back and take a deep breath. In the words of Derek Burney, former Canadian ambassador to the United States, "We should do our home-

**TRUMP SAID HE WOULD REVERSE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S DECISION TO VETO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE. IF KEYSTONE DOES GET BUILT, THAT WILL BE GOOD FOR CANADA'S OIL PATCH. BUT TRUMP ALSO SAID HE WILL NOT DEFEND NATO ALLIES WHO ARE 'FREE RIDERS.'**

work quietly, talk to potential allies quietly, discuss privately with the new team as it takes shape, but not panic. Trump's real target is U.S. companies that are moving out, not Canada." However, there will be challenges to Canadian competitiveness at a time when we are losing market share in the U.S. if Prime Minister Justin Trudeau doubles down on carbon to meet Canada's international commitments on climate change and the Americans, under Trump, decide to take a pass. Canada's policies on refugees and open borders

could also be a source of friction with the new administration.

TPP, meanwhile, given the complexion of the new Congress and Trump's own agenda, is clearly dead.

Canada was fortunate that it was not drawn into Trump's line of fire during the election. Trudeau wisely decided to say nothing that would compromise Canadian interests. Trump said he would reverse Obama's decision to veto construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. If Keystone does get built, that will be good for Canada's oil patch. But Trump has also said he will not defend NATO allies who are "free riders." Though Canada is hardly a free rider, Trump will be looking for Canada to boost its defence spending above the slightly more than one per cent of GDP it now spends.

Whatever happens, Canada should boost its efforts to promote trade with markets in Europe and Asia. Ultimately, that is going to be the only way to ensure Canada's future prosperity and reduce its dependence on the U.S. and the vagaries of its politics.

Trump's presidency raises far more questions than it answers. Providence is murky. But his presidency surely promises to transform the way Canada has managed relations with the United States over the past 60 years.

Fen Osler Hampson is co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance. He is a distinguished fellow and director of the Global Security & Politics Program at the Centre for International Governance Innovation and Chancellor's Professor at Carleton University.



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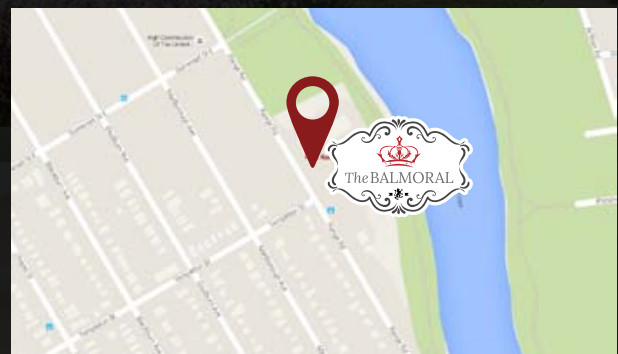
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University of Toronto professor Janice Gross Stein

## Trump and Brexit: 'This is really an attempt to reverse the last 35 years of accelerated globalization'



Janice Gross Stein is the founder of the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto and is the Belzberg Professor of Conflict Management in the department of political science.

She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and a member of the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario. She's written two books, *Networks of Knowledge* and *The Cult of Efficiency* and she's co-authored several books, including *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar*.

Stein delivered the Massey Lectures in 2001 and was awarded the Molson Prize by the Canada Council for her outstanding contribution to public debate. She has honorary doctorates of law from four universities. She makes frequent TV appearances as an international affairs expert.

**Diplomat magazine:** The question on everyone's minds at the moment, and likely for the foreseeable future, is what does a Donald Trump win mean for Canada and the world. What are your thoughts?

**Janice Stein:** Trump's presidency will be enormously disrupting for everyone around the world. Canada, which is the United States' closest neighbour — we export 75 per cent of our goods and services to the U.S. market — shares a continent with the U.S. We share our air spaces and our oceans. There's no country more vulnerable to American disruption than Canada.

Trump will certainly be a disruptive president. It's impossible at this point to assess the level of disruption because there are checks and balances built into the U.S. system, but all the signs suggest

this is a president determined to disrupt many institutions domestically and internationally. This will have an impact on Canada — on trade, on the environment, on competitiveness. If Trump succeeds in lowering taxes in the United States, that will make Canada less attractive to American and other international investors. A Trump presidency could have an impact on virtually every issue in our bilateral relationship, from trade, global supply chains and the environment, to broader multilateral issues where the U.S. becomes less attractive to people and the door opens wide for Canada to attract global talent.

**DM:** So there may be a couple of small pluses in there?

**JS:** There may be several pluses, one clearly being the enhanced capacity to attract global talent, from students, to professionals and skilled immigrants, Canada has just become a much more attractive place for many people as the U.S. diminishes in attractiveness for many. That's a huge plus.

It's also conceivable that, for the first time, the U.S. will be able to break out of the legislative gridlock and move ahead dramatically on big infrastructure spending. That will benefit Canada as well because we have such integrated economies, very large intra-firm trade and interconnected supply chains.

Economists are correct that there's a short-term gain for Canada if the U.S. economy moves into a period of higher growth as a result of the stimulus the new spending provides. Canada always benefits from a growing U.S. economy. But ultimately, how can Trump square the circle of higher spending and lower taxes? How can he avoid very large deficits? The answer to that question is unclear to any serious economist who looks at Trump's plans.

High spending and low taxes is a Keynesian solution in response to a depression or a recession and it makes a great deal of sense. But the U.S. is at close to full employment. That's generally not

the right time to inject a massive stimulus into the economy. Trump is trying to create jobs among voters who have been left behind by the recovery. Infrastructure spending is a very good way to do that because it creates jobs for workers that are not as skilled as high-value manufacturing requires.

The longer-term strategy in the United States under Trump is worrying because it is not sustainable over time. It's always been difficult for the Canadian economy to march out of step with the American economy because we're one-tenth their size. They're so important to us so we, more than anyone, are in the eye of the storm.

Trump is a domestic president. He's not that interested in international politics. To the extent that anyone can say anything about his policies, it appears he will focus largely on domestic issues. That's what interests him.

But international challenges usually come quite quickly. The world is unforgiving. What happens to North Atlantic defence? I doubt he'll go ahead with his more radical plans to reform NATO, but certainly Canada is going to have to increase its defence spending. That will skew other budgetary spending for our government.

How Canada increases that spending, how it gets the maximum benefit for Canadians, how it gets the maximum benefit in terms of spinoff knowledge and skill development is going to be a very large issue for the government. It has to be, given the size of the likely expenditure on defence.

**DM:** You are confident he'll insist on NATO partners increasing their defence spending?

**JS:** I am confident because this isn't a new argument that we're hearing from Donald Trump. President [Barack] Obama, on his last trip to Canada, spoke in his polite way on the necessity for Canada to do more. This request from the United States crosses parties and crosses presidents. I think we've run out of excuses.

**DM:** Anything else Canada should be watching in the context of a Trump win?

**JS:** China is a huge beneficiary of a Trump presidency because it consolidates China's strategic dominance in Asia. Trump signaled his disinterest in engaging and countries are already adjusting — from the Philippines to Malaysia. We'll likely see more of that.

The role that the United States had as

an over-the-horizon balancer is likely to diminish. Trump appears willing to treat Russia as a great power and to look for ways to work with Russia. When Obama first became president, he too looked for a "reset" of the relationship between the U.S. and Russia. The "reset" failed after Putin decided to annex Crimea. This president does not appear to care about the annexation of Crimea.

There could be some real benefits from a better U.S.-Russia relationship. It's conceivable that they will be able to work



Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte has been cozying up to Chinese President Xi Jinping since the election of Donald Trump.

together to de-escalate the war in Syria, to dampen the fighting. Putin may move now, before Trump becomes president, to consolidate Assad's control over Aleppo. That would give President Assad control of the spine of central Syria and the rebels would largely be reduced to a much less significant force in the eastern part of Syria. That would be a strategic defeat for those, like the United States and Saudi Arabia, who have backed the rebels. Such a victory for Assad seems to be imminent and could lead to reduced fighting and diminished refugee flows over the next 18 months.

On the other hand, I think our friends in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland and Hungary are very anxious. They're returning to a world that they know all too well and that did not serve them very well in the past.

**DM:** Marine Le Pen, president of France's National Front, was one of the first people to congratulate Donald Trump on his win. Can you comment on the rise of the

right in Europe? And how did this play into Trump's win?

**JS:** We have to distinguish between the rise of the right and populism. We've long had parties on the right, in the U.S. and in our own country and certainly in Europe. What we're seeing now is very different. We're really seeing a populism that began in Europe in the wake of the global recession, which devastated economies, pushed up unemployment and made inequality within European states and between European states much greater than it was before.

We saw it in Brexit, where it's clear that was a reaction against the established order. In this case, it was a reaction against immigration, globalization, trade — all of these. The Trump election is very much connected to what is happening in Britain and Europe.

The second point that's worth thinking about is that this is not purely, or even largely, economically driven. It's not fuelled by people who are unemployed necessarily or by the poorest of the poor. If you look at the voting data, to the extent that it's reliable, Trump voters were middle-class. Yes, some were from Rust Belt states, but many were not. Most were from higher immigration-receiving areas. This is as much about what's called 'white identity' as it is about economic grievance. It's about a loss of control; it's about reclaiming identity; it's about reclaiming sovereignty. It's very similar in Europe and the U.S.

If we look at Brexit voters, they're very similar to Trump voters; they're generally not in the larger cities, they were in smaller cities and rural areas, they were in areas that have received high levels of immigration relative to the population. We know that Brexit voters who voted yes weren't the poorest and they weren't necessarily from areas of high unemployment either. For Brexit voters, part of this was a worry about the future — that their children will not have the same opportunities and enjoy the same kind of life that their parents did.

There's populism of the left and populism of the right — and this is clearly populism of the right — but it's very distinct from right-wing political movements and right-wing political parties. This is really an attempt to reverse the last 35 years of accelerated globalization, opening economies, deepening trade, mobility, immigration, movement of populations. It's a sense that the world is slipping out of control and away from people and the culture and traditions that they know.



**DM:** Switching gears completely, you wrote a book on Canada in Kandahar. What are your thoughts on Canada's current international engagements and what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion seem to be planning for Canada in terms of peacekeeping?

**JS:** We don't really know yet — they haven't told us where they're going to deploy forces. There's a commitment to peacekeeping in Africa and that's about all we know. And you know, that could take many forms. Certainly in Mali and in the Congo, there are very troubled peacekeeping missions already deployed. In the Malian case, the mission works alongside France, which is engaged in a robust combat operation against Islamic State forces. In the Congo, there's been a long-standing civil war and the peacekeeping forces in the Congo have a really troubled history. The foreign minister and the prime minister are thinking hard about where they will make a difference.

One of the things that is generally understood is that peacekeeping operations have been less than successful in the last decade. There have been abuses of human rights by peacekeepers, they've been poorly led, they've failed to protect civilians — these are long-standing issues in UN peacekeeping, but they've gotten worse and it's worth thinking about whether Canada could not make a greater contribution by thinking hard about leadership in New York, on peacekeeping and on improving logistics and communications. So we'll have to wait and see.

In the context of a Trump presidency, he's made a pretty strong attack against NATO members who don't do their share and don't spend proportionally to their size. And Donald Trump isn't the first person to make that allegation. When President Obama was in Ottawa, he was complaining about our level of defence spending as well. What we'll see in the future, one way or the other, is an increase in military expenditure in Canada. It's not going to be enough to say we've deployed forces; we're going to have to make a more robust increase in defence spending. That's difficult when defence spending is competing with other priorities.

The new president south of the border has a very different set of priorities than the Trudeau administration. And, if the past is any guide to the future, because we're small and they're big, it tells us that we adjust our priorities — not the other way around. That's just life when you're small and someone else is very, very big.

**DM:** We've heard of them, of course, but can you give a couple of examples of UN peacekeepers breaching human rights?

**JS:** They brought cholera to Haiti and did not accept responsibility for four years, and engaged in rape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Secretary-General has acknowledged that the rapes occurred.

**DM:** If you're looking broadly at 2017, what are the three places you're most concerned about in the world?

**JS:** I worry a lot about Europe. There's a constitutional referendum in Italy, there are elections in France. Europe is struggling to preserve the gains that it's made and to preserve the cohesion that has served it so well over the last 60 years. A destabilized Europe, a divided Europe, is in nobody's interest. I would pay a lot of attention to Europe. It's a very important part of the world.

Asia matters to everybody and we're going to have to see what the Trump administration does with traditional alliances. But if there is a growing sense that the United States will be less present, less engaged, less reliable as a guarantor to Japan, to South Korea, to other Asian allies, that's a potentially destabilizing factor.

You can never ignore the Middle East because if you try to ignore the Middle East, it doesn't ignore you. The war in Syria is likely to continue. What difference, again, a Trump presidency will make is yet to be seen. Is there opportunity to work more closely with Russia, because [Trump] clearly has reached out to Russia? Will there be opportunities there to move forward and at least diminish the scale of the violence that is rippling out over the whole world?

Secondly, what happens when Mosul falls and Raqqa falls? Both of those cities will fall in 2017 and the Islamic State will lose its control over this territory. It will become again a networked organization that launches attacks of violence throughout Europe as well as throughout the Middle East. And how does the Trump administration, as well as others in Europe who are now deeply preoccupied with their own problems, respond to that?

**DM:** Other than Iraq and Syria, can you talk about what you think will happen in the Middle East over the next year?

**JS:** The other country I would watch is Egypt. Egypt is a hugely important country. It is the largest Arab country by far — 90 million and growing — so its size dwarfs everyone else.



The poster features a red maple leaf at the top with a menorah inside it. Below the leaf, the text reads "CANADIAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE". Underneath that is the "CANADA 150" logo. The text continues: "A TRIBUTE TO CANADA 150", "A special exhibition that explores, explains and celebrates Jewish life in Canada.", "Challenges, Achievements, & Contributions", "Details to be announced in early 2017". At the bottom, it says "THIS PROGRAM IS PRODUCED BY COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND PHILANTHROPISTS." and "information: 2017cje@gmail.com". The background of the poster shows a faint image of a crowd of people.

The government of President Abdel Fatah el-Sisi has just done something that no other president of Egypt has done, which is float the Egyptian currency. The currency is slowly losing its value against international currency, which means that imports will be more expensive and a lot of them are things that Egyptians rely on — many are living at subsistence level. So it's cooking oil, gas, flour — these are absolutely critical to survival in Egypt and if the prices go up, there could be riots. Under [Anwar] Sadat, there were riots in the streets over the diminution of subsidies. This [floating of currency] is what the International Monetary Fund has insisted upon as a condition of a loan to Egypt, so that it reduces its deficit, but it's a very risky strategy and it's potentially destabilizing. It's not inconceivable that this government could be overthrown as a result of — again — street protests against rising prices of staples.

**DM:** How do you assess Yemen, Israel and the Palestinian conflict?

**JS:** Yemen is in the middle of a terrible civil war. The Obama administration was supportive of the Saudi crown prince, and especially the king's son, who is pursuing the war. We'll have to see whether the Trump administration continues that policy. Saudi Arabia would feel very isolated were American support to be reduced. That might, in fact, enable a quicker end to the civil war, but again, so much in the Gulf, more broadly speaking, depends, in the larger sense, on the United States as a security guarantor. These next 15 months are going to be absolutely critical as the [new administration] figures out the new world order.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is deadlocked. It has remained deadlocked. I see nothing in the international environment or in the domestic politics of either country that would lead me to think that the deadlock is going to be broken in any way.

**DM:** What are your thoughts on the new world orders we keep reading about with respect to China and Russia?

**JS:** I'll break that up into littler pieces. I think the liberal international order that the United States built after World War Two is stressed because it was built



Canada is not immune to populism: The election of Rob Ford as mayor of Toronto was a populist protest.

on stable currencies, open borders and international trade, which really accelerated at the beginning of the 1980s. But history shows us globalization increases and then decreases, that it's not a linear movement forward. Often it's interrupted by major wars and we have 30- or 40-year breaks. That's what happened from 1914 to 1945 and that's what stopped the last great wave of globalization.

So the popular protests that we're seeing in the United States and all across Europe tell everyone that leadership has to be more focused on domestic issues, has to be more attentive right across the economic and social spectrum, has to think much harder than it has about the domes-

tic costs and benefits of trade. Populism has happened in Canada, too. We are not immune. The election of Rob Ford, the mayor of Toronto, was a populist protest.

It tells government that it has to invest more significantly in helping the segments of the population that cannot cope well with the pace of technological change, as jobs shift out of the industrial sector to the post-industrial sector. These haven't been high priorities of government in the last 30 years. There have not been serious investments made. And the hope was that globalization would lift all of those [segments of the population affected by globalization], but trickle-down affluence has not really happened. And any government in the liberal, post-industrial world would be foolish not to pay attention to these issues.

Do these stresses and strains in the liberal order provide opportunities for Russia and China? Of course they do, because when governments turn inward because they're forced to turn inward, that provides space for Russia and China.

**DM:** Are we witnessing the decline of the U.S. as an undisputed superpower? Will we see it in our time? What happened in the U.S. to cause the shift in power?

**JS:** I don't think the United States is a declining superpower. The U.S. still has the most dynamic economy in the world and the strongest military by far. It remains the youngest developed country in the world. China is aging much more quickly than the United States and the gap between them will grow.

I think we may be witnessing the beginning of the end of the liberal international order that the United States and its allies built at the end of the Second World War. The first phase of that, a rules-based international order, was developed from 1948–49 until the late 1970s and promoted inclusive economic growth and modern welfare states in the developed world. There was also an inclusive poli-

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tics that tried to bring in those who were marginalized. Those outside the developed world, however, did not do as well.

That period ended with stagflation, a period of inflation, but also very low growth. Out of that came the first assault on that international order, led by [then U.S. president Ronald] Reagan and [then-British prime minister Margaret] Thatcher that sparked the most intense period of globalization that we've known. They created a neo-liberal international order — global free trade, deregulation of the economy, integrated global supply chains and increased mobility of labour that produced huge gains in global economic growth, especially in Asia. China lifted at least half a billion people out of poverty, if not more, when it became a factory to the world. At the same time, however, the U.S. lost at least one million manufacturing jobs to China during this period, and inequality grew within developed economies. The financial crisis in 2008 brought this period of accelerating globalization to an end. The roots of Trump's presidency really begin in the great recession of 2008. His is an America-First strategy, a visceral opposition to global free trade and a much more protectionist agenda.

Long before the election, trade had begun to diminish as a share of global economic growth. For the first time this past year, global trade did not grow as a proportion of the world economy. Trump has been talking about an issue that is already in the past. The challenge for people who are excluded from good jobs in the American economy is not trade, but technology. Trump's protectionist instincts could well signal the beginning of the end of the neo-liberal international order. This is not the first time in history that globalization has retreated. It has always moved in fits and starts.

**DM:** What should Canada take on as its role in the world at this point?

**JS:** We tell ourselves we're a trading nation, but we're not, because 75 per cent of our exports still go only to one market. That's not the pattern of a global trader. Only four to five per cent of our exports go to China. What can we do to improve our performance as the United States becomes more protectionist?

First and foremost, Canada can never, ever ignore the United States. This is not the first time a prime minister will have to deal with a president whose views are very different from his own. Canadian

prime ministers have generally been good at not giving unnecessary offence when their views differ from those of a president, although there have been exceptions. On the other hand, it is very important — and I think our prime minister will be very good here — that we continue to promote our values, that on issues that are important to Canada globally, such as climate change, we speak our mind.

I think it is important to remember that this was a very close election. Trump does not have a strong mandate to embark on a radical program. Many of the people who voted for him did so for economic reasons and because government doesn't work for them anymore. That's an important message for every government in the developed world to hear. How do we make our governments more responsive?

Finally, a very sobering lesson is the terminal danger of smugness. Elites often think that they know better than everyone else and dismiss those who disagree with them as uneducated or uncultured, as unwise or unworthy. The kind of disrespect that some liberal elites show voters who disagree with them is a terrible mistake. ▣



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# Ghana Medical Help: A 21-year-old's vision

By Olivia Knight

In 2010, Ghana Medical Help (GMH) founder Kelly Hadfield went to Ghana for the first time. She was volunteering in a hospital in the rural north, which, like most hospitals in the area, lacked even the most basic medical supplies and supported more than 88,000 people with a single physician.

While she was there, she befriended a young boy who was suffering from a snake bite. What the hospital staff couldn't have known was that, despite the appearance of recovery, the boy had internal bleeding. Without even the basic medical equipment required to monitor his vital signs, the staff had no idea what was happening when the boy suddenly became critically ill. As a result, he died. Ghana Medical Help exists today because one devastated, stubborn 21-year-old woman, passionate about health equity, resolved to do whatever she could to change that outcome for future patients.

What began as Hadfield's personal mission to provide those basic medical supplies to a single hospital has developed over the past six years into a comprehensive charitable organization, driving a movement to improve health outcomes for millions of people around the world. Part of the success GMH has experienced is owed to Hadfield's research background. A master's in science graduate, she recognized the importance of using a research-based approach to find solutions that would fulfil genuine needs in the community and evolve as those needs change.

As a result, the organization conducts quarterly assessments to identify and target the most urgent medical equipment needs and review GMH's impact at each of its 14 partner hospitals, which together serve more than two million people. Since GMH's intervention began, partner hospitals report decreased maternal mortality, decreased infant mortality, increased patient attendance, decreased patient re-attendance, increased staff morale and other key indicators of an improved capacity to deliver effective health care.

The medical equipment donation program is an incredibly important part of operations today, but GMH has become much more. To monitor and maintain the equipment donations, GMH recruited



Dr. William Gudu uses a GMH-donated vital signs monitor to take the blood pressure of a new mother at the Bongo District Hospital in Ghana.

volunteers — called “GMH ambassadors” — from each hospital. Initially intended to train the GMH ambassadors on proper use, monitoring and repair of donated equipment, the program expanded when they requested more medical training. The organization now conducts quarterly educational workshops for the GMH ambassadors, on topics such as neonatal resuscitation, trauma care and respiratory distress. The workshops are conducted using a train-the-trainers model, so the ambassadors return to their respective hospitals and provide the training to fellow staff members and those in remote health centres. The program has also created a novel network among the hospitals, promoting collaboration and enabling them to share knowledge and resources with one another.

Beyond supporting the hospitals, the organization turned its sights on surrounding communities. These communities experience some of the country's highest levels of poverty; families survive on the equivalent of less than \$45 per year. When people lack a sufficient income to provide their families with food or shelter, it's easy to see how employing good health practices can cease to be a priority. To address this, GMH launched the Sheep

Health and Economic Empowerment Project (SHEEP). Beneficiary families receive one pregnant sheep and keep the first three offspring, which they can sell at a very high price. The fourth ewe born is returned to GMH and donated to a new beneficiary family. In this way, the program quickly becomes self-sustaining and provides rural families with a stable source of income. To qualify, families agree to attend bi-monthly workshops that are one part asset-management training and one part public-health education, covering topics such as family planning, malaria prevention and alcoholism.

Equip, educate, empower. These initiatives reflect GMH's approach to changing the future of global health. We aim to supply health care professionals and communities with the tools and resources they need to function; provide education to improve the quality of health provision and practices; and engage the community to establish local ownership over the programs, ultimately eliminating the need for external intervention. Together, these actions can create the sustainable change 21-year-old Hadfield was seeking.

Olivia Knight is Ghana Medical Help's Canadian director of operations.



# Creating community with an international buffet

**M**ore than 25 diplomatic missions provided food for an international buffet at Rockcliffe Park's Grand Village Fête to mark the 90th anniversary of the village's creation.

"It was a very special event for the community," said Liz Heatherington, who co-ordinated the diplomatic portion.

Heads of mission from the German, Thai, Japanese, Indonesian, Turkish, Czech and EU embassies attended, some of them with their children. German Ambassador Werner Wnendt offered greetings and his wife, Eleonore Wnendt-Juber, made German cheesecakes.

Japanese Ambassador Kenjiro Monji and his wife, Etsuko, brought four staff members, two of whom wore national dress. The staff showed attendees each step in the making of sushi.

The ambassador said participating in the event made perfect sense to him.

"As residents of Rockcliffe Park village for nearly 60 years, successive ambassadors of Japan have always enjoyed the village life," he said. "It was, therefore, natural and important for me to participate in its 90th anniversary event to express our gratitude to the village for its service and to share with other residents some Japanese cuisine, which was registered as 'intangible cultural heritage' by UNESCO in 2013. I was also delighted to be able to taste proud dishes of many of



The Japanese embassy participated in Rockcliffe's 90th anniversary celebration. From left, chef Ichiro Fujii, his wife Ayumi Fujii, Etsuko Monji and Japanese Ambassador Kenjiro Monji.

my colleague ambassadors in the village."

Turkish Ambassador Selçuk Ünal and his wife, Lerzan Kayihan, brought their daughter and UAE Ambassador Saif Helal M. Alshehhi brought all of his children.

"The children had fun," Heatherington said of the event that featured readings, a magic show, music and dancing. "It really was a big family event."

Irene Knöpfel Nobs, wife of Swiss Ambassador Beat Nobs, attended with one staff member and Heatherington said she "masterminded" all of the Swiss pastries on offer. The EU ambassador took chocolates and EU coffee mugs and the Belgians brought sweets. The Chilean and New Zealand missions donated wines, which

will be served at another event, when the organizers have the appropriate licence. Organizers did, however, buy Chilean and New Zealand wines for the event as a nod to those generous donations. The Thai embassy, meanwhile, had a nice display with much-loved Thai food.

"All of the diplomats were so enthusiastic when asked to participate," Heatherington said. "The Chinese group — we had asked them for maybe 100 pieces of finger food and I think they tripled or quadrupled that. We had an excellent turnout of food and because it was raining, people stayed in the community room."

Those who came brought food donations for the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre whose food bank is underfunded.

"The idea was to bring the community together," said Aly Abdulla, who chaired the event. "Despite the fact that it was pouring rain, we had 400 people and I think the international buffet was a really big draw." He said the other draw was a love of their neighbourhood.

"Our community has very few fences — it's generally pretty open — and you don't need the security they have in other parts of the world. That's what makes it nice. I think we all appreciate that." ■

*Do you know of a diplomatic mission that does good works in Ottawa? If so, email your idea to [editor@diplomatonline.com](mailto:editor@diplomatonline.com).*




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# Costa Rica: Leading the world in renewable energy



**FIRST NAME:** Roberto

**LAST NAME:** Dormond-Cantú

**CITIZENSHIP:** Costa Rican

**PRESENTED CREDENTIALS AS  
AMBASSADOR:** Feb. 18, 2015

**PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS:**  
Entrepreneur, corporate  
executive, attorney,  
communications professor.

and respecting a healthy and balanced environment as a basic human right. In fact, these goals are cornerstones in our foreign policy and they are a constitutional mandate. Our country promotes a safe environment for all human-

ity, where the benefits of development can be shared equally by all.

This principle has been evident for decades in the way our country has protected our natural resources and developed our energy sources towards a sustainable model. For example, since the mid-20th Century, our nation has followed a strategy to produce electricity generated

by renewable sources of energy. Looking back, this extraordinarily intelligent decision was creative, courageous and visionary, since, at that time, climate change was not considered an issue.

In the 1970s, the government established a national parks system, which was designed to conserve the extraordinary biodiversity of the country's key ecosystems. Our ancestors were progressive enough to generate fiscal resources that would help maintain and expand our forests. This decision was taken in a time when there was immense pressure from the international market to concentrate instead on raw materials and commodities.

During the 1990s, Costa Rica decided to strengthen the protected areas by developing an innovative financial mechanism to promote forest conservation and recovery. For the first time, a developing country created a tax on fossil fuels to maintain and enhance its forests and related ecosystem services. The program of payment for

People often ask me, why do Canadians and Costa Ricans get along so well? Answering this question could be an essay in itself. However, it is clear that our nations share many of the same values and aspirations, including democracy, rule of law, diverse and open societies, protection and advancement of human rights, constant investment and improvement of education, peace promotion and the pursuit of happiness for our people. And we mustn't forget our mutual love of enjoying nature responsibly.

Canadians and Costa Ricans love and treasure their natural surroundings. That is why we salute the Canadian authorities' position with respect to protecting the environment and taking action against climate change. We know that together Canada and Costa Rica will work closely towards common environmental goals and aspirations. We both strongly believe that urgent action on climate change is required.

Canada and Costa Rica have shown global leadership and determination in challenging and urgent topics such as climate change. As parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), both countries are working towards the most effective and inclusive manner to achieve measurable and verifiable progress.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that so far this year, during the three high-level meetings between our ministers and vice-ministers of foreign affairs, Costa Rica and Canada have been working towards the foundations for an ambitious bilateral collaboration agenda.

Costa Rica is committed to promoting



Last year, 99 per cent of Costa Rica's electricity was generated by renewable sources, including hydro, solar, geothermal and wind power.

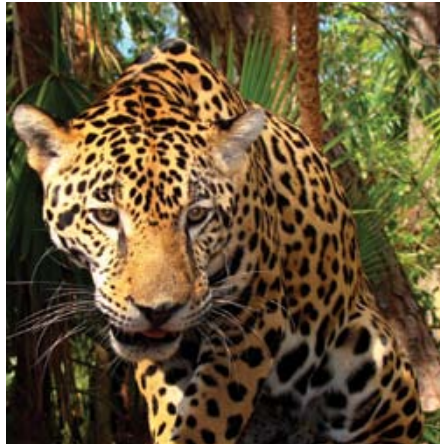


environmental services (PES) has operated for 20 years and has allowed the country to invest millions of U.S. dollars from the public budget, along with international loans and sources of international co-operation. In 2015, this tax generated \$27 million that was turned over to the national forest-financing fund. That total was more than 50 per cent of the total revenue received by the fund that year.

As a result of these policies and initiatives, we are the only tropical country in the world that has reversed deforestation. For example, the country's forest coverage has increased from less than 30 per cent in the 1980s to 54 per cent today. And, in doing so, we have protected 6 per cent of the globe's biodiversity that inhabits Costa Rica, including such animals as jaguars, sloths, ocelots, pumas, toucans, the tiny blue jeans poison dart frog, the white-headed capuchin monkey and hundreds of birds.

This intelligent and progressive approach towards natural conservation has also paid off by influencing sustainable business practices. Today, Costa Rica is a world leader as an ecotourism destination, an industry that generates more than five per cent of our GDP, surpassing \$2.7 billion US.

Last year, 99 per cent of our electricity was generated by renewable sources, which include hydro, solar, geothermal and wind power. This year, we launched the Reventazón Hydro Project with an installed capacity of more than 300 MW (the country's largest infrastructure project and



Costa Rica protects six per cent of the globe's biodiversity that inhabits the country, including the jaguar.

the region's second largest after the Panama Canal). This shows Costa Rica's clear and continuous commitment to renewable

energies and this shall lead us on a path to 100 per cent renewable electricity.

Costa Rica wants to lead by example, and maintains its political commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2021, as a legacy to the world and the generations to come. However, the scale and global nature of this challenge require efforts and collaboration from the international community.

Canada and Costa Rica both strongly believe that solidarity can change the world for the better and leaders in both countries know that climate change action is a complex feat that requires joint efforts.

Historically, Canada and Costa Rica have worked in many areas, including peace, disarmament, trade and investment. We have supported each other in strategic decisions and processes.

Friends and partners should talk more often and continue supporting each other in those areas of common interests and values. In working towards our common goal of protecting our world from climate change, both countries have valuable experiences to share.

So let's continue our dialogue at the highest level, let's continue leading by example for the good of our countries and for the good of humanity. ▣



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# Croatia: Inviting Canadians to invest and visit



By Marica Matkovic

Croatia is the youngest member of the European Union; we became its 28th member in July 2013. And last year, we celebrated our 25th anniversary of independence. But historically speaking, Croatia is an old European country. The first Croatian king was crowned in 925. Today, Croatia is a modern and open middle-European country with lots to offer in fields such as business, investment, culture, gastronomy and tourism.

In 2015, 15 million tourists visited Croatia to enjoy its natural beauty, try delicious food, taste exquisite wines and see its cultural heritage. This number is even more notable if you consider that Croatia has only 4.3 million inhabitants. Meanwhile, estimates for 2016 show it will be a record year, with more than 16 million tourists choosing Croatia as their vacation destination. The number of tourists from Canada is rising every year, too, by an average of 20 per cent. In 2015, almost 100,000 Canadians visited Croatia, and that number jumped by 26 per cent between June and August 2016. Just in those three months, almost 60,000 Canadians visited Croatia. And still, we welcome more.

Commodity exchange between Croatia and Canada, however, has room to grow. In 2015, exports from Croatia to Canada totalled more than \$41 million and exports from Canada to Croatia amounted to \$17 million. Croatia's main exports were medications, electrical transformers and aluminum foil. Croatia's main imports from Canada were medications, dried leguminous vegetables and aircraft parts.

One of the reasons for our modest bilateral trade is the significant geographical distance between our countries. For that reason, we believe there may be more promise in the exchange of services.



Split is a major tourist attraction in Croatia.

Croatia has a strong information technology sector and innovative companies that deliver unique and useful solutions for government-to-citizen, business-to-business and business-to-consumer platforms.

In terms of Canadian exports to Croatia, it is important to stress that Croatia, as part of the EU, is part of a market of 500 million customers. Croatia supported the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement because we saw benefits for both sides. Investments would be most beneficial for Canadian companies in Croatia, especially in the highly profitable tourism sector. There are a growing number of international tourists and more and more demand for specific kinds of vacations, including those centred around golf, wellness, health tourism and adventure, so there is much room for new investments.

Croatia offers interested investors a investment projects from several sectors. One example is the building of an LNG terminal on the island Krk, a project that the EU considers crucial for Europe.

Croatia is interested in attracting a substantial share of investment in greenfield projects, manufacturing and export-oriented activities as well as high-value prospects that will create the basis for long-term continuous economic growth. Foreign investors can invest in private, public or public-private projects.

The Croatian Chamber of Economy promotes private projects and for that reason, it has created an extensive investment database. With respect to public projects, their investment plans include infrastruc-

ture projects such as the reconstruction, modernization and development of sea-ports, airports, other transport and trade integration projects, tourism, greenfield and brownfield projects and energy projects, including the development of an existing hydro power-plant system.

Attracting foreign direct investment is one of our most important strategic goals and priorities. To create an attractive legal framework and competitive business environment, a comprehensive set of measures and legislative amendments has been successfully implemented by the Croatian government. In addition, the Agency for Investments and Competitiveness has been established to facilitate investment from potential investors. As a result, Croatia has one of the most attractive Investment Promotion Acts in all of Europe.

By constantly improving the investment climate, and adopting agreements to avoid double taxation with more than 50 countries, Canada included, Croatia offers many incentives to potential investors. These include tax incentives, incentives for employment and education, and additional incentives for capital expenses and labour-intensive investment projects.

In close co-operation with Canadian-Croatian Chamber of Commerce (in Toronto), the Croatian Embassy in Canada tries every day to help Croatians export to the Canadian market. Canadians can already buy chocolates and sweets from Kraš; *vegeta*, our famous condiment that is a mixture of salt, spices and vegetables; Croatian wines and hard liquors such as *rakija*; and footwear by Borovo. Conversely, Canada's Algoma Central Corporation purchased five ships from Croatia's Uljanik Grupa Shipyard. Canada's Vermilion Energy Inc. got the licences for the extraction of several different hydrocarbons and Canada's Dundee 360 and Dalmi Resorts, together with Croatian partners, invested \$750 million in building tourism facilities in the Dalmatian cities of Primosten and Cavtat.

We welcome more such investment and look forward to realizing our mutual potential.

Marica Matkovic is the ambassador of Croatia. Reach her at [vrhotta@mvep.hr](mailto:vrhotta@mvep.hr) or (613) 562-7820.



# Iraq needs Canada for trade and its 'know-how'



By Abdul Kareem Toma M. Kaab

**D**iplomatic relations between Iraq and Canada were established in 1961 and have fluctuated over the years. During the years preceding Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, relations between both countries were normal. However, they were interrupted after the invasion as Iraq became subject to strict international sanctions pursuant to resolutions of the UN Security Council. Following the fall of Saddam's regime in 2003, mutual relations resumed and have been characterized by co-operation.

Canada has helped Iraq rebuild its institutions, especially the democratic ones. Canada also trained many representatives of various Iraqi governmental and legislative institutions, including those involved in democracy promotion, enhancement of human rights and good governance for the new federal and decentralized Iraq. Iraq's laws related to its provinces were amended after a visit to Canada by a delegation of members of the provinces' committee in Iraq's parliament.

When it comes to trade, an agreement for economic and technical co-operation between Iraq and Canada was ratified in 1983. In accordance with this agreement, a joint ministerial committee was established. This committee is supposed to hold meetings in Baghdad and Ottawa for the purposes of implementing, monitoring and revising this agreement. However, the committee stopped working after 1990 when Saddam invaded Kuwait. Both governments agree this agreement is still valid.

When it comes to trade, Canada sent exports worth \$98 million to Iraq in the first quarter of 2016. Included in this were agricultural products, especially wheat, industrial and chemical materials as well



Wheat is a major Iraqi import from Canada.

as metals, wood, cars, spare parts for cars and planes and medical materials and equipment. Iraq was a major importer of Canadian wheat — it imported about one million tonnes between 2009 and 2010. However, this number dropped last year to just 250,000 tonnes.

Clearly, trade between Iraq and Canada has a lot more potential. Both countries must try harder to develop mutual economic and commercial relations.

First, we must promote communication that will enhance relations in all respects, especially economic ones. This may include establishing a commercial office in Baghdad to foster and develop economic co-operation between both countries and revitalizing the work of the Canadian embassy in Baghdad by enabling it to issue entry visas to Iraqis, especially for business people, instead of forcing them to get visas in neighbouring countries, as these procedures normally take a long time. We should also re-establish direct flights

between Canada and Iraq to promote the bilateral exchange of passengers and commodities.

Iraq and Canada should reinvigorate the 1983 agreement on economic and technical co-operation by establishing a joint committee that would hold yearly meetings in one of the two capitals. The aim of this committee would be to improve communication, promote trade and encourage and foster investment in both countries.

The two governments should also work toward establishing project priorities, financing them, providing guarantees for investors and facilitating transactions.

The Canadian private sector can also play a role by investing in Iraq. In fact, Iraq provides hundreds of investment opportunities in important sectors such as infrastructure, medical, industry, agriculture, transportation, housing and oil.

Iraq is a promising field for investment today and in the future. It badly requires a rebuilding of much of its infrastructure, which has been destroyed by wars, sanctions and blockades. Most recently, ISIL's occupation of some Iraqi cities has led to huge devastation.

On a positive note, the Canadian Business Council successfully organized a joint conference in April 2016 with the union of Iraqi businessmen in Toronto. This conference led to the signing of some commercial and industrial agreements between business people in both countries.

Canada can also help Iraq with its technological know-how in certain fields, including agriculture and oil and gas. Helping Iraq develop capacity in these fields would be welcomed. Canadian industry can also benefit from resources in Iraq, such as manpower, technical experience and raw materials.

After the change of the Iraqi regime in 2003, Iraq and Canada became close allies. We share the same democratic principles, respect human rights and stand together in fighting international terrorism. However, to promote and strengthen relations between the two countries, we must work harder.

**Abdul Kareem Toma M. Kaab is the ambassador of Iraq. Reach him by email at [ambassador@iqemb.ca](mailto:ambassador@iqemb.ca) or by phone at (613) 236-2629.**

# Palestinians are eager for more Canadian commerce



By Nabil Marouf

**P**olitical issues play a more critical role in the success of the Palestinian economy than many other places. Since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, the Palestinian National Authority has strived to build a quasi-independent economy that would constitute the basis for an independent Palestinian state, as part of the internationally recognized and agreed-upon two-state solution.

Our efforts range from encouraging trade, exports and foreign investments to establishing air and sea ports, supporting industries, including fisheries and agriculture, and building modern infrastructure and telecommunications facilities.

However, these aspirations to build an independent economy eventually hit the wall of outdated signed protocols that go back to 1994. These then-interim protocols were intended to organize economic and trade relations between the Palestinians and the Israelis for a specific period of time.

The Palestinian economy has fared well despite challenges, yet it received a heavy blow with the eruption of the second *intifada* in September 2000. Since then, our economy has experienced severe structural shocks and adjustments.

Ensuing efforts to improve our economic performance bore short-lived fruit as three consecutive offensives on the Gaza Strip — the last was in 2014 — put further stress on an already struggling Palestinian economy. The deterioration continued in 2014, particularly in Gaza, which has been suffocating due to a 10-year siege. The average yearly economic growth exceeded 8 per cent between 2007 and 2011, but declined to 1.9 per cent in 2013, reaching -1 per cent in the first quarter of 2014.

There are several explanations for this



Olives are a major Palestinian export.

poor economic performance, including the closing of Israeli borders and crossing points, withholding tax revenues and dependency. Closings are the most detrimental. They increase transaction costs and cause losses in competitiveness. It has been estimated that transaction costs for the Palestinian economy are about 30 per cent higher than in the rest of the world. The dependency of Palestinian trade on the Israeli economy is another crucial reason for our slow economic performance. Almost 90 per cent of Palestinian exports are destined for Israel, and 70 per cent of Palestinian imports are from Israel, leading eventually to distorted prices and reduced competitiveness.

Despite this dire situation and the constraints, the Palestinian economy has been resilient, thanks to relatively successful efforts by the government to strengthen its fiscal position. In addition, Palestinian institutions are still able to function efficiently and deliver basic services, albeit with the much-appreciated assistance of donor countries and the United Nations. The private sector has also adapted to the changing needs of consumers as consumption and expenditure patterns have

changed. Nevertheless, there's no question that the economy remains a victim of the lack of conclusion to the Middle East peace process.

The Canadian-Palestinian relationship is a positive one, particularly in the fields of security and governance, which Canada supports with a \$300-million program. In terms of trade, relations with Canada remain modest. In 1999, Canada and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, concluded a joint Canadian-Palestinian framework on economic co-operation and trade. Nonetheless, this framework wasn't sufficient to boost trade and investment between the two countries.

For example, eight years after its signing, Canada's exports to our territories were worth \$5.2 million US, and Canada imported \$243,000 from us. Canada has agreements with 18 Palestinian companies and hopes to be working with 80 companies by 2018, according to Canada's former representative in the territories. Our main exporting commodities to Canada are stone, olives, fruit, vegetables and limestone, while imports are food, consumer goods, construction materials, petroleum and chemicals.

The door is open for foreign investments with attractive incentives and numerous regulations and policies to encourage and protect investors. In addition, the Palestinian leadership hasn't spared any effort to provide security, stability and a peaceful environment and is still hoping to conclude a peace agreement that would ensure stability and prosperity for the whole region.

In sum, one can say that Canada-Palestinian trade and investment levels do not reflect our positive and friendly relations. There is much more room for improvement and perhaps the first step is reviving and updating the Joint Canadian-Palestinian Framework for Economic Cooperation and Trade, which was signed on Feb. 27, 1999. In addition, producers of Canadian food, wood, construction materials and petroleum are invited to explore our unlimited opportunities in a virgin land.

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This young girl goes to school in Burkina Faso. Global literacy rates for youth aged 15 to 24 increased from 83 to 91 per cent over two decades.



# 2017: Reasons to rejoice

2016 was a difficult year, so why should 2017 be any better? We dug deep and came up with 10 reasons to celebrate this year.

*By Wolfgang Depner*

*"The time is out of joint — O cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right!"  
Hamlet Act I, Scene V*

**S**hakespeare's dithering prince Hamlet speaks these words after meeting what he believes to be the spirit of his father, who urges him to avenge his "foul and most unnatural murder" by killing his usurping uncle, that "incestuous, that adulterate beast" sitting on the Danish throne.

With these words, Shakespeare captures the resentful disgust through which Hamlet sees the world, a world turned upside down by events beyond his comprehension and control.

We can certainly find considerable evidence that we live in a world of conflict and chaos. Several freedoms, including freedom of the press, are under attack. The global economic climate is anxious as economies everywhere are struggling. Democratic norms and institutions are failing.

Russia has returned to the global stage as an expansionist authoritarian power under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, who has enabled and protected the likes of Syria's Bashar al-Assad. Turkey — which many once considered exemplary for its adoption and promotion of democracy in the Middle East — has imprisoned thousands of people, including political prisoners and journalists, after a failed military coup last year. Long gone are the days when Turkey had no problems with its neighbours.

While China has become a more constructive agent on the international stage — see its role in fighting climate change — it also continues to militarize and seize territory in the South China Sea. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was responsible for 16.1 million refugees in 2015, with 53 per cent coming from three countries: Somalia (1.1 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million) and Syria (4.9 million). Non-state actors such as the Islamic State, the global spread of the Zika virus and urban decay, among other issues, only add to this scenario.

Various real-life characters have since offered their own versions of Hamlet's complaint, perhaps none more successfully than incoming U.S. president Donald J. Trump.

His promise to "make America great again" was premised on the perspective that the natural order of things is "out of joint." Trump's campaign undeniably tapped into a nostalgic longing for the past, but as British writer L.P. Heartley reminds us, the "past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." And if so, they did things worse than today. Life around the world today is more peaceful and prosperous than it has ever been and the list that follows tries to capture this reality by highlighting genuine achievements that might be lost amidst all of the doom and gloom that currently prevails. As such, it is a form of counter-programming to the nightly news. This commentary is not blind to certain realities. But it challenges their breathless, exaggerated presentation on the evening news.

As Swiss-born writer Rolf Dobelli notes, commercial newscasts affect the brain as sugar affects the body — "they are delicious, digestible and ultimately highly damaging." Our brains, he writes, disproportionately respond to "scandalous, shocking, personalized, loud, quickly changing stimuli" and demur when confronted with information that is "abstract, complex and deserving of interpretation."

Worse, when we are consistently confronted with one kind of information — and only one — we are increasingly likely to believe that information at the expense of any other kind. We tend, as Dobelli writes, to confirm our own biases. Or as U.S. philosopher-historian-linguist Noam Chomsky might say, we can choose to live in a world of comforting illusions. The more general our illusions, the more comforting and comfortable they become.

That is not to say that the current complexity of the world is merely in our heads. It has become more difficult

to make sense of the world. During the Cold War, the ideological frontlines were simple, straightforward. No such obvious certainties exist today. As the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard said, the "grand narrative has lost its credibility." Yet understandably, people still yearn for it. But if the world is more complex, it is also improving, as the list below shows.

True, the gap between the descriptive and normative remains appreciable. In 2000, when the United Nations adopted its Millennium Development Goals targeting eight areas — poverty, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, disease, environment and global partnership, "they seemed Utopian," *The Economist* noted. More than 15 years later, it might be hard to completely disagree, as

admiring the past, is strongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence, even on persons endowed with the profoundest judgment and most extensive learning."

But mainly, Pinker argues, it is the effect of a journalistic and intellectual culture that revels in sensationalism. Hamlet, as it turns out, had reasons to be resentful. But Hamlet's fate also teaches us that apparitions can easily lead to self-destruction. Hamlet believed the ghastly images of his dead father to be real. We should know better than to believe in conjured up ghosts.

## 1. Decline in global poverty

It is not easy to count the global poor. Definitions of poverty vary among and across societies.



According to the World Bank, 1.9 billion people — 37.1 per cent of the global population — lived on less than \$1.90 a day in 1990. By 2015, that number was down to 702 million — 9.6 per cent of global population. These businesswomen are beneficiaries of the Grameen Bank project for poverty eradication.

only about half of the goals have been met.

Yet would anyone openly dare to dismiss those huge achievements and so many others of recent decades? As Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker writes, the current prevailing gloom is partly "the result of market forces in the punditry business, which (favour) the Cassandra over the Pollyannas." Partly, it arises, says Pinker, from human temperament, quoting 18th-Century philosopher David Hume. The latter observes that the "humour of blaming the present, and

A leading definition by British sociologist Seebom Rowntree describes poverty as the state in which "total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency." But this *absolute* definition of poverty fails to capture what sociology calls *relative* poverty.

As British sociologist Peter Townsend argued, every society enjoys an average bundle of resources that consists of certain activities, amenities and conditions. "Poor" people accordingly lack these re-



sources. Different societies, in turn, value different bundles. While indoor plumbing might be a measure of affluence in many corners of the developing world, people in the developed world take it for granted and treat its absence as a sign of poverty.

All this said, several (but hardly all) metrics point towards a decline in global poverty, admittedly with uneven progress.

According to the World Bank, 1.9 billion people (or 37.1 per cent of the global population) lived on less than \$1.90 a day in 1990. In 2015, it was 702 million (or 9.6 per cent), a drop of 74.1 per cent over 25 years.

The final United Nations report on the Millennium Development Goals finds similar figures. Whereas nearly half of the population in the developing world lived on less than \$1.25 a day, that share dropped to 14 per cent in 2015. Globally, the number of people living in extreme poverty (as the UN defines it) has declined

from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2010. According to the report, most of the progress occurred since 2000.

So what accounts for this decline? The World Bank says world trade is to thank, a point *The Economist* echoed in its Oct. 1 issue, in which it reported that “(export)-led growth and foreign investment have dragged hundreds of millions out of poverty in China, and transformed economies from Ireland to South Korea.”

Millions of people around the world, led by academic critics and by such non-academic critics as Canadian Naomi Klein, have challenged these claims in citing globalization as a source of economic dislocation and decline in developed and developing nations.

This space lacks the scope to settle this dispute. But if supporters of globalization acknowledge its deficiencies, critics also implicitly recognize its positive effects when they acknowledge the emergence of

sophisticated consumer societies in Asia and elsewhere that rival, even exceed, their western counterparts in some areas, such as transportation and digital access.

## 2. War-related deaths drop

As of this writing, the estimated death toll from the Syrian Civil War approaches half a million. Millions more have fled the war-torn country for Europe and beyond in stoking the worst refugee crisis in human history. And many of those who remain now live among the ruins of cities such as Aleppo, a synonym for unbridled savagery in the pursuit of geopolitical gains, and a continuum of local and foreign powers, both large and small, show no sign of ceasing their struggle.

This carnage and confusion, amplified through continuous, occasionally cynical media coverage, have created the impression of a world that is descending into a murderous maelstrom of chaos and



Between 1945 and 2011, the global death rate from war, such as the one pictured here in Syria, had fallen from 22 per cent per 100,000 to 0.3 per cent. In 2014, it had risen to 1.4 per cent, but that's still a lot lower than in the Cold War years.

conflict. Yet what Joshua Goldstein, professor emeritus of international relations at American University, and Pinker, have called the “bloodiest conflict in a generation” actually appears as an aberration in what has been a steady decline in the number of war-related deaths.

As Goldstein and Pinker write in *The Boston Globe*, “for nearly two-thirds of a century, from 1945 to 2011, war has been in an overall decline.” During this period, the global death rate from war had fallen from 22 per 100,000 to 0.3 per 100,000. Yes, we have since seen this rate rise to 1.4 in 2014, according to Ali Wyne of the Atlantic Council. Yet this figure is “far lower than the average that prevailed in the Cold War,” a period that Wyne says witnessed “numerous civil wars and genocides, and the nuclear sword of Damocles came close to dropping on many occasions.”

While these facts might be cold comfort to the people in places across the Middle East and elsewhere, they remind us that human existence itself has become more peaceful. Pinker makes this point in his ground-breaking 2011 book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, in which he writes

that “though it may be hard for news readers to believe, since the Cold War of 1989, organized conflicts of all kinds — civil wars, genocides, repression by autocratic governments, and terrorist attacks — have declined throughout the world.” This quantitative decline, which Pinker describes as the “New Peace,” has “proceeded in fits and starts” and nobody would predict that it would be a long, never mind perpetual, peace. “There will certainly be wars and terrorist attacks in the decades to come,” he writes, “possibly large ones.”

Yet it would be equally “foolish to let our lurid imaginations determine our sense of the probabilities.” Writing in the *New York Times* with Colombian president and eventual Nobel Peace Prize winner Juan Manuel Santos in September, Pinker finds organized violence has become the almost exclusive domain of a zone that stretches from Nigeria to Pakistan, an area containing one sixth of the world’s population. “Far from being a world at war, as many people believe, we inhabit a world where five out of six people live in regions largely or entirely free of armed conflict.”

### 3. Fewer infectious disease deaths

Despite warnings about diseases such as Zika and Ebola, humans are living longer, healthier lives, as advances in medical science and governance push down death figures from infectious diseases. This point does not deny their past, present and potential effects on entire populations. Malaria, tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS remain “humanity’s deadliest foes,” as *Nature* reported in 2014.

This terrible trio continues to evade vaccine-finding efforts and collectively claims millions each year. HIV/AIDS alone was responsible for an estimated 1.1 million deaths in 2015, according to the United Nations’ anti-HIV agency, UNAIDS. HIV/AIDS has killed tens of millions since 1981 when health officials reported the first case and more than 36 million people currently live with the disease. And as David M. Morens and Anthony S. Fauci of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases write in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, infectious diseases remain a “perpetual



HIV/AIDS remains the leading cause of deaths in Africa, but new infections have dropped from 3.2 million in 2000 to 2.1 million in 2015, thanks to a greater awareness of preventative measures.



challenge” whose “unpredictability” and “explosive global effects” have “influenced the course of wars, determined the fate of nations and empires, and affected the progress of civilizations.” Humans, in other words, “will always confront new or re-emerging infectious threats” that may turn entire societies upside down.

Yet, recent statistics also offer reason for genuine optimism. According to the World Health Organization, global deaths from malaria and TB respectively declined 48 per cent and 47 per cent between 2000 and 2015, with much of the drop occurring after 2000.

The news from the front in the fight against HIV/AIDS is also positive.

While the HIV/AIDS pandemic remains one of the most serious global health issues and the leading cause of death in Africa, many statistics point in the right direction. New infections dropped from 3.2 million in 2000 to 2.1 million in 2015, as prevention measures such as condoms gained popularity. HIV/AIDS-related deaths dropped from 1.5 million in 2000 to 1.1 million in 2015, a 36-per-cent decrease since the peak of 2005.

Increased availability of affordable antiretroviral drugs has been one reason for this decline in deaths. In 2000, fewer than a million people who carried HIV could access them. In 2015, the drugs were available to 17 million people.

Problems remain, however. While new infections have significantly declined since the 1990s, this decline has flattened out among adults over the last five years and the rate of new infections has been rising in some areas, including Russia. Its despotic government, which *The Economist* described as “immune to reason,” stigmatizes local sufferers, obstructs international agencies offering aid and indulges in dangerous conspiracy theories that dismiss HIV/AIDS as a hoax. Most people who live with the disease or risk contracting it, lack access to prevention, care and treatment. A cure, despite various pronouncements by prominent figures such as philanthropist Bill Gates, remains out of reach for the foreseeable future.

Yet, for all its grim aspects, the trajectory of HIV/AIDS is consistent with other trend lines that point towards a healthier future. The literature describes this development as the epidemiological transition. Christopher Dye, of the World Health Organization, says that it begins primarily with a fall in the death rate among children, thanks to vaccination and other efforts. (In the 1970s, fewer than five per cent of the world’s infants received basic

lifesaving vaccines; now more than 80 per cent do).

“As a higher proportion of children survive to adulthood, parents choose to have smaller families,” Dye says. (Decline in fertility lags behind the decline in mortality). Over time, Dye notes, chronic, but non-infectious diseases common among adults begin to replace the infectious diseases common to childhood, with polio being the most prominent example.

This epidemiological transition, long ago completed in the developed world, is still unfolding in many parts of the developing world, perhaps too slowly for many. But to paraphrase an optimist, Martin Luther King Jr., the long arch of history is bending towards health.

#### 4. Declining crime rates

Statistics in the United States and elsewhere in the developed world show that violent crime rates have been plunging for decades.

Granted, media accounts suggest otherwise. Consider Chicago. According to *The Chicago Tribune’s* total for 2016, the city recorded 668 homicides by mid-November 2016. The figure for all of 2015 stood at 492. By August of 2015, the total number of people killed in Chicago, the third largest city in the United States, had exceeded the figures for the two larger cities — New York City and Los Angeles combined.

These trend lines have left the impression that crime is surging. Yes, projections for 2016 called for a 13.6-per-cent rise in



The average person in a large urban area is safer walking on the street today than he or she would have been almost any time in the past 30 years, according to the New York-based Brennan Center for Justice.

the murder rate in the United States, with Chicago estimated to account for almost half of this spike. Overall, the murder rate in the United States has risen by a third since 2014, with Chicago, Baltimore and Houston accounting for most of this spike.

But once you zoom out of these hotspots, the larger picture is different. As the New York-based Brennan Center for Justice, a non-partisan think-tank, concluded in a report released in the fall of 2016, overall crime levels in the United States remain at “historic lows” with “reports of a national crime wave” explained as “premature and unfounded.” The average person “in a large urban area is safer walking on the street today than he or she would have been almost any time in the past 30 years,” the Brennan Center found.

Statistics from other sources underscore

surging crime rates. In fact, this “surge” occurred just two years after police-reported crime had reached its lowest point since 1969.

Yes, some evidence suggests that this general decline might be heading in the opposite direction. But life — at least in the developed world — is very safe. So how can we explain the historical decline in crime?

Sociologists generally mention four factors: more police on the streets, aging societies, abortion (unwanted children are more prone to crime) and economic conditions. Notably, sociologists stress that higher incarceration rates and tougher prison sentences have generally failed to lower crime rates.

Pinker perhaps sums it up the best when he writes that the historical decline of crime rates has “had multiple causes, and no one can be certain what they were,

## 5. Environmental progress

Recent reports about accelerating climate change and dwindling biodiversity make it all too easy to despair about the state of the natural environment and the eventual fate of humanity. Despair, however, is not a luxury in light of the stakes. And if action is the imperative of our age, we can look back upon a number of recent environmental improvements that may serve as inspiration.

The first is the state of the Earth’s ozone layer protecting planetary life from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation emanating from the sun. Scientists, starting in the 1950s, found that the human production of chlorine-containing chemicals — chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) — was thinning this protective layer.

Fears that ozone depletion could cause serious health and environmental harm eventually inspired the Montreal Protocol



The giant panda has been taken off the endangered species list by the International Union for Conservation of Nature thanks to successful breeding and conservation efforts under way since the mid-1980s. They do, however, remain “vulnerable.”

this point. Figures from the National Victimization Survey administered by the U.S. Justice Department recorded 18.6 incidents of violent crime per 1,000 people in 2015. In 1993, that figure stood at 79.8 incidents per 1,000 people.

Figures from Canada paint a similar picture. While police-reported crime rose 12 per cent in 2015 compared to 2014, this figure was 31 per cent lower than a decade earlier. Canadian crime rates had risen briefly, but from a low base, a point missed by headline writers who spoke of

because too many things had happened at once.”

That is not to say that crime — violent or otherwise — is becoming a thing of the past. Some experts have warned that the recent uptick in violent crime might signal a turning point. Technology-driven crimes, such as online fraud, hacking and other cyber crimes as well as sexual crimes, have also seen an increase, with the latter being the result of a changing culture and growing comfort among women to come forward.

of 1987, which phased out CFCs following the discovery of a massive hole in the ozone layer above the Antarctic in 1985.

More than three decades later, these efforts have helped close the hole, according to research published in *Science* this summer.

“For years, [the Montreal Protocol] has slowed the rate of stratospheric ozone depletion,” and now there are signs that the ozone abundance over Antarctica has begun to increase.”

As lead researcher Susan Solomon, of



the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), told the British media, “(we) can now be confident that the things we’ve done have put the planet on a path to heal.” But if *Science* expects the ozone layer to recover, this process will unfold “very slowly,” because CFCs can linger in the atmosphere for more than 50 years.

Also on the mend are a number of plant and animal species, thanks to tools such as the U.S.’s Endangered Species Act, passed in 1973. It has protected more than 1,300 plant and animal species and a recent study found that 99 per cent of protected species have avoided extinction. Robbins’ cinquefoil, a plant found in New Hampshire several years ago, became the first to be taken off the U.S.’s Endangered Species List. Also off the list are birds such as the American peregrine falcon and the American bald eagle.

The United States also recently removed most humpback whale populations from the endangered species list. “Today’s news is a true ecological success story,” Eileen Sobeck, assistant administrator for fisheries at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, told the *Guardian*. “Whales, including the humpback, serve an important role in our marine environment.” Other whales are struggling. Consider the North Atlantic right whales and North Pacific right whales. Only several hundreds of each remain, according to the International Whaling Commission.

Biologists have also changed the status of the animal that has become the very symbol of various environmental conservation efforts — the giant panda. As of April 2016, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) took the cuddly animal off the endangered species list.

Successful breeding and habitat conservation efforts under way since the mid-1980s have raised worldwide panda numbers to 1,864, a figure the World Wildlife Fund for Nature has called “hugely encouraging.”

Nevertheless, pandas, along with African elephants and polar bears, remain “vulnerable” and the IUCN has noted that climate change could destroy a third of the giant panda’s habitat, thereby undoing the diligent work of recent decades.

These improvements must also be considered within the context of the following prediction by the WWF: If current trends continue, two thirds of fish, birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals will have disappeared in what would be the largest mass extinction event since the disappear-

ance of the dinosaurs.

That said, the Montreal Protocol and the recovery of some species show what is possible.

## 6. Rising life expectancy

According to British medical journal *The Lancet*’s, global life expectancy at birth rose from 61.7 years in 1980 to 71.8 in 2015. The journal finds that, overall, life expectancy globally rose in 188 of 195 countries, and, in many, at faster than anticipated rates.

Let us now acknowledge a place where

this trend is heading in the wrong direction: Syria. According to *The Lancet*, the average lifespan of a Syrian man dropped by 11.3 years to 62.6 years between 2005 and 2015, with war being the main cause for the decline.

Syrian infant mortality, not surprisingly, also rose by 9.3 per cent between 2010 and 2013. Overall, research by the journal reveals that the Syrian civil war has reduced Syrian life expectancy by three months each year. These numbers themselves represent a larger point: Death



Global life expectancy at birth has risen from 61.7 years in 1980 to 71.8 years in 2015 and rose in 188 of 195 countries surveyed by *The Lancet*.



from interpersonal violence and war has risen across the Middle East between 2005 and 2015.

But if this fact confirms the negative perception of the region, it also obscures a larger point: The Middle East represents an exception to the rule of rising life expectancy across the globe, as described above.

So what accounts for these developments? We have already highlighted two reasons: The decline in war-related deaths in most corners of the world and what the report called “marked reductions” in mortality from HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious diseases through various improvements in immunization, sanitation and other factors. Children, not surprisingly, are those with the most gains in life expectancy. According to the study, 5.8 million children under the age of five died last year, a drop of 52 per cent since 1990.

But reasons for concern also exist. Deaths from non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and stroke, bear responsibility for seven out of 10 global deaths. According to the study in *The Lancet*, titled “Global Burden of Diseases,” rising rates of obesity, hypertension, alcohol and drug abuse threaten to overthrow much of the progress in recent decades.

Progress, in other words, has remained somewhat patchy and subject to reversal.

## 7. Maternal deaths decline

As previously mentioned, this list invites two possible interpretations. On one hand, it can be read as a reminder of progress. On the other hand, it also records failure by pointing to the problems that remain. This forces us to praise a concept of less failure, but it’s failure nonetheless, in fields where failure is deadly. Consider the global state of maternal health. The number of women who died from childbirth and pregnancy-related causes almost halved since 1990, according to a report by *The Lancet*, a British medical journal. It found that the worldwide annual number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births fell by 44 per cent between 1990 and 2015, from 385 to 216. Skilled health personnel assisted more than 74 per cent of all births in 2014, an increase from 57 per cent in 1990.

But what counts as progress also means that hundreds of thousands of women — most of them in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia — still die each year while being pregnant or giving birth. Almost 290,000 suffered such a fate in 2013, according to a United Nations estimate.

The ambiguity of this accounting also appears when we hold it up against the United Nations’ stated Millennium Development Goal of reducing the maternal mortality rate by two thirds, an ambition that has obviously gone unfulfilled. Yet, it would be equally disingenuous to dismiss what has been achieved.

Today, millions are alive and would not be if governments, non-governmental organizations and others had not invested their money, emotions, efforts and energy.

One such notable actor was Canada under the Conservative government of

Stephen Harper, who was an instrumental figure behind the Muskoka Initiative. Named after the 2010 G8 meeting site where it was announced, it committed a total of \$7.3 billion US of new and additional spending towards maternal, newborn and child health. Under the initiative, Canada committed \$1.1 billion in new funding and agreed to maintain \$1.75 billion in existing funding for a total contribution of \$2.85 million over five years. As of 2015, Canada had disbursed more than 97 per cent of that funding.

More work needs to be done. Access



Global maternal mortality rates fell by 44 per cent worldwide between 1990 and 2015.





The number of illiterate youth declined from 170 million to 115 million between 1995 and 2015.

to maternal health remains uneven and varies according to the wealth of a region. Whereas women living in high-income countries face a 1-in-4,900 chance of dying during child birth, these odds worsen to 1 in 36 for women in sub-Saharan Africa. Wendy Graham of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who co-ordinated the report, said it best in her remarks to *The Guardian*: "Lots of people worked very hard and progress was achieved. Like many things in health, in the progress that the average [person] receives, invariably there are some left behind."

## 8. Rising literacy rates

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are dead, long live the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Announced in 2015, the SDGs set out to shape global development until 2030 by following in the footsteps of the MDGs. But if the MDGs came across as a relatively concise catalogue of eight goals, the SDGs sprawl across 17 primary targets and 169 associated targets.

"Moses brought 10 commandments down from Mount Sinai. If only the UN's proposed list of Sustainable Development Goals were as concise," *The Economist*

wryly observed months after their passage. This goal inflation has accordingly invited questions about their overall achievability. Yet beneath all of their bloat, the SDGs highlight what analysts from various academic corners have long recommended.

Consider the following: According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the global literacy rates for youth (aged 15 to 24) increased from 83 to 91 per cent over 20 years. The number of illiterate youth declined from 170 million to 115 million. While it might be difficult to discern the immediate effects





Female entrepreneurship is on the rise. This woman, Janet Roukwakwa, a former prostitute, received seed money from a UN program to start a group called "Wimana" that has opened a bar and restaurant. She employs other former prostitutes, giving them a better chance in life.

of these efforts, studies show that literacy is one of the strongest drivers of economic progress, prosperity and environmental protection.

As a 2013 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report notes, "educated people are more likely to understand, support and create solutions that ensure the development of sustainable cities and communities, as well as to use energy and water more efficiently and recycle household waste."

UNESCO further says studies have identified increased literacy through education as "an essential foundation of peace, tolerance and a healthy civil society."

Literacy also raises the social status of women. Various scholars, including American philosopher Martha Nussbaum, have identified literacy as a tool in the quest for political emancipation.

As always, these improvements vary across regions. While UNESCO reports that 60 per cent of all countries and areas with available data have eradicated youth illiteracy, literacy rates in several West and Central African countries remain at less than 50 per cent.

## 9. More women in business

Female entrepreneurs to the rescue. That could be the headline over a growing body of evidence that shows that female business leaders are playing an increasingly more important role in the fate of their respective societies and the global economy at large. Let us first acknowledge that the rate of entrepreneurship among women is lower than among men for reasons that sound entirely familiar. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, women face more "social and cultural constraints" than men. Such obstacles include higher levels of domestic responsibility, lower levels of education, a lack of female role models, fewer business networks in their communities, a lack of capital and assets, lower status in society and a culturally instilled lack of assertiveness and confidence in their abilities to succeed in business. "These factors may prevent women from perceiving, as well as acting on, entrepreneurial opportunities," write the authors of *Women's Entrepreneurship*, published by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GME), which studies the nature of entrepreneurship. Surveying 83 economies, the authors find a wide range of what they

call early stage entrepreneurship activity (TEA) rate, a percentage that measures the portion of the adult population (18 to 64 years) that plans to or has recently started a business.

According to this research, female entrepreneurship rates range from a high of 41 per cent in Nigeria and Zambia to a low of 2 per cent in Suriname and Japan. In 10 economies, women are as likely as men, or more likely than men, to be entrepreneurs. Overall, female entrepreneurship rates have increased by 7 per cent since 2012 among 61 out of 83 surveyed economies, a desirable development.

As the World Bank shows, female entrepreneurs contribute substantially to economic growth and poverty reduction around the world. Research from the Kauffmann Foundation also shows that businesses with female executives take a more nuanced view of risk, are more creative and have a higher likelihood of success. Or put another way, businesses need women to succeed and the economy needs women, especially in the developing world, where female participation helps ease poverty. This reality, in turn, points towards a broader point: inclusive societies are productive societies.





German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who will seek a fourth term, is one of several prominent female leaders in the world. British Prime Minister Theresa May is another.

## 10. More female politicians

The highest and hardest glass ceiling remains unbroken. But if the failure of Democrat Hillary Clinton to win the presidency of the United States against Donald J. Trump might depress some, it should not obscure the fact that the number of female politicians is rising. Consider the following numbers, as compiled by the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union.

In January 1997, women made up 11.7 per cent of all elected representatives. Fast forward to September 2016, when the overall proportion had risen to 22.8 per cent. However, these gains appear more

impressive once we look at the regional figures. For example, women made up only 3.3 per cent of political representatives in the Arab world in 1997; their institutional presence had risen to 17.6 per cent by September 2016.

Other areas without any long record of female representation have also recorded gains. From January 1997 to September 2016, female representation rates in sub-Saharan Africa rose from 10.4 to 23.1 per cent. In the Pacific region, which includes Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa and neighbouring islands, it rose from 11.6 to 16.3 per cent, and in Asia, from 13.1 to 19.2 per cent.

These continental figures do not capture country-by-country variations, with some countries reporting figures far above the average. Consider Rwanda, where women hold about 64 per cent of all parliamentary seats, the highest rate in Africa and the world, according to the United Nations.

Turning to the Americas and Europe, rates there are also rising. In the Americas, women held about 27 per cent of parliamentary positions in September 2016, up from 12.7 per cent in January 1997. As for Europe, women held 11.5 per cent of all parliamentary seats in January 1997. By September 2016, the number had risen to 24.5 per cent.

Female politicians have also played an important role in the Nordic countries. In January 1997, 36 per cent of all parliamentarians were women. In September 2016, that number stood at 41.6 per cent. A woman — Erna Solberg — also currently governs Norway as prime minister, and all Nordic countries, except for Sweden, have already had at least one female leader.

The growing institutional presence of women in European politics also appears in other ways. Women govern Europe's second most populous country (Germany, 81.4 million) and fifth-most populous country (United Kingdom, 65.1 million). In fact, it would not be a stretch to argue that Angela Merkel and Theresa May are the two most powerful women on the planet. Other powerful female leaders include Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, and her fellow French citizen, Marine Le Pen, of France's Front National, who may yet win the French presidency in the spring of 2017. In addition, Taiwan just elected its first female president, Tsai Ing-wen.

And we mustn't forget Nicola Sturgeon of the Scottish National Party. She currently serves as Scotland's first minister and may eventually become the first head of an independent Scotland. Finally, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, responsible for the governance of 160 million people, is leading Bangladesh for the second time.

Overall, more than 70 nations have already had a female leader, according to the *New York Times*. So while the world's most powerful state still awaits its first female leader, glass ceilings elsewhere have already shattered.

Wolfgang Depner has taught political theory and international politics at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus. He now lives in Victoria.



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# Yemen: Exotic and utterly war-torn

By Johannes van der Klaauw



The city of Sa'ada is the al-Houthi stronghold in Northern Yemen.

In January 2014, I was appointed as the representative for the United Nations refugee agency to Yemen. In this capacity, I was to lead and co-ordinate the protection and assistance services for hundreds of thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers, new arrivals and internally displaced Yemenis.

Two months later, I was asked to assume the functions of the humanitarian co-ordinator for Yemen, in addition to those as UNHCR representative. As the senior-most United Nations official in the country, I was expected to lead and co-ordinate all humanitarian work conducted by UN agencies and international and national NGOs. Little did I know that one year later, Yemen would be plunged into a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented volume and severity.

I had always wanted to serve in Yemen. I had heard so many stories of the exotic country, which, in ancient times, was called Arabia Felix. It is marked by a long history, landscapes ranging from mountains to deserts, along with a long coastal strip, unique architecture and, above all, a tribal population that keeps up traditions. I was also interested in seeing how Yemen was dealing with the aftermath of its own version of the Arab Spring in 2011, and how I could now contribute to the transition, one I hoped would lead the country on a path towards inclusive democracy and strengthened rule of law. I also hoped it would modernize the administration and respect for the human rights of all, notably women, youth and a large marginalized segment of the population.

I arrived in Yemen full of enthusiasm

and optimism, but soon conflict pushed the country into chaos, mayhem and destruction. My tasks would turn out to be very different from what I had imagined before I arrived.

## A country in transition

My first public appearance in Yemen was to attend the closing ceremony of the National Dialogue Conference, which was attended by hundreds of representatives of the political, social and tribal groups in country. These groups had deliberated for a year about the new political landscape and social fabric for the country under the supervision of Jamal Benomar, special adviser to the UN secretary general. The ceremony was a solemn event, bringing together the president, the government, dozens of tribal sheikhs, politicians,

female and youth activists, foreign diplomats and donor representatives. I was honoured to be part of it, as it was obvious that history was being written that day.

At least we thought so. Soon after, however, it became clear that the hundreds of recommendations of the conference would not be easily implemented. Moreover, one month after its conclusion, and while the country was preparing for a new constitution and presidential and parliamentary elections, transitional President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi announced that Yemen, in future, would be divided into six regions that would form a new federal state. By not allowing much discussion, the president had hoped that any simmering dissenting forces could be silenced. This proved to be a miscalculation. Demonstrations broke out in the north and the south. While those in the south remained peaceful, those in the north quickly turned violent.

#### The rise of the al-Houthi

In fact, the al-Houthi minority in the north took up arms to support its wish for more autonomy, investment and development, as the northern region had been neglected for decades during the previous long rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh (1978–2011). The al-Houthi had unsuccessfully waged six rounds of war against the army of the former president between 2004 and 2010, and now they took up arms again. While they had started as a revivalist youth movement representing a religious Shi'ite Muslim minority in a majority Sunni country, the al-Houthi had quickly transformed their struggle into an armed uprising, initially to enforce self-governance and an equal share in the country's scarce revenues, but soon it became clear that the al-Houthi also had territorial aspirations.

During the first six months of my double-hat assignment, it became clear that the fragile transition period was in serious trouble. The al-Houthi fighters made advances towards the central provinces, ably co-opting the support of tribes that had hitherto been their enemies and, in July, they managed to conquer the important regional city of Amran, which had been known as a stronghold of the Islah party, the Yemeni version of the Muslim Brotherhood and a staunch opponent of the al-Houthi.

I travelled to Amran days after its fall to the al-Houthi to determine the emerging humanitarian needs after the bloody conquest, and to broker sustained, safe access for humanitarian workers and aid supplies. I negotiated for two hours with Abu

Ali al-Hakim, the top militia leader of the movement, who was dressed in fatigues. None of us would see him again as he has been fully immersed in the armed struggle ever since.



Writer Johannes van der Klaauw distributes kitchen sets and other non-food items to those in need in the besieged city of Taiz.

The summer brought demonstrations in the capital Sanaa, orchestrated by the al-Houthi against the government's decision to abolish subsidies on fuel and essential commodities and against rampant corruption. The situation was tense, but none of us believed the al-Houthi would capture the capital as the group had no cadre to administer the country.

We were proven wrong, however. On Sept. 21, 2014, the al-Houthi took the capital after two days of localized fighting against militant Islah groups. Ali Mohsen, the commander who had led the army loyal to Hadi subsequently had to flee, as he was known for his Islah membership. I remember vividly chairing a meeting of the humanitarian team while explosions and shelling happened just one kilometre away. It was no reason to suspend the meeting; on the contrary, we urgently needed to put a contingency plan into action and ensure aid reached the parts of the capital under siege.

Once Sanaa was taken by the al-Houthi and the members of the transition government and senior officials supporting them had left their positions, it became increasingly clear that behind the al-Houthi's successful takeover of Sanaa was former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who, as part of the deal to oust him from power in 2011, had been allowed to stay in the country. Many segments of the army, security forces and administration had remained loyal to the former president and it was those segments that would allow the al-Houthi to exert their power.

From then on, change came quickly. While the secretary general's special adviser managed to broker a truce and a political settlement, the al-Houthi refused to implement its provisions. Though they had agreed to do so, they didn't withdraw their militia from the capital, didn't allow the transitional government to return to power, and didn't transform their movement into a political party that ultimately could help form a coalition government of national unity.

A technocrat government was formed in November 2014, but it couldn't govern because in January 2015, the al-Houthi arrested Hadi and the prime minister, and suspended parliament, the constitutional court and all other state institutions. The diplomatic community left the country in February and we humanitarians were the only international presence left (with the exception of a few diplomats from Russia, Iran, Syria and Iraq).

In March 2015, two Sanaa mosques visited mainly, but not solely, by al-Houthi supporters were hit by heavy bomb attacks that caused more than 100 casualties and provoked the al-Houthi into a general mobilization and a rapid military descent to the south. Within a week, they had captured the port city of Aden, the second biggest city in the country and its economic capital. On the way, they had taken Taiz, Yemen's third-biggest city, and its cultural capital, known for its intellectual activity, and for having been the city from which the uprising against then-president Saleh began in 2011.

Hadi, who had been able to escape from house arrest in to Aden, had to subsequently flee to neighbouring Saudi Arabia, together with members of his government. Ever since, he has been governing in exile.

#### The regionalization of the conflict

Then came the bombing. None of us had foreseen that Saudi Arabia and a coalition of 10 Arabic states would directly involve themselves in the conflict, adding a regional dimension to it. Yet, in the early hours of March 26, 2015, the coalition started an airstrike campaign to remove the al-Houthi from power and reinstate the legitimate and internationally recognized Hadi government. None of us had foreseen that by the end of 2016, 20 months into the conflict, the situation would be mainly one of status quo with the al-Houthi still firmly in power in the north and central part of the country. Increasingly, the conflict evolved into one in which the Saudis not only wished to rein-





Hajjah city, capital of Hajjah governorate, is located in the northwest part of Yemen.

state the legitimate Hadi government, but also wanted to reduce the influence of its regional rival, Iran, the avowed supporter of the al-Houthi, though the extent of this support remains somewhat unclear.

Aden and the five southern governorates were liberated from al-Houthi power in July 2015, mainly with the support of the United Arab Emirates. The goal was to reinstate the Hadi government in the south. Yet the volatile security situation, mainly caused by the presence of the jihadist extremist terror groups al-Qaeda and ISIS, has so far prevented Hadi's reinstatement on a permanent basis.

Ever since the escalation of the conflict, the international community, under the auspices of the UN, has sought a negotiated settlement between the warring parties. A number of efforts, accompanied by ceasefires or humanitarian pauses, have so far failed to bring an agreement on a political solution.

I assisted in some of the peace talks, as a resource person for humanitarian confidence-building measures, and learned that peace and a settlement remain within reach. Yet for this to happen, the parties must demonstrate a minimum level of political will and readiness to compromise. The longer the conflict persists, the more difficult a solution is to reach. Twenty

months into what started as an internal conflict, the dynamics have changed and the conflict is increasingly about regional hegemony, securing the oil trade along the Red Sea and fighting terrorist and jihadi groups. The Yemeni people are the victims of a conflict that counts no winners.

#### Leading the humanitarian response

Shortly after the start of the airstrikes campaign, the situation became extremely volatile, with the risk of a complete breakdown of law and order. There was also



A boy in the Sa'ada governorate. Like their older counterparts, young boys always wear sports jackets over their traditional dress.

talk of an armed invasion over land. The humanitarian community decided to leave, except for a core team that would stay in the country to co-ordinate the emergency response. I was in charge of this operation and after the departure of more than 100 UN and NGO staff, including the special adviser and his team, as well as remaining embassy personnel, we stayed behind with 10 international humanitarians.

Unfortunately, after a few days, it became imperative that we also evacuate as our safety and security could no longer be guaranteed. A plane took us to Addis Ababa and then to Amman, where each UN agency and international NGO established a Yemen backup office. I remember the emotions of guilt and frustration when we had to leave our Yemeni colleagues behind.

The exile was bitter, but of relatively short duration. The humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict had rapidly deepened and it was decided that, provided the necessary staff safety and security measures were put in place, the humanitarian community should return to the country to address the exponentially increased needs. After six weeks, I returned, leading a small core team of 10 staff. A UN air shuttle to and from Djibouti was set up and today still serves the humanitarian community. Initially, we stayed in the basement of one of our offices in the capital, which had turned into a ghost town, littered with garbage and waste and marked by shelling and airstrikes. We then moved into a heavily fortified hotel where we would live while witnessing the nightly airstrikes. During the day, we would move in armoured vehicles to our offices. While we were happy to be back, the severe restrictions on our freedom of movement and the extremely volatile security conditions required high levels of resilience. We had to leave our private accommodation; I missed my house and garden, as well as the escorted visit to the supermarket, which used to be the highlight of each weekend.

Yet at least we were back in the country and I could assume the leadership of a significant operation. The escalation of the conflict had resulted in a humanitarian emergency of unprecedented scale and volume.

Prior to the escalation, Yemen already had a humanitarian crisis, with more than 15 million of the 27 million Yemenis in need of some form of external aid. Following the escalation, this number rose to 18.8 million people in need — 70 per cent

of the population. These needs stem from years of poverty, under-development, environmental decline, intermittent conflict and weak rule of law and governance. Now we must add devastating conflict to that list. Of those in need, more than 10 million are in acute need today, urgently requiring immediate life-saving assistance.

#### A protracted humanitarian crisis

Between 2012 and 2015, real gross domestic product per capita fell by just under 50 per cent, from \$590 US to \$326 US per capita, and by almost 35 per cent in 2015 alone. Inflation has risen by 30 per cent. The conflict has led to wilful destruction of infrastructure worth an estimated \$19 billion US, the equivalent of half

Council, coupled with the destruction of port infrastructure, have resulted in a severe reduction in the supply of food, fuel and medicines.

The current conflict, the severe economic decline and the regularly imposed restrictions on imports and transport contribute to serious shortages and price increases in basic commodities. Millions of Yemeni struggle to make ends meet these days. Purchasing power has fallen substantially as livelihood opportunities are diminishing. The relocation of the Central Bank of Yemen from Sanaa to Aden has contributed to a liquidity crisis. Civil servants and their families — a third of the population — are no longer receiving salaries and letters of credit for vital im-

destruction of or damage to at least 274 health facilities. Functioning health facilities reported more than 44,000 casualties, including more than 7,000 deaths since the escalation of the conflict. An average of 75 people are killed or injured each day. These are conservative figures as health facilities have diminished reporting capacity.

The conflict has resulted in a 10-fold increase in the number of internally displaced within a year. As of October 2016, nearly 2.2 million people remained displaced, of which more than half are in just three of the 21 governorates. Three out of four displaced persons are living with host families or in rented accommodation; the remainder are in “collective centres” or in the open. More than one million displaced have provisionally returned to their areas of origin during the last few months, with three out of four returning to Sanaa, Aden and Taiz. These returns, however, remain precarious and some people have been uprooted again as conflicts flare up.

An estimated 14 million Yemenis, more than half of the population, have limited access to food, and half of these do not know where their next meal will come from. The country has seen a drastic decline in agricultural production, which normally employs half of the population, as a result of conflict, insecurity and lack of seeds, fertilizers, transport and markets. The fishery sector has seen a 50-per-cent decline as a result of the conflict. Two cyclones also had a devastating effect in south Yemen in late 2015.

An estimated eight million Yemeni have lost their livelihoods or are living in communities being deprived of minimal basic services. Approximately two million children are out of school and 1,600 schools are currently not in use, either because they have been damaged, are being occupied by armed militia, are hosting internally displaced people, or there are no longer any teachers or learning equipment available. Malnutrition is another problem as 3.3 million children and pregnant or lactating mothers are acutely malnourished, with more than 460,000 children severely malnourished, a 63-per-cent increase since late 2015.

More than 14 million Yemeni do not have access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and this is particularly a problem for the internally displaced and their host communities. A total of 4.5 million Yemeni are in need of emergency shelter and essential household items, including the internally displaced and their hosts. Beyond the material needs, Yemeni are



Locals in the old city of Sanaa. Almost all Yemeni women wear a niqab or hijab in public.

Yemen's GDP in 2013. The poverty rate has doubled to 62 per cent. Parties to the conflict have targeted key infrastructure such as ports, markets, roads, bridges and factories with airstrikes, shelling and other attacks.

Yemen is dependent on imports for more than 90 per cent of its staple food and its energy supply is also mainly dependent on imported fuel. However, restrictions on imports as a result of an arms embargo imposed by the UN Security

ports are no longer issued to traders. The Central Bank foreign exchange reserves have dropped from \$4.7 billion in late 2014 to less than \$1 billion in September 2016.

The already threadbare basic services have suffered further from the current conflict and a considerable number have collapsed. As of October 2016, only 45 per cent of the country's health facilities remained functional. An estimated 14.8 million Yemenis have no access to basic health care. The conflict has resulted in the





These pro-government militia fighters were in the port city of Aden in August 2015.



Destroyed houses in the Crater district of Aden, following shelling by retreating al-Houthi fighters.

lacking essential protection of their safety, dignity or basic rights. Women are victims of sexual violence, children risk being recruited or married off early; marginalized people suffer discrimination in accessing essential aid. These vulnerable Yemeni are in need of psycho-social, legal and other counselling services.

#### Forced displacement

The conflict in Yemen has resulted in the flight of more than 90,000 Yemenis, Somalis, Ethiopians and others to countries in the Horn of Africa. Several tens of thousands of Yemenis are thought to have sought refuge in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. As it is not in the tradition of Yemeni to seek refuge abroad, but rather to find shelter and safety in the villages in the countryside, these numbers are without precedent.

Notwithstanding the conflict, Yemen remains host to more than 260,000 refugees from neighbouring countries, essentially Somali (250,000), many of whom have sought refuge since the collapse of their country in 1991. Other refugee populations include Ethiopians, Eritreans, Syrians, Iraqis and Palestinians. Yemen is the only country in the Arab Peninsula that is signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol. It is also a transit country for economic migrants, and 2016 saw a staggering 100,000 Ethiopian migrants, but also Somali refugees, arriving on its shores.

With partners, UNHCR co-ordinates a large number of protection services for refugees and asylum seekers in the country. With the exception of 20,000 Somali refugees who are hosted in the Kharaz camps in the southern governorate of Lahj, all refugees live in Sanaa, Aden and Taiz where it is somewhat easier to earn a living, though the conflict has also caused significant impoverishment of the refugee population.

UNHCR registers asylum-seekers and refugees and provides them with documentation that should protect them from arbitrary arrest and expulsion. However, 2016 saw a rise in arrests and detentions and subsequent expulsions of mainly Ethiopian refugees, but also Somalis by the al-Houthi de facto authorities, who argue that the refugees would otherwise have joined the militia serving President Hadi.

UNHCR and its partners provide the refugees with psycho-social support, cash assistance for the most in need, support for vulnerable children and survivors of sexual violence, as well as access to health care. Refugee and asylum-seeker children



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These Somali refugee girls are at a school in Kharaz camp, Lahj governorate.

have access to public education at all levels.

Life in the cities is difficult for refugees, who complain of frequent harassment and insecurity, coupled with loss of income as work opportunities in the informal sector have become scarce. The refugee area of Basateen, near the southern city of Aden, was hard hit by heavy fighting during the three-month occupation by the al-Houthi in 2015. This resulted in the self-imposed flight to Somalia of thousands of Somali refugees. Many of these, however, returned to Yemen when the al-Houthi were driven out of the southern governorates.

Life in the refugee camp in Kharaz has been better, as, with few exceptions, the food, medicine, water and energy supplies have not been interrupted. UNHCR and its partners have been able to provide services to the camp-based refugees throughout the conflict. Refugees in both camp and urban settings have organized themselves in committees with elected leaders to provide support and arrange awareness sessions in mental health, family planning, female genital mutilation and other harmful practices. The level of self-management and organization of the refugees in Yemen is high and the UNHCR conducts monthly meetings with leaders to address and respond to problems with documentation,

employment opportunities, education or delays in the refugee status determination process.

As UNHCR representative, I oversaw the many projects of the vast refugee operations in Sanaa, Aden and Kharaz camp. With my legal and protection staff, I regularly intervened in cases of arrest and detention. Sometimes refugees in despair staged demonstrations in front of the UNHCR offices in the false hope of obtaining assistance or resettlement to third countries. To peacefully solve such refugee protests required skilful mediation and negotiation. Once, we negotiated the release of a group of more than 200 Eritreans who had been detained upon arrival in Yemen and whose refugee status was subsequently confirmed.

As thousands of Ethiopians and, to a lesser extent Somalis, keep arriving on Yemeni shores, notwithstanding the current conflict and destruction, UNHCR and partners continue to provide them with initial reception such as clothing, food and medical support before they are referred to UNHCR offices in case they wish to seek asylum, or take to the road by themselves in search of work in Saudi Arabia or the Gulf States. UNHCR and its partners are uniquely placed to collect and analyze the data and trends of mixed migratory





UNHCR built a new kind of UNHCR emergency shelter for internally displaced people in Khamer.

flows towards and through Yemen. Nowadays, however, the authorities arrest considerable numbers of new arrivals and put them back on boats to Ethiopia. UNHCR and partners are planning an information campaign in Ethiopia and Somalia to dissuade people from going to Yemen where they can expect arrest by authorities and interception and exploitation by traffickers and smugglers.

#### Being a humanitarian in Yemen

As UNHCR representative, but also primarily as humanitarian co-ordinator, I travelled within Yemen to reach and help the displaced, refugees and the new arrivals. Some areas in the midst of conflict, however, were difficult to reach. Travel took weeks of negotiations with the rebels, but also the coalition in Riyadh as numerous checkpoints had to be passed and local militia had to provide safe passage. Much of this travel was dangerous. I recall checkpoints where illiterate militiamen couldn't understand our written authorizations and weren't familiar with humanitarian aid convoys. It required negotiations with the parties to the conflict, the government in exile and the Saudi authorities to ensure the neutral and impartial nature of our humanitarian aid effort would be respected. We also made sure

humanitarian partners locally, selected by the United Nations for their expertise, experience and adherence to humanitarian principles, were allowed to do their work. This often proved challenging as authorities frequently prevented local partners from moving around and running their operations.

Negotiating humanitarian access, ensuring the safety of humanitarian personnel and aid and mobilizing sufficient resources from the international community have been, and are, among our major challenges. The destruction of roads and bridges was, and is, another impediment. During my assignment, I saw large-scale destruction in Aden, Taiz and Sa'ada. I saw corpses in the street, children starving and adults severely wounded as a result of the conflict. I narrowly escaped disaster when I was delayed on my way to an area where an airstrike hit at the same time I was supposed to be there. I sweated at checkpoints where illiterate militia had killed those who passed before me, including other humanitarian aid workers. I crossed frontlines with the warring parties within shooting range.

These experiences have left a mark on me, but I was most impressed by the resilience of the Yemeni people and the refugees the country is hosting. I saw the

immense gratitude on their faces when long-awaited aid finally arrived. I have been deeply moved by the mutual support and inner strength of my own colleagues when one of them lost a husband, brother or son in the conflict, or, as happened to one of our drivers, 10 members of his family as a result of one airstrike.

Those of us who have served and lived in Yemen know that this experience leaves a lasting impression. Yemen, Felix Arabia, is the most exotic country I have ever called home, and today, it is also among the most severely damaged and destroyed. I have seen human nature at its darkest, but I've also seen the bravery and courage of the Yemeni people. I have shared moments of utter despair and utmost relief. The daily bombing still resonates, the destruction and human misery haunt me every day. Yet if I could, I would return to Yemen today, to support the humanitarian response and the search for peace and stability.

Johannes van der Klaauw is UNHCR's representative in Canada. The views expressed in this article are his and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations.

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# The trade-offs of peacekeeping

By Richard Cohen



The Harper government oversaw a transformation from peacekeeping to "a real fighting force" in Afghanistan, while moving away from Canada's peacekeeping past. Though the Trudeau government doesn't call it combat, Canadians, such as this soldier, are engaged in the fight against IS in Iraq. Under this government, Canada will also step up its UN-related peacekeeping deployments.

**T**he Canadian peacekeeping monument stands on an island in the midst of busy traffic opposite Ottawa's National Gallery. It commemorates a Canadian ideal. Three peacekeepers — two men and a woman — stand as a symbol of hope over the broken debris of war. But today the monument is hardly noticed and its meaning has slipped from the minds of most Canadians.

Peacekeeping was invented in 1956 in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis. Then-Canadian foreign minister Lester Pearson proposed a United Nations-led force to oversee the truce between Israel and Egypt. For his vision and leadership, Pearson was awarded the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize. This seemed to confirm to Canadians that the world now looked to us as champions of a more peaceful planet. Today, Pearson's legacy remains firmly embedded in the conscience of a generation of Canadians and of today's Liberal party.

From the 1950s into the 1990s, Cana-

dian soldiers, police and officials were active in UN-sponsored peace operations. But over the years, peacekeeping became messier, more complicated and more dangerous. In 1994, the Rwandan genocide brought home to Canadians the harsh realities of modern peacekeeping. Gen. Roméo Dallaire watched, horrified, while 800,000 Tutsis, along with his own Belgian peacekeepers, were slaughtered because UN members refused to reinforce him. A year later, Dutch peacekeepers stood helplessly by as thousands of Bosnian men and boys were massacred by Serbs at Srebrenica. These tragic events highlighted the failings of traditional United Nations peacekeeping when confronted by parties who simply ignored resolutions passed by diplomats in New York.

As a result of these tragic events, the UN commissioned the 2000 Brahimi Report that recommended serious structural reforms and UN peacekeeping forces did have limited successes in places such as

East Timor, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Burundi.

## Changing the military ethos

For Canada, a major consequence of the peacekeeping era was its effect on the combat readiness of the Canadian Forces. Successive governments, Liberal and Conservative, often supported by public opinion, fostered the ethos of the Canadian soldier as a peacekeeper, not a warrior. To their credit, the military leadership tried to preserve the armed forces' fighting skills, but the long years of neglect had their effect. According to authors Lee Windsor, David Charters and Brent Wilson in their 2008 book, *The Kandahar Tour: The Turning Point in Canada's Afghan Mission*, as early as 1993, a battle by Canadian peacekeepers in the Medak Pocket in Croatia demonstrated that "peacekeeping forces... had to be trained, equipped, and prepared for combat just as much as they were for peacekeeping." But the Medak battle



was largely ignored by the media and it had little effect on the perception of most Canadians that peacekeeping was benign and well-suited to Canadian soldiers.

The Canadian deployment to Afghanistan in 2002 revealed a lack of proper equipment and training to cope with the sharper edge of peacekeeping. Hard lessons were learned and by the time the Canadians moved south to Kandahar, things had changed. The hard-fought Canadian victory during Operation Medusa, in Panjwai in September 2006, highlighted the transformation. The Canadians were once again a real combat force. An increased defence budget, better equipment, more people and greater public and government support underlined the change. The Conservative government distanced itself from Canada's peacekeeping past and Canadian contributions to UN peacekeeping missions (a process that had already begun under earlier Liberal governments) dwindled to a handful of soldiers.

But all this changed after the federal election of 2015. A new generation of Liberals led by an idealistic young leader campaigned for a return to multilateral co-operation and especially renewed support for the UN and UN peacekeeping. Now back in power, the Liberal government sees its renewed commitment to peacekeeping as a clear demonstration that Canada is back in its rightful place in the world.

### The trouble with peacekeeping

Idealism aside, the Liberals seem to be under no illusion about the dangers of modern peace operations. It knows that blue helmets have long ago replaced blue berets and that even those won't stop a high velocity bullet. Few peace operations are danger-free. This is especially true in Africa, where the bulk of UN missions are concentrated. There are no easy choices and the government has yet to announce where its promised contingent of 600 Canadian peacekeepers will go.

Cynics point to this commitment as the price for winning a seat on the UN Security Council. But there are true believers within the Liberal party and the general public who staunchly support Canada's return to peace operations as an important part of regaining our rightful place in the world. They also argue that unless we take joint responsibility for world problems, they will eventually affect us.

Another more practical consideration is that peacekeeping is relatively cheap. All overseas military deployments are expensive, but peacekeepers don't need

expensive tanks, artillery, combat aircraft and warships. With deep budget deficits and numerous other spending priorities, equipping the military for peacekeeping has its attractions, although the new U.S. administration may not be as understanding as the current leadership of our bottom-of-the-league defence spending.

UN reforms notwithstanding, peace operations still have serious endemic problems: member states' reluctance to



*"Peacekeeping isn't what it used to be... and it never was." So said a former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations.*

provide people and money; weak and inexperienced commanders in the field; language difficulties; differing standards of training; questionable logistics; scarce modern equipment; poor mobility; lack of common procedures; communications and intelligence capabilities; diverse military cultures and standards of discipline; conflicting political priorities; caveats; dual chains of command and a reluctance to give control to UN commanders.

Perhaps most important, peacekeeping forces often refuse to enforce their Chapter VII mandates (use of force to restore international security), especially the protection of civilians. Recent massacres of men, women and children under UN protection in Congo, Darfur and South Sudan are examples of a lack of political will on the part of the troop-contributing countries.

In June 2015, the High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (HIPPO) made more than 100 recommendations for transforming UN peacekeeping. But with no evidence that members are prepared to increase their support or funding, it's doubtful that many of these will be implemented.

So Canada could be left out on a limb.

The last thing the government wants is peacekeepers coming home in body bags, or even worse, to be associated with such disasters as Rwanda, Srebrenica, the Congo or Sudan. It's no surprise that most of our traditional allies have shied away from UN peacekeeping.

The government has so far not identified the national interest of sending Canadian soldiers and police to dangerous places, probably in Africa. Even a little security is better than nothing for vulnerable people, but how do we decide which country should be the priority and why?

### Whistling in the Dark?

Vladimir Putin is on a roll. From the battlefields of Eastern Ukraine to the ruins of Aleppo, a resurgent Russia is showing its teeth. Notwithstanding president-elect Donald Trump's probably brief infatuation with the Russian leader, most of our allies have awakened to the fact that the threat is real. Should Canada put its scarce resources at the disposal of the UN at a time when the West is gearing up for a possible confrontation with Moscow?

The ongoing defence policy review is unlikely to propose a significant increase in the defence budget or in military manpower and there are only so many soldiers to go around. Deploying and training a 600-strong peacekeeping battalion for a long-term rotation requires at least two more dedicated battalions. Canada has only nine regular infantry battalions; one is largely committed to training in Ukraine and the best part of another will be deployed to Latvia early next year to support the NATO deterrent brigade (the result of some very public arm-twisting by President Barack Obama.) And our special forces are heavily engaged in Iraq.

At a time when the armed forces, regular and reserve, are thousands of servicemen and women under strength, committing a third of our infantry to UN peace operations for no compelling reason cannot be in our national interest. A return to peacekeeping may be attractive for ideological reasons, to strengthen long-term global security and as a way of reducing defence costs, but the growing challenge of an aggressive Russia and numerous other pressing strategic dangers dictate that we equip, train and deploy our soldiers to where they are most needed. In today's world, Africa is not that place.

Richard Cohen was a professor of European security at Germany's George Marshall Center and served in the British and Canadian armies.



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# Africa's urban problems to worsen

Robert I. Rotberg



Nairobi, whose Kibera slum is pictured here, is growing at four per cent a year — faster than Houston, Cairo, São Paulo and Mexico City.

**A**frica's destiny is in its cities. Already the home of half of sub-Saharan Africa's 1 billion people, with untold more millions to come, some of the cities of Africa will soon be the largest in the world — with all of the possibilities and problems that pertain to megacities with high potential and inadequate infrastructures and deficient governance.

Lagos, Nigeria and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, already sprawl across a vast unplanned terrain, with spiffy, barricaded upper-class ghettos up against immensely crowded home-crafted shanty towns rife with the energy, discomforts and vices of squashed-together urbanites everywhere. But the African residents of these jerry-constructed enclaves are poor, often without formal employment, and readily neglected by their respective governmental power structures.

Lagos now has 21 million inhabitants;

in 2050 it is expected to house 32 million Nigerians. Kinshasa holds 15 million people today; in 2050 it will be the home of 30 million Congolese. Nairobi, now with 4 million Kenyans, is growing at 4 per cent a year — faster than Houston, faster than Cairo, faster than Sao Paulo, faster than Mexico City. These large sub-Saharan African cities are but 3 among a total of at least 50 with populations of more than 1 million today. A full 20 of those conurbations are in Nigeria alone, a country that is destined shortly to become the third most populous on the planet, up from seventh today.

Even greater Gaborone, the smallest capital of Botswana, sub-Saharan Africa's best governed, democratic nation, is already pushing 500,000 residents, up from a mere 20,000 when it was invented in the 1960s as the new country's capital. Greater Gaborone houses about 20 per cent of the entire population of Botswana. Like

Gaborone, African cities everywhere are growing inexorably, even if conditions within them are rough and sometimes inhospitable.

## Blackouts and food and water shortages

Cities everywhere struggle to provide their populations with adequate amenities, even basic ones, such as water and sewerage. But in one African city after another — even Johannesburg — municipally supplied and treated potable water is often scarce or unavailable. In sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, only 70 per cent of homes have ready access to drinkable water, and the cities are more limited in that regard than many towns and villages. Even in Lagos, established for more than a century, homeowners must purchase precious water from entrepreneurs selling it in 25-litre plastic jugs if they lack access to a personal bore hole (artesian well.)



Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, has long ago failed to replace its ancient, leaking, cast-iron water mains with more modern equipment and to chlorinate whatever water manages to find its way down those old arteries.

Only 30 per cent of Africans, fewer in jam-packed cities, have access to water-borne sanitary facilities. In future, as the cities of sub-Saharan Africa explode with new settlers from rural areas and from smaller towns and villages, the sewage problem will grow exponentially. It has already exceeded the capacity to cope of many urban agglomerations in Africa.

Electrical power availability is a further concern. It is hard to exist in cities without adequate power with which to light rooms or to cook and heat. Equally, factories function best when electrical power is abundant. But large swaths of Africa, especially the biggest countries with the biggest cities, have insufficient generating capacity, forcing industries to stand idle and citizens to experience unanticipated outages and frequent rotating blackouts, euphemistically termed loadshedding.

Transportation is another powerful issue, since most African cities have spread horizontally rather than vertically, without planning or zoning regulations. Densely peopled annexes ("suburbs" would give the wrong idea) spread inexorably outward from every rim of every central city, and those fortunate dwellers who have work, or need to shop, or those unfortunates who seek work of any kind, all have to travel by jitney, bicycle or on foot into older inner cities. Traffic is slow, often impossible. But the inner city is where prosperity is believed to lie, even if the many who trek there find more disappointment than opportunity.

All over the world, increasing urbanization has usually meant income growth and an alleviation of poverty. It has resulted elsewhere in connected rather than disconnected peoples, with increasing industrialization, with a corresponding provision of better and better infrastructure and with political and social growth based on the power of demanding middle classes. But not so much in Africa, largely because the movement from the countryside into the cities of sub-Saharan Africa has not been preceded by and driven by accelerated African agricultural productivity. In fact, African cities are the product of the reverse — of a drift from a land that has provided less and less well into cities where scrambling and informal economic entrepreneurial activities hold out the theoretical potential of better lives.

**Africa imports a third of its food and drink**  
African cities are places of consumption rather than of manufacture. They also have schools, hospitals and centres of government. But they survive (as well as they can) by service — by dispensing governmental services, by banking, by selling and repairing consumer goods, by constructing dwellings, and so on. Here and there in, alas, too few places, there is light manufacturing for the local market — breakfast cereals or packaging materials. Sub-Saharan Africa imports more than

## ALL OVER THE WORLD, INCREASING URBANIZATION HAS MEANT INCOME GROWTH AND AN ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY... BUT NOT SO MUCH IN AFRICA

a third of its food and drink (even water), a much higher total than that for Latin America or Asia. In Africa, unlike the other continents, agricultural productivity is a major problem, somewhat because of poorer soils and limited access to fertilizers, but also because poor governance, poor infrastructure and poor financial rewards inhibit farmers from growing cash crops efficiently.

Sub-Saharan Africa only has about 400 concerns with annual revenues of more than \$1 billion and about 700 with annual revenues of \$500 million. These are paltry figures compared to middle-income countries, such as India or Brazil. And, if South Africa is removed from the calculations, the continent has many fewer large firms even than the numbers above. There is ample room to grow manufacturing for domestic consumption, and to provide jobs for the now-unemployed millions in the cities. But both foreign and domestic investment are inhibited by the autarkic systems and policies practised by most of the governments of sub-Saharan Africa with the aim of promoting economic self-sufficiency and removing the need for imports, by a diminished rule of law, and

by the presence of strikingly robust corruption. African cities need entrepreneurs and capitalists to take risks, but deficient infrastructure, weak national and municipal governance and largely self-serving leaders have so far contributed to urban population and geographic growth without urban prosperity or urban progress.

### Middle class and politicians drive change

Too many of the nations of Africa are rentier states, that is, living (or trying to live) off the proceeds of abundant in-ground or offshore resources such as iron ore, copper, cobalt, cadmium, coal, diamonds, petroleum and natural gas. When countries and their leaders are content to benefit mostly from the mineral largesse of the soil or the sea, and not to build diversified economies, the result is an urban growth in poverty rather than out of poverty. The huddled masses, in other words, continue to huddle without much hope of advancement or of reaching the better lives and livelihoods that elsewhere have accompanied the agglomeration of cities.

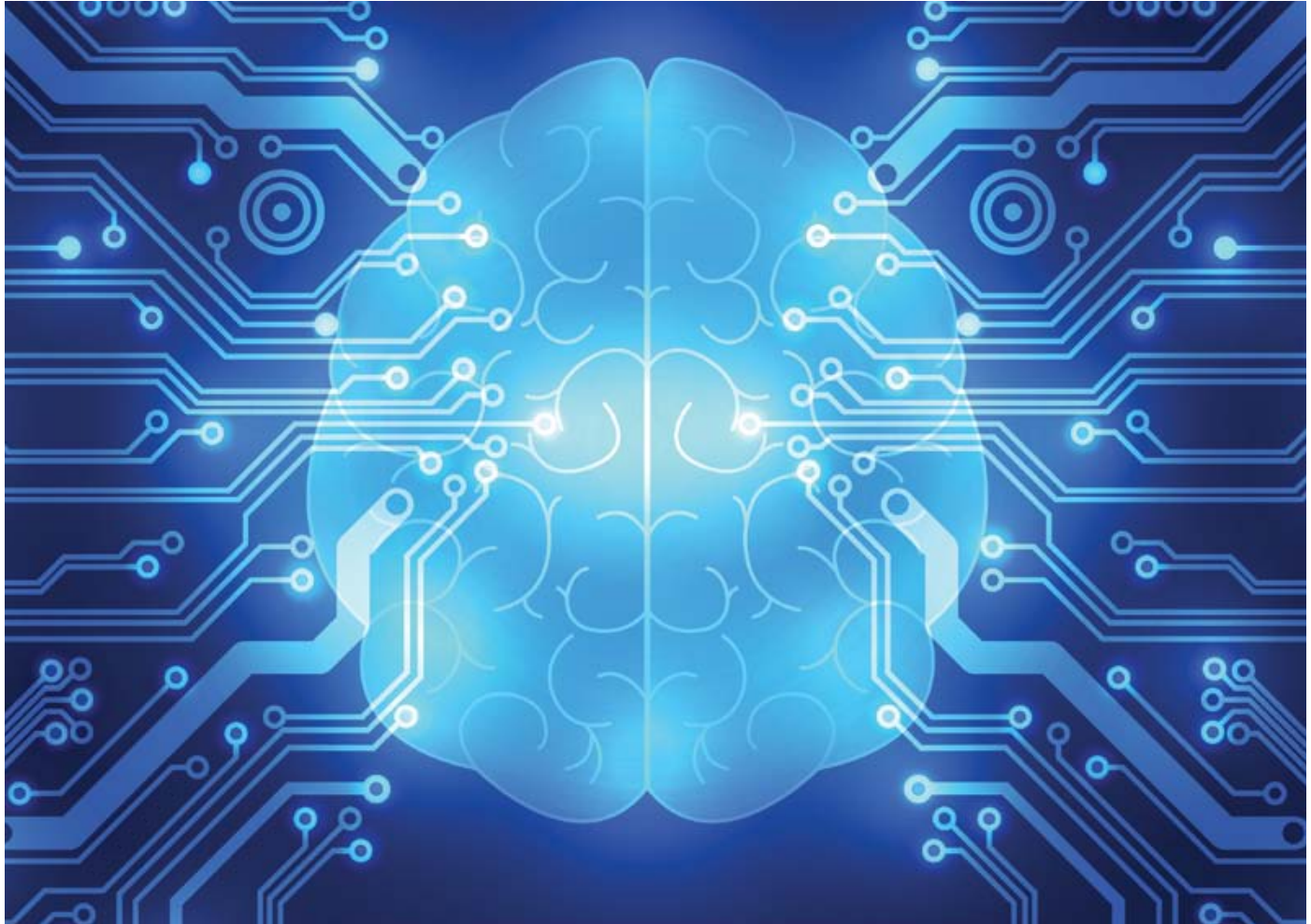
Yet, the middle class in Africa is itself emerging as a new political factor. Where this emboldened middle class has made its political weight felt (as in Kenya or Cape Town), or when strong, positive leaders such as President Paul Kagame in Rwanda and President John Magufuli in Tanzania have attempted to rid their cities of crime and make them more livable, investment and new job opportunities have often followed. It is possible that the newly elected Democratic Alliance municipal reform governments in Johannesburg, Pretoria (Tswane) and Port Elisabeth (all in South Africa) will follow the same path, and provide good outcomes for their residents. The harbingers are positive.

Sub-Saharan Africa in 20 to 30 years will be much more urban than rural. The villagers of yore will have moved into large towns or larger cities. Generations will be born and raised with almost no connection to the old Africa. Leaders will appear who will turn these desperate and difficult centres of human aspiration into more viable and responsive accumulations of enterprise and progress. The future of Africa depends on uplifting its cities and the people who live in them now, and for decades to come.

Robert I. Rotberg is a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center, senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation and founding director of Harvard's Kennedy School program on intrastate development.

# How Canada can keep leading the future digitized world

By Tom Jenkins



Canada's Waterloo-Toronto corridor is ranked the second-largest ICT cluster in North America and one of the best places to start a company.

*Excerpted from Tom Jenkins' speech at the 10th Ivey-Thomas d'Aquino Lecture on Leadership held in Ottawa on Oct. 19*

**C**anada is winning the digital race. Although we are concerned about our productivity and the ability of our largest corporations to remain competitive, we are actually doing very well in digital. Over the past few years, Canada has been recognized for its digital capacity.

The Waterloo-Toronto corridor is ranked as the second-largest ICT (informa-

tion communications technology) cluster in North America and one of the top 10 places in the world to start a company. We are the most significant alternative to Silicon Valley. Multinationals have recognized this. Recently, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau welcomed Thomson Reuters back home to Toronto and earlier, General Motors, CISCO, Microsoft and Google have all made major investments in the Waterloo-Toronto corridor.

We are building a strong ecosystem with domestic corporations. CGL, from Quebec, has more than 60,000 IT profes-

sionals and is one of the largest firms in the world that deploys digital solutions in every country. Open Text, a University of Waterloo startup, is one of the largest software companies in the world. Constellation, Enghouse, BlackBerry, Descartes, Shopify, Hootsuite and the Communitech, DMZ and MARS incubators have thousands more startups coming up. That is quite an achievement.

Our private sector has created digital capacity. However, our public sector may not be moving fast enough to keep pace. There are productivity challenges in edu-





Henry Ford made history by selling low-cost Model-T Fords to the very workers building them.

cation and health care that no longer exist in the private sector. Future governments may not be able to govern effectively and remain relevant to society.

**Canada is winning, but we must do more** Digital has transformed our lives, mostly for the better. However, digital may have negative impacts in the long term.

What happens in a society where many people can no longer work for value? How do we achieve inclusive growth then? Some digital observers question whether our very survival as a race might be eclipsed by a new race of machines that we created. That is profound.

Do we really understand the changes that digital is driving in Canadian society and other societies throughout the world? Do we understand the implications when the brain of a millennial is physiologically different than that of his or her parents? Something that once took tens of thousands of years of evolution to shape has been modified in one generation. This has never happened before and it has implications. For one, our education system has been organized for a different type of human brain. Let's consider these implications in terms of the major public policy issues that face Canada in the economy and in society.

Let's start with our economy. The world is in a global race of innovation. This year at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the next technology wave was considered as the fourth industrial revolution. It is estimated that we will grow from 5 billion connected people to 1 trillion

**OUR CREATIVITY  
IS CURRENTLY  
THE LAST VESTIGE  
FOR HUMANS  
CONTRIBUTING  
TO THE OVERALL  
PRODUCTIVITY OF  
SOCIETY.**

connected devices within 10 years with a combined computing ability that will surpass the human brain within 5 years. Digital has a possible negative economic impact: massive unemployment in some

sectors. If you are a truck driver, a taxi driver, an Uber driver, even a banker, an accountant or a lawyer, all of these jobs might be eliminated in the next 10 years by digital analytics. We are now automating so many jobs that there is a race between the old ones being replaced by machines and new ones being created by new capabilities. So far, humanity has been able to take advantage of these productivity improvements and create better quality of life and standard of living. But something is changing.

#### **An access slowdown**

Our ability to create those productivity improvements and benefit society has slowed down and in some cases reversed. Why? It may be that in this next fourth industrial revolution, the machines are thinking so fast they are moving beyond our capacity to keep pace and we are thus losing the race to remain relevant. This is the opposite of the Model-T Ford effect of the last century.

If you recall, Henry Ford made history by selling a low-cost automobile, the Model T Ford, that would be affordable to the very workers who were building them. This created a virtuous circle that lifted the quality of life for the middle class in the U.S., and this pattern was soon repeated elsewhere.

The problem with digitization in its current form is that we are not replacing the lost jobs fast enough. We are not organized to retrain our human employees on the scale and with the speed required and we need to think about that more deeply while we still have time.

Our creativity is currently the last vestige for humans contributing to the overall productivity of society. We cannot just be consumers of the goods and services that machines produce, but rather, we must also produce something or the virtuous circle first created by Henry Ford as the economic pillar of our modern society will be forever broken. This has profound implications for social order across the world. Recent elections indicate the unease throughout society. Our modern economics will require a re-think in terms of the distribution of wealth and the balance and value of work in our consumer society.

Consider another aspect of our economy and society — infrastructure. This usually means the creation of jobs and better and safer roads, railways, bridges and so on. This is a well-known method for building our society and we have a great history of doing this in Canada. But, have

we modelled the impact of the sharing economy and the driverless automobile? This may cause a dramatic reduction in our need for infrastructure as we may take current road utilization and quadruple it, thereby creating a “holiday” for road building for decades right at the same time that we seek to build it out. As we use more of Uber- and Airbnb-type services we may find that we have a radical reduction in our demand for infrastruc-

tures to your door, or a self-driven truck that will deliver them. The world will be a different place.

Let’s think about the infrastructure that this new digital world would need and look forward, not backward. It’s actually very simple. It needs communications with a lot of bandwidth.

Think about infrastructure, but this time digital infrastructure. Let me give you an example of how another nation



As industrial hubs such as this grain elevator in Buffalo are abandoned, we must rethink the distribution of wealth and the balance of value and work in society, writes Tom Jenkins.

ture. We should think about this carefully before we spend \$1 trillion over the next decade.

Indeed, the very best societies may wish to consider the virtual infrastructure that we will need for the fourth industrial revolution. We know, for instance, that if you have a 3D printer (a printer that creates objects instead of documents) and an internet connection, you don’t need to move goods around, since this will be on demand, and you don’t need to have an elaborate warehousing and transportation system. We also know that we may have drones that will effectively fly your prod-

state approaches this issue. A five-megabyte communications network is what you need to livestream something from Netflix on a TV. But countries that are concerned with productivity invest in much faster networks at the one-gigabyte level since businesses will need to be able to receive a 3D printing file from a city on the other side of the world to remain competitive and that requires the latest in computers, software, and 3D printers.

Connectivity is everything. Recent consumer research indicates that millennials rank wi-fi as just as important as food and shelter. Imagine that.

### **The brains of millennials are different**

Consider the impact of digital on society. Communications is at the core of digital infrastructure and if we define our needs solely as consumers, we are then hastening our demise as producers. We must keep up or be rendered non-competitive and thus irrelevant in the global economy. We need to imagine the future digital world when we plan, but the conclusion is simple: Low-cost high bandwidth is an essential public good for any future society. We must recognize that digital infrastructure is a key factor in our future productivity as a nation.

Despite the fast pace and dramatic impact of digitization in the past few years, one can only foresee that the pace and impact are about to substantially increase and perhaps occur as a step function rather than a geometric progression. This is due to the shift from human-based data collection and analysis to machine-generated collection (FitBit, Apple Watch, Internet of Things) and machine-generated analysis (robo adviser, high-frequency trading, digital doctor). This shift has already happened in other industries (automated welders, for example). We are moving to one trillion connected machines. That is a stunning number. The world will be forever changed.

Many of our leaders are now leading the first generation of millennials or digital natives. They are the kids that grew up with the internet similar to the way the previous generation grew up with TV. As many parents will tell you, these kids appear not to be able to remember anything and also appear to be doing too many things at once. Guess what? Those observations are correct and supported by research that has been done into their brains. In California, researchers have been conducting CAT scans of digital native brains and they have found that the areas of the brain associated with memory are diminished while the area of the brain that “networks” between the right and left sphere, is enlarged. So, you are not imagining these traits, they are real and supported by actual physiological changes to the brain in digital natives.

After hundreds of thousands of years of brain development over tens of thousands of generations, in one generation we have made a massive impact on brain function. That is an acceleration like we have never seen before. It is profound and it demands our attention.

What is behind this? Well, it’s the impact of machines. Smartphones are just personal machines. The brain of a digital



native is just efficiently handing over the memory function to a machine and concentrating on the integration of information rather than just the storage of data. This has a huge impact on how we train and lead our next generation. They are not like us. If we force them to memorize things as we did, they will soon quit and go to somewhere more suited to their abilities. No wonder millennials consider wi-fi an essential need.

Now we know why many of them have such difficulty with their education as the courses they take rely on human memory without machines. The education system was developed for our brain, not theirs. How disappointing that fact must be for a

them, and their idea of privacy, consciousness and social media will evolve in a way that none of us can predict. It will happen in their lifetime.

The innovation of machines also has an impact on governance. Remember the movie *Terminator*? The Cyberdyne Systems machine became self-aware and then destroyed humans in order to protect itself. Sound farfetched? Think about what happened in the financial industry five years ago. It had a “flash crash.” This happened one day when the nanosecond trading algorithms on bank computers decided that the market would go to zero and they all started automatically selling. The problem with machines is that they can operate

not. Studies show that the pace of innovation is geometric. In other words, instead of one, two, three, four, we are increasing the way we do things exponentially, as in two, four, eight, sixteen, and so on. You get the idea. We don’t notice change when it is early, but what about later, when instead of step eight on the linear scale, we are now at 512 on the geometric scale.

We as humans have met these challenges before. We must be aware that a machine has had one million chances at thinking about something compared to each single chance we have. Our public policy must move from specific rule of governance to principles that are technology and time invariant.

What are the opportunities for Canada? Although the digital agenda is daunting, we have many advantages as a country and we can lead the world with a nimble digital strategy. We must make digital a focus for our country the same way we did youth or the environment. We must create a digital department of the federal government and encourage the provinces to do the same — complete with a digital minister who has a seat at the cabinet table. For example, Ontario recently created the first minister of digital, Deb Mathews.

#### **We will find benefit in several areas**

Our millennials, who are getting frustrated, will have somewhere to go to help them cope. A dedicated department would attract the best and brightest in digital, since they would see a clear mandate and ability to make a difference.

Our citizens and our corporations will have somewhere to turn when they are dealing with out-of-date services from our government. This department would help shape new legislation that would be principles-based so that it would not be outdated by technological changes. Of course, creating another department is not a panacea. But what choice do we have? If we don’t overcome these challenges and change for the future, what legacy will we leave behind?

Canada is winning in the digital race so far, but we must continue to pick up our pace if we wish to remain relevant in the digital world. Having a digital department can help prepare us for the enormous changes that are coming. That would give Canada a true competitive advantage for the dramatic changes to come.

**Tom Jenkins is chairman of the board of OpenText Corporation, chairman of the National Research Council and the 10th chancellor of the University of Waterloo.**



Businesses will need to be able to receive a 3D printing file from a city on the other side of the world to remain competitive and that requires the latest in technology.

digital native to realize, as they get older. There wasn’t anything “wrong” with them. They were just different and the system had not anticipated their lack of capability nor their enhancements.

#### **Humans with implanted internet devices**

Unfortunately, this first generation of digital natives will just have to endure this. They are the digital pioneers and set the tone for all that follow. Millennials must drive the change in the education system. As they go through stages of their careers, this will happen again to them. The millennials are the signpost generation and they are one of the most important generations in the history of human evolution. Probably on a scale with the first humans who walked out of Africa. “Wearable” internet devices will soon get smaller, to the point where they will be implanted into

much faster than we can. A nanosecond trade can make one billion trades within one second. We humans are lucky if we can react within one second to a complex situation. Consider that one billion trades for a human is the equivalent of 32 years. A group of machines can do 32 years of trading before we humans are even aware of what they are doing. We have to think long and hard about the governance of that.

#### **Time is getting short to react**

The impact of digital on our society will happen faster than any of us can imagine.

The pace of innovation is very deceiving. Most of us believe that growth and change occurs in a linear fashion. So what happened in the last five years will be about the same as what will happen in the next five years and so on. In fact, it does

# A strange tale of Palestine and Hollywood



George Fetherling

**B**en Hecht was a famous screenwriter and author who invented a pair of movie genres — the gangster film and the screwball comedy — and wrote two of the best Hitchcocks: *Spellbound* and *Notorious*. In fact, he wrote literally scores of fine films, often without credit, as was common practice in Hollywood in the '30s and '40s. Examples include *Nothing Sacred*, *Some like It Hot*, *Gunga Din*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Shop Around the Corner*, *Gilda*, *Monkey Business*, *A Farewell to Arms* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. He was the script-doctor who saved *Gone with the Wind* from becoming a garbled mess.

He won the first Academy Award for screenwriting, but was also the first screenwriter to be blacklisted, though not because of McCarthyism and not in the U.S. Rather, his films were banned in Britain (the studios' most important overseas market) because of the role he played in the lead-up to the creation of the State of Israel — or at least because of the way he expressed himself on the subject.

This year is the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, when Britain, having defeated the Ottoman Empire during the Great War, took control of Palestine, promising to establish a Jewish homeland there. But London never lived up to its promise. Jewish settlers in what was called the British Mandate, aided by fellow Jews worldwide as well as important Gentiles, used every possible political and diplomatic device to secure the desired outcome. But to get what they wished, they had to fight for 30 years, until the new nation of Israel was established on May 14, 1948, a day when, as the Israeli novelist Amos Oz has written, the living and the dead rose up as one, shouting and cheering.

The peace, however, was short-lived. A United Nations proposal to split the land into Jewish and Arab states went nowhere, and war broke out, after which, in 1949,



Ben Hecht was a famous screenwriter, but he also played a role in the lead-up to the creation of the state of Israel.

the old Palestine was divvied up between Israel, Egypt and Jordan (with the Occupied Territories coming into existence after the Six-Day War of 1967).

## A war deep underground

There are, of course, many books about these foundational events, but one of the most recent works may be the fullest and most interesting. *Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917–1947* by Bruce Hoffman (Penguin Random House Canada, \$26 paper) examines how groups of terrorists (a loaded term, of course, especially these days) brought about Britain's departure, making room for the new state's emergence. Hoffman knows his stuff. He teaches security studies at the foreign

service school at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and gained access to American, Israeli and especially British documents, including diaries and letters not previously seen by other authors.

The main Jewish underground group, the Irgun, came to life in the 1930s, first attacking Arabs and only later adding the British (who were trying to suppress them both). The Lehi was a splinter group of the Irgun. Another player was the Haganah, the paramilitary instrument of the Jewish Agency, the semi-official government of Palestine. Its most prominent leader was David Ben-Gurion (who became Israel's first prime minister). The British relied initially on their police to suppress the insurgency, but later had to commit



large numbers of regular troops when the violence escalated. In 1944, the Lehi, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, another future Israeli PM, assassinated Lord Moyne, the top British official in the Middle East. In 1946, the Irgun blew up the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, which served as British headquarters.

Such groups naturally thought of themselves as freedom fighters rather than terrorists. Hoffman, in writing about the past, is, of course, reminding us between the lines what can happen in the present as well. The history is full of precedents that we ignore at our peril, he seems to be saying, as when he writes (in what we hope is a warning) that terrorism “can, in the right conditions and with the appropriate strategy and tactics, succeed in attaining at least some of its practitioners’ fundamental aims.”

Altogether, 100,000 British troops were sent to Palestine; the Haganah was a force of 40,000. Palestine was not, by strict definition, a colony, but its transition had much in common with the independence movements that eliminated European rule in the decades after the end of the Second World War. In the case of Britain, the list of places large and small is long — from Kenya and Nigeria to Burma, Malaysia, Singapore and 48 others.

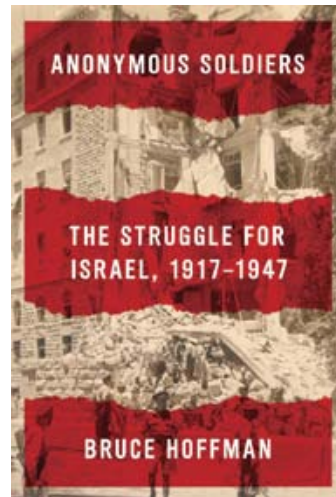
*Anonymous Soldiers* is a fat and thickly layered work, painstakingly put together. Hoffman’s main motive is explaining the rise of the various Jewish homeland movements and how they worked together, or even, at other times, worked at cross purposes. This is a book about politics and diplomacy as well as about violence. Although his narrative isn’t strong on biographical insights, Hoffman can’t help but serve up short glimpses of fascinating characters. For instance, there is Avraham Stern, the poet and scholar who founded another of the militant groups, the Stern Gang. Hoffman calls him a person “of grandiose dreams and half-baked plans.”

Then there’s Arnold (or Arnie) Lawrence, the kid brother of T.E. Lawrence (“of Arabia”). These days, it’s commonly understood that the present chaos in the Middle East dates back, not simply to the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, but rather to the geopolitical shenanigans of the French and the British at the close of the Great War. Especially the British, including Winston Churchill, the elder Lawrence and the redoubtable Gertrude Bell, archeologist and spy. Arnold Lawrence crops up in *Anonymous Soldiers* during the Second World War when Churchill sends him to Palestine to report on whether Jew-

ish settlers from Poland and other places could be repurposed as spies and saboteurs in their former countries. Lawrence referred to them as “honourable fanatics who will stick at nothing. Physically and mentally tough, highly disciplined and used to guerrilla warfare. No better human materials could exist for our purposes.”

A good deal of the book is concerned with Jewish efforts to win private and public support in the U.S., which was always less anti-Semitic than Britain and hence more sympathetic. This brings in such figures as Hillel Kook of the Irgun (known as Peter Bergson in the U.S.) who had been fighting in Palestine since 1930 and proved to be effective as a high-level version of what today would be called a K Street lobbyist. And this brings me full circle back to Ben Hecht.

Like many other urban Midwestern Jews, the children of immigrants, Hecht concentrated on being “American” rather than a Jewish American — until 1933, when Hitler came to power and, later, when the first news of the Holocaust began to circulate. He is thought to have become Hollywood’s main fundraiser for the twin causes of independence and Jewish immigration to the future homeland. He enlisted the support of many celebrated non-Jews (Frank Sinatra for instance)



and produced theatrical extravaganzas that raised money and raised people’s consciousness as well (including that of president Franklin Roosevelt).

And he wrote prodigiously on Jewish affairs in books and in signed newspaper advertisements. One of the latter was considered way over the top. It cost him many Jewish friends (for example, Edgar G.



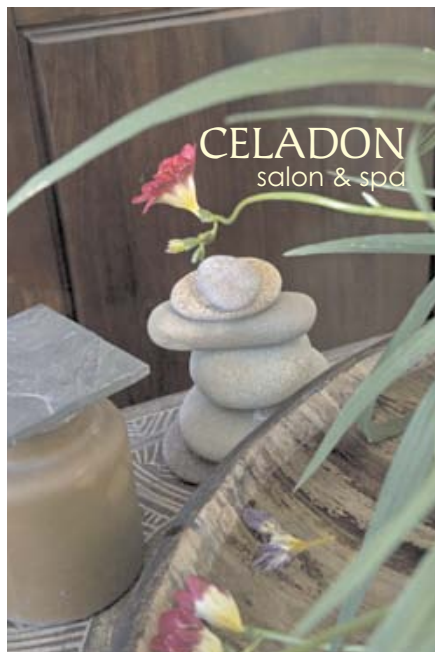
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Robinson, who never spoke to him again) and led to his blacklisting. Here is the key sentence, addressed to the anonymous soldiers: "Every time you blow up a British arsenal, or wreck a British jail, or send a British railroad sky high, or rob a British bank, or let go with your guns and bombs at the British betrayers and invaders of your homeland, the Jews of America make a little holiday in their hearts." A rather broad statement and not exactly the soul of tact.

In 1947, a ship named the *SS Ben Hecht*, a decommissioned U.S. Coast Guard cutter, was carrying Holocaust survivors to Palestine when the British impounded it at sea and interned the passengers. The following year, with the State of Israel firmly in existence, Hecht helped to secure the *Altalena*, an Irgun-sponsored vessel carrying illegal immigrants and also weapons. The Israeli government allowed the immigrants to land, but wanted to seize the weapons. The Irgun refused. The Israelis sank the ship.

Hecht died in 1964. Menachem Begin delivered the eulogy.

#### Amazonian thinking

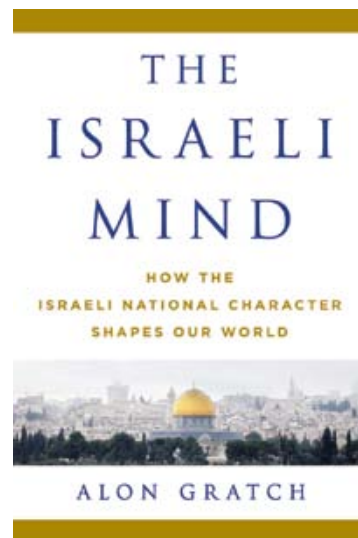
As our friends at Amazon keep saying, if you liked that one you might be interested in these.

Alon Gratch is an Israeli-born psychologist who practises in New York. His book *The Israeli Mind* (Raincoast, \$32.50) has one of those Simon Winchester-style subtitles — *How the Israeli National Character Shapes Our World* — hinting at clever generalizations, like a TED talk. But the work is much more substantial than that makes it sound.

The idea of a national character is often little more than a hodgepodge of affectionate clichés: the can-do American, the dour Swede, the polite Canadian, and so on. Gratch writes at some length about Israel's ongoing, indeed almost never-ending, internal dissent. He teaches non-Jews such as me the highly useful Hebrew word *davka*, which he defines as the inclination "to disagree for the sake of disagreeing." In a country with razor-sharp political divisions, he says, Israelis tend to act as though they have little in common with one another. He says it's easy to see why this might be so. The very existence of the country is the result of saying no to enemies that surround it, in fact saying no to obstacles of all types, and, of course, saying no to a big swatch of modern history that nonetheless lurks in everyone's mind. He looks at a country that is now divided between what he calls the traditional "cho-

sen-people" narrative and the contemporary "miracle-in-the-desert" narrative.

He relies a good deal on anecdotal evidence, but also on his own clinical training. Yes, Sigmund Freud and others pop up now and then. He, of course, writes about the impact of early Zionist movements on the development of the Israeli psyche (covering a little bit of the territory dealt with in Hoffman's book). But he fixes also on two specific anxieties. One is the fear of Iran, whose own national character Laura Secor does her best to analyze in *Children of Paradise: The Struggle for the Soul of Iran* (Penguin Random, \$35). The other



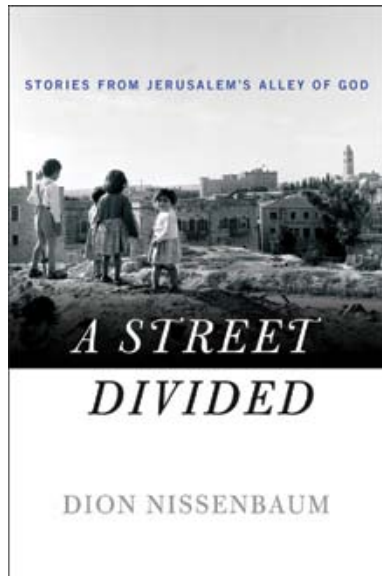
source of national anxiety is, of course, the Palestinian crisis.

Oxford University Press publishes an excellent series of concise and inexpensive paperbacks it calls Very Short Introductions. They cover specific ideas in science, politics, history, pop culture: all sorts of subject areas. The series began in 1995 and now has well over 500 titles on topics such as algebra, liberalism, God, structural engineering and teeth. That's what I call range. *A Very Short Introduction to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (\$11.95) is by a Canadian, Martin Bunton of the University of Victoria, who is also the author of a standard history of the modern Middle East. His *Introduction* came out three years ago, and I've certainly learned a great deal from it. I took it down from its shelf again as I prepared to start some of the new titles on the Palestinian impasse. Yasir Suleiman's anthology *Being Palestinian: Personal Reflections on Palestinian Identity in the Diaspora* (Oxford, \$38.50 paper) is a collection of more than a hundred individual accounts by Palestinians now scattered



round the world. Brought together this way, the pieces can be seen as equal parts interview, memoir and essay.

Until the ceasefire of 1967, what's now Assael Street (spelled various ways) in



the Abu Tor neighbourhood of Jerusalem was simply a line of barbed wire, about 100 metres long, separating West Jerusalem (Israeli-run) from East Jerusalem (Jordanian). Eventually the barricade came down and buildings were put up, but Jews and Muslims continue to live on opposite sides and yet must interact every day to carry on with life. *A Street Divided: Stories from Jerusalem's Alley of God* (Raincoast, \$32.50) by Dion Nissenbaum is an interesting study of the particular little spot and what it symbolizes. At one point, the author includes a vaguely Romeo-and-Juliet story of a Palestinian boy and an Israeli girl. But this is a serious attempt to look at the big picture by focusing closely on a small part of the frame. At this writing, Nissenbaum, who is a convert to Islam, is the head of the *Wall Street Journal's* bureau in Istanbul, but previously worked for the paper in Israel and Afghanistan.

#### And finally...

Harold Macmillan won a seat at Westminster in the great Conservative sweep of 1924 — and was residing at 10 Downing Street as prime minister during the early phase of Beatlemania. One doesn't have a political career of such length without acquiring some wisdom along the way. Perhaps the wisest thing he said was this: "The first rule of politics is 'Don't invade Afghanistan.'" The British tried it, and failed, on three occasions in a hundred-

year period. The Soviet Union made the same mistake in our own time. And then, of course, there is the United States.

We are now beginning to see a raft of new books about the U.S.'s Afghan adventure. Two examples that are getting a good deal of attention remind us of the first generation of Vietnam War memoirs. Some of the wartime policy-makers are trying to put the best possible face on the experience while others attempt to erase the terrors and errors by reliving them in print.

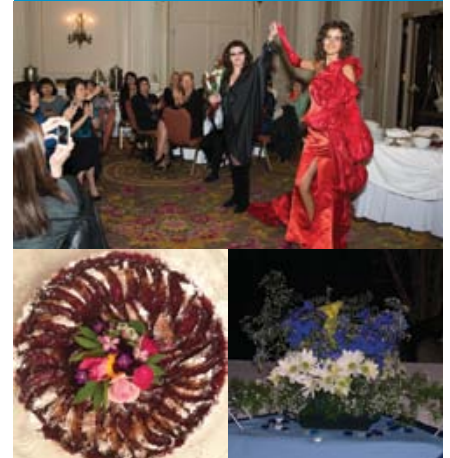
Zalmay Khalilzad, the author of *The Envoy: From Kabul to the White House, My Journey through a Turbulent World* (Raincoast, \$32.50), was the George W. Bush administration's ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq and the United Nations, becoming the highest-ranking Muslim in the U.S. government. He writes that he was born in rural Afghanistan, far from cosmopolitan Kabul, in 1951 when his father was 22 and mother somewhere between nine and 12. In an amazing leap, he won a scholarship to study in California and "came to see myself as a person with two homes and two affiliations. And, in an odd, rather unusual twist of history, I would become an advocate for each to the other." Actually he is mostly an advocate for the policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations and the people associated with creating them: figures such as Paul Wolfowitz, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice. When a male politico says he wants to spend more time with his family, what he usually means is that he's going to write a book like this one, enumerating all the great people who were fortunate enough to have met him.

*The Mirror Test: America at War in Iraq and Afghanistan* by J. Kael Wilson (Knopf, \$38.95) is a far more serious and important book, widely reviewed, discussed and debated by serious people. For seven years, Wilson worked on the ground for the U.S. State Department in the two countries of his subtitle. His memory seems to have retained every meeting, every scene, every tragic occurrence he experienced. Returning home, he investigated the losses — physical, psychological, one could even say spiritual — incurred by those who had served there. The title is a term used by military doctors. It refers to the moment when a patient sees his facial wound for the first time when the bandages are removed.

George Fetherling's novel, *The Carpenter from Montreal*, will appear next year. He is the chairman of the Writers Union of Canada.

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# Polish cuisine: Old is new again



Margaret Dickenson

**P**oland is located in Eastern Europe on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea and west of Germany. Evidence indicates mining activity took place in the area as early as 3500 BC; however, the first written record of a town refers to a 2nd-Century trading post, Kalisz, on the amber route between the Baltic and Mediterranean seas, where, in the 6th Century, the Slavonic tribe of the Polanie settled and eventually became the source of the country's name.

The cuisine of Poland has undoubtedly been influenced by geographical and historical factors. With cool and desolate winters, traditional Polish meals featured local vegetables, fruits and fish that could be stored or preserved for several months, primarily with readily available fossil salt.

Opened in the 13th Century, the Wieliszka mine, situated near the city of Krakow, continuously produced table salt until 2007. Preservation techniques, including drying, pickling and light fermentation, exist to this day and give Polish cuisine its distinctive characteristics.

Vast tracts of forest with an abundance of game and Salar de Uyuni wild woodland products referred to by the collective term "sylvan-fleece" — mushrooms, herbs, spices, nuts, honey, vegetables and fruits, particularly berries, including blueberries, strawberries, blackberries and currants — shaped the earliest Polish diets and still figure prominently in Polish cuisine. Olga Jabłońska, first secretary at the Polish embassy in Ottawa, explains that because Poland frequently lost access to the Baltic Sea due to wars, freshwater fish from the country's numerous lakes and rivers dominated its cuisine.

## First historical influences

The conversion to Roman Catholicism in 966 marked the commencement of the evolution of Polish cuisine as fasting, oppressively enforced by clergy and secular



Margaret Dickenson's exotic escargots pierogis offer a twist on a traditional Polish dish.

authorities, was extremely restrictive. When fasting, meat, dairy products and eggs were prohibited; and until 1248, Lent could last up to nine weeks in Poland. Adapting to this reality, people created meatless meals featuring fish and vegetables and these remain a critical part of Poland's national cuisine.

Also, even before the end of the first millennium, Jewish traders began arriving from eastern and southern trading routes, and by the end of the 16th Century, Poland had a larger Jewish population than the rest of Europe combined. Over the centuries, many Jewish culinary traditions have been assimilated into the nation's cuisine, as have those of Armenia and Lithuania. Krakow's renowned pretzels, sprinkled with poppy and sesame seeds, are actually referred to by their Jewish name, *bajgiel*.

## Old Polish cuisine

Medieval cuisine was based on highly caloric, moderately pungent and spicy dishes with meat (including game) and cereals (millet, rye and wheat) being the two principal ingredients. Rather than bread, most people ate a variety of crispy

cracker-like flatbreads, such as *oplatek*, as well as *kasza* (cooked buckwheat groats), which remain ever-present in Polish cooking. Besides cereals, beans, particularly broad beans, and peas made up a major part of daily diets, along with a wide array of game and foraged products. Indeed, Polish nobility enjoyed gourmet fare such as honey-braised bear paws (accompanied by a pungent, flavour-packed horseradish salad), smoked bear tongue and bear bacon. Spicy sauces gained popularity primarily due to close trade relations with Turkey and the Caucasus, which facilitated access to black pepper, nutmeg and ginger at a much more reasonable price than other European countries. A couple of sauces that maintained broad appeal until the 18th Century were red and grey blood sauces, *jucha czerwona* and *jucha szaka*.

For medieval Poles, like Poles today, pork was the preferred meat, and unlike in other parts of Europe, forests were essential. They were not cut down to create pasture land for cattle; rather, Poles kept cattle in enclosures, relying on them for dairy products. Forests were places to graze pigs and to hunt various game —



another important source of meat that included everything from rabbit and fowl to wild boar and deer. Even today, 25 per cent of Poland remains forested. Consequently, traditional and modern Polish cuisine include recipes made with game and sylvan-fleece. Hens, too, were enclosed, bred to provide eggs and, only when in excess, to provide meat. The entire bird was used — from giblets to blood. With the blood, Poles prepared blood soup which, over time, has lost much of its appeal, and the ever-popular black pudding, or *kaszanka*.

To add flavour, horseradish, mustard, chives, onions, garlic and Asian pepper infused a mild pungency into dishes, while herbal and spicy elements came from dill, juniper, nutmeg, anise and caraway. Slightly tart tastes were achieved with sour cream, pickles and pickled cabbage, with mainly apples and cranberries offering sweet and sour tones. All of these are critical in defining today's Polish cuisine.

In the Middle Ages, common beverages consisted of milk, whey, buttermilk and herbal infusions, beer (also used for flavouring soups and other dishes), vodka (initially among the lower classes), and mead (fermented honey and water). It is said that in the 13th Century, a Polish king refused a pope's request to send Polish knights to take part in a crusade because the Holy Land did not have mead.

#### Renaissance brings change

By the early Renaissance, menus in the royal court started to incorporate vegetables such as beets, turnips and cauliflower. This trend continued when a series of Polish kings married foreign women. These queens were all eager to introduce specialties of their native countries. Most notably, in the 16th Century, Italian Queen Bona Sforza, the second wife of King Sigismund I, brought in Italian cooks to prepare extravagant feasts for aristocrats, and imported enormous quantities of products from Southern Europe, Western Asia and even the Americas, including vegetables, fruits, rice, sugar cane, nuts, herbs, spices, pasta and Italian olive oil. But it was her love of vegetables that had the greatest permanent impact on Polish cuisine.

Even today, Poles refer to vegetables introduced by her — leeks, celeriac, parsnips, carrots and cabbage — as *włoszczyzna* or "Italian stuff." Simultaneously, a shift in drinking habits was taking place as upper-class Poles began importing Hungarian and Austrian wines. French cuisine soon followed when, in the next century, two consecutive Polish kings married the

same French duchess, Marie Louise Gonzaga, who engaged a brigade of French chefs. French cuisine became fashionable in wealthy Polish households, which hired French cooks and pâté makers. By the middle of the 18th Century, French Champagne and wines were being served at Polish tables. Indeed, since then, Poles have acquired the habit of embracing exotic and foreign foods. Today, many Polish restaurants specialize in foreign cuisine.

Poland was one of the largest countries in Europe until its repeated partitions began in the 18th Century. Over the years, the culinary traditions of neighbouring countries permeated its national cuisine. The period of partitions resulted in the modification of some traditional recipes and the introduction of others, particularly from Russia, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Subsequently, over time, Russian-style *pierogi*, Hungarian *goulash*, Ukrainian *borscht*, Austrian cakes and French pastries, plus other foreign specialties — always with a Polish twist — became part of Poland's culinary profile.

#### A dark period

During the First and Second World Wars, Poland's once-vibrant culinary cuisine became lethargic. Jabłońska points out "only during 20 years of independence between the two world wars did Poland experience a brief revival with some restaurants opening." However, as the country fell under Soviet occupation after the Second World War, many restaurants were nationalized. Drab workplace lunchrooms served the same basic and inexpensive meals, and economic woes manifested themselves in a scarcity of some staples such as meat, coffee and tea, a rationing of others, including sugar and chocolate, and the complete absence of still others, particularly due to restrictions imposed on imported goods.

Food supplies were basically domestic. Despite the fact that some seasonal fruits and vegetables were available at private stands, for much of the year, Poles were obliged to make do with domestic winter vegetables and fruits, so their diets consisted of potatoes, cabbage, onions, beets and other root vegetables, apples and a limited amount of frozen produce. At times, imported foods could be purchased at certain markets, but at exorbitant prices. Only during holiday periods were tropical fruits — bananas, oranges and perhaps pineapples — available.

Under these conditions, Poles replaced their beloved traditional cuisine with dishes prepared from whatever was avail-

able at the moment. *Kotlet mielony*, which is meatballs with puréed beets and fresh carrots, was a favourite among the few dishes offered in public restaurants. Poles had to be satisfied with reserving traditional recipes for Christmas Eve, when families endeavoured to respect, as much as possible, a 12-course meatless tradition that included a fish dish. Christmas Eve and Easter are still the most celebrated holidays and when traditional dishes are expected to be served.

#### Polish cuisine's glory returns

With the end of communism in 1989, basic food products were once again available and a deluge of new restaurants opened. Traditional Polish cuisine returned to home kitchens and restaurants, and ingredients to prepare other international cuisines appeared in supermarkets. Over the past decade, Polish cuisine has soared from obscurity, with a new focus on healthy eating and sophistication. With its traditional taste combinations of pungency, fermentation and umami elements dating back as early as the Middle Ages, some say Polish cuisine has a unique edge over other European cuisines as chefs reinvent traditional dishes in creative and sometimes quirky ways.

The average Pole's impressive knowledge of and appreciation for homegrown produce, along with the country's beloved sylvan-fleece and ancestral recipes, have resulted in the disappearance of many American fast-food chains that seemed so popular in the '90s. Locals are enthusiastically opting for their own cuisine instead.

#### Pride in Polish cuisine

Poles love their soup, or *zupa*. Polish cuisine offers a staggering number, from clear broth types to thick, nourishing combinations such as *nosol* (a chicken broth with noodles) or *barszcz* (in the early days, made with sour berries, but now with beetroot and lemon juice or vinegar as the souring agent; eaten as clear broth or with dumplings stuffed with meat or cabbage) or *zurek*, also referred to as white *barszcz*, (beef or chicken broth, onions, mushrooms and sour cream, flavoured with fermented flour juice, served with a hard-cooked egg and kielbasa sausage, and usually presented in a hollowed-out loaf of bread.) On hot summer days, *chłodnik*, a chilled beet or fruit soup might be served.

On Fridays, fish such as carp, pike, sturgeon, perch, sole, salmon and eel are normally served in various ways; however, Poles are also well known for their delectable meat entrées, which include

wild game dishes and an exceptional variety of sausages. Pork leads in popularity, whether grilled, coated in bread crumbs, or braised with onions or prunes. Poultry remains a close second, be it stuffed chicken, chicken livers served with baked apples or duck stuffed with apples and cooked in red wine. Beef has yet to gain great appeal, other than as tartare, with its origins dating back to Mongolian horsemen who invaded central Europe, carrying a supply of raw meat under their saddles. Also *zrazy* offers a delicious blend of flavours: a filling of breadcrumbs, bacon, mushrooms and cucumbers is rolled inside slices of sirloin beef before frying or grilling. Poles appreciate the pleasure of dining on local game, particularly wild boar, roe-deer, hare, partridge and goose. Partridge stuffed with milk-soaked bread, currants and juniper dates back to the days of royal hunts and extravagant feasts.

Main courses feature boiled vegetables and salads. Leafy greens are now replacing *sorowka* — shredded root vegetables such as celeriac, carrots and cooked beetroot, tossed with lemon and sugar or mayonnaise or sour cream — in addition to other side dishes that might include potatoes in some form, traditional *kasza*, *pierogis* or rice. Meals conclude with a dessert, such as *sernik* (Polish cheesecake with orange peel and raisins), *makowiec* (sweet poppyseed sponge cake with walnuts and raisins), *szarlotka* (apple cake), *babka* (pound cake) or *fatworki* (pastry twists).

Poland proudly claims a multitude of dishes as specialties. *Bigos*, or hunter's stew, is regarded as the national dish, traditionally prepared with cabbage, mushrooms and a variety of meats — usually pork, bacon and sausage — and even prunes, seasoned with hot pepper, cardamom, nutmeg and a splash of Madeira. However, the stew may only be legitimately called hunter's stew when made with game meats such as wild boar, rabbit and venison. Other specialties include *golonka*, stewed pork knuckles or hocks, served with horseradish and sauerkraut; *golabki*, cabbage leaves stuffed with rice and ground meat; *pierogis*, dumplings stuffed with potatoes, white cheese and onions, or filled with a mushroom-cabbage mixture, or with tripe, known as *flaki*. For dessert, pierogis are filled with fruit.

Today, dark bread, pancakes, pickles and smoked and salted fish (especially herring) feature in Polish cuisine.

Please try my *pierogi* recipe — with a Dickenson twist. Bon Appétit! *Smacznego*, which means “wishing you tastiness!”



Margaret Dickenson's twist on traditional Polish *pierogis*, this time with escargots.

### Exotic Escargot Pierogi

Makes about 50 hors d'oeuvre pierogis

1 can escargots (can size: 4 oz or 115 g drained weight; about 25 escargots)

1 tbsp (15 mL) butter

½ tsp (3 mL) finely chopped fresh garlic

½ tsp (3 mL) peeled and grated fresh gingerroot

1 tsp (5 mL) instant beef bouillon powder

To taste: crushed black peppercorns

### Dough:

1 ¼ cups (300 mL) all-purpose flour

1/3 tsp (2 mL) salt

5 tbsp (75 mL) sour cream

1 egg, well beaten

2 ½ tbsp (38 mL) soft unsalted butter

### Garnish:

1 1/3 tbsp (20 mL) garlic butter (or butter)

½ cup (125 mL) sour cream

1. Drain and rinse escargots. Drain again; check for and discard any shell pieces.

2. Melt butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and ginger; stirring constantly, cook for 1 minute.

3. Add escargots, sauté for another minute. Sprinkle with instant beef bouillon powder and crushed black peppercorns; reduce heat to medium-low and cook for 2 or 3 more minutes stirring frequently. Cover skillet, remove from heat and cool. Cut escargots vertically in half; set aside.

4. To prepare dough, in a medium-large bowl, stir flour and salt together. Make a well in the centre of dry ingredients. Add only 2 ½ tbsp (38 mL) of beaten egg plus the sour cream. Drop soft butter in small dollops over flour mixture.

5. Using your hand and working from the

centre, gradually combine ingredients. Work the dough until it forms a stable mass. Transfer dough to a clean dry counter top (not dusted with flour) and knead for about 8 minutes to produce a smooth, soft and tender texture. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and allow it to rest at room temperature for an hour.

6. Roll out dough very thinly (thickness: about 1/8 inch or 0.3 cm). Using a glass (rim diameter: about 1 ¾ inches or 4 cm), cut out circles of dough; gather leftover pieces and wrap in plastic wrap.

7. Work with one circle of dough at a time and keep others covered with plastic wrap. Place the circle in the palm of your left hand and with the index and middle fingers of your right hand, press the circle into a larger form. To one half of the circle (careful to avoid dough perimeter), add half of a sautéed escargot. (Note: If escargot half is too large, trim it slightly.)

8. Fold remaining half of dough circle over the escargot to form a half moon; pinch edges together. Arrange in a single layer on a parchment-lined tray and keep covered with plastic wrap. (You can freeze at this point. Don't thaw before cooking.)

9. Working in batches, drop pierogis into a pot of boiling water. Stir carefully with a silicon spatula to prevent pierogis from sticking to bottom of pot or to each other. Once they rise to surface, allow them to cook for another minute.

10. Drain well. Sprinkle lightly with salt; toss with garlic butter. Serve promptly with sour cream.

Margaret Dickenson is a cookbook author, TV host, menu/recipe developer, protocol, business and etiquette instructor. ([www.margaretstable.ca](http://www.margaretstable.ca))



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# The art of blending



Pieter  
Van den Weghe

It used to be that where a wine came from was more significant than the grapes used to make it. The advent of regulatory appellation systems, the New World's liberty to select its own grape varieties and a more scientific awareness of varieties have helped change that.

While the history and tradition associated with regions and vineyards are still relevant, the modern idea of considering wine by grape variety is now firmly established and has tremendous impact on what wines are produced and consumed.

Whether driven by tradition to combine certain grapes or a modern freedom to

plant as one wishes in the vineyard, many of the world's most distinctive wines come about by blending two or more varieties. These wines can speak to a region's relationship with the specific grape varieties that history has given them, and the winemaker's skill to make a wine that is compelling and delicious. Co-fermented or combined after fermentation, great blended wines made from two or more varieties have the balance of acid, weight and flavour needed to produce a whole that is superior to the sum of its parts.

Several examples are easily found in the Old World, where the practice has been a matter of course for generations. Port has always been the result of blending. Approximately 30 different varieties, including Touriga Francesa, Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz, Tinta Barroca, Tinta Amarela and Tinto Cão from Portugal's Douro are co-fermented to produce port. Each variety provides its own character to create the complex, layered style for which port is famous. An excellent example is C. Da Silva Vinhos' 1995 Dalva Colheita (vin-

tage tawny) port. It shows the complexity derived from blending well, with generous aromas and flavours of dried fruit, nuts, honey, spice and molasses. It is sold at LCBO Vintages for \$34.95.

While celebrated as the father of sparkling Champagne, Dom Perignon was a pioneer of blending and creating a wine greater than its components. His practices show in the 2006 "Grand Vintage" Brut Rosé Champagne from Moët & Chandon. A blend of all three Champagne varieties — Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier — this is a big, structured and deep sparkling wine. While starting to show well, the wine could also spend a few years resting in the cellar. This Champagne can be found at Vintages for \$95.95.

Bordeaux's prestige and reputation makes a very strong case for blending. The roles and relationships of the three main grape varieties can be well displayed in the final wine: Cabernet Sauvignon's structure being rounded out with the richness of Merlot and the aromatics of Cabernet Franc. Shown well in many Bordeaux wines, this act also goes on the road. A fantastic New World ode to this well-established blend is Hidden Bench's 2012 Terroir Caché. Completely sourced from their estate vineyards on the Niagara Escarpment's Beamsville Bench, this mix of Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon and, another permitted Bordeaux variety, Malbec, shows the complexity and depth of character that Niagara is capable of in a warm vintage. In its current state, it has a certain youthful vigour, but it will also benefit from a couple of years of aging. This is excellent homegrown value for \$38 from Vintages or the winery.

Another great Old World example of blending is Amarone. Here, the grapes used for Valpolicella are dried to create weighty and complex wines.

Michele Castellani's 2012 Cinque Stelle Amarone della Valpolicella Classico is one such wine. Fermented from 70 per cent Corvina, 25 per cent Rondinella and 5 per cent Molinara, and dried for three to four months, the wine has an amazing depth. Flavours range from dark fruit and baking spices to tobacco and mocha, and are all well supported by a silky-textured structure. It's sold for \$57.95 at Vintages.

Pieter Van den Weghe is general manager and sommelier at Beckta.

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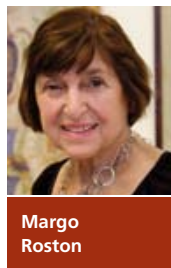
AGA KHAN MUSEUM

# Saudi Arabia's Ottawa jewel on Sussex Drive

*Photos by Ashley Fraser*



The large reception room, half of which is shown here, has a total of four long couches and many chairs to receive visiting dignitaries.



**A**sk Saudi Arabia's Ambassador Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy what he likes best about his lavish embassy on Sussex Drive and he's sure to

look across the Ottawa River to the Gatineau Hills and answer that he's happy to be so close to skiing. At every other posting, he says he's had to travel far to strap on his skis and at his last post in New York, a ski trip meant an overnight stay.

"Here I can just go skiing for the day," he says with delight. "I really enjoy Camp Fortune." He has skied all around the world and his first trip to Canada was to Mont Tremblant. For someone who enjoys sports, he also has the only embassy in Ottawa with an indoor swimming pool.

The Saudi embassy, which also houses

the ambassador's residence, is a \$40-million, 4,200-square-metre (45,000-square-foot) white stone and marble edifice that wears its Arabesque exterior behind high walls on some of the national capital's most prized land. The land was purchased by the Saudi government in 1978 for \$900,000. Designed originally by the late architect Arthur Erickson, the building has had a controversial past involving neighbours and the National Capital Commission over its proposed height and the presence of a large guard house.

Eventually the height was reduced





The front foyer of the embassy and residence is grand and imposing, with several pillars and traditional rugs.



Ambassador Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy says Ottawa is his favourite city.



The ambassador swims in the pool every day.





The long, narrow dining room seats 20 in its gold-topped chairs. When the ambassador hosts bigger dinners, he holds them at round tables set around the swimming pool with buffet lines on either side of the room.







to three storeys by Canadian architect Domenic Meffe to make the building more Arabic in appearance. Arched and punched windows were added, creating a more cubic design. The exterior was finally finished in 2001, but a political rift between the Canadian and Saudi Arabian governments meant the embassy remained empty until 2005 when an ambassador and his staff finally moved in. The NCC recently approved the addition of a Douglas Cardinal-designed grand hall, which it says will add “sparkle” to the property.

Simple from the outside, once inside the heavily guarded entrance gates, the residence boasts a large, elegantly landscaped exterior courtyard dominated by two large metal palm trees leading to a columned entranceway. The effect is a faux desert scene. But once inside, simplicity immediately turns to opulence and elegance with the large entrance hall, all marble and wood, chandeliers and pillars, with gold brocade sofas against the walls. Photographs of Saudi Arabian landscapes dot the walls. A doorway on the right leads to the 60 offices of the embassy and consulate, including that of the ambassador; one on the left leads to the three-storey residence.



The ambassador's private suite has a separate, less formal living room.

Ambassador Alsudairy, who has been in Ottawa for four years, appreciates the embassy's location. “This is a very famous street,” he says. “We can walk to the Market and to Parliament.” His wife is a doctor at home in Saudi Arabia and of their four children, only their daughter, a student at Algonquin College, still lives in

Ottawa. An older son is studying in New York and two younger boys have returned home. “I miss them,” he says.

Just to the right of the first hallway at the entrance to the residence portion of the building is an opulent powder room with gold taps and flowered brocade inlay on the vanity which serves as a warm wel-



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come for guests. The main reception room, like other rooms in the residence, is long and luxurious with gold and royal purple brocades, carpets and chandeliers and colourful works of art by Saudi artists on the walls. The windows are swathed with long velvet curtains.

A long, narrow dining room that seats 20 has yellow faux-painted walls; velvet high-backed gold-rimmed chairs and a massive chandelier hanging from a recessed ceiling. Filling the ceiling is an oval painting rimmed in gold of blue sky with a few puffy clouds reminiscent of a beautiful summer day.

At the end of the long marble hall, one finds the large indoor swimming pool area, filled with natural light from windows that extend two storeys high. The ambassador says he swims here every morning. Tables and chairs and faux palm trees create a beachfront setting and a bright patio-style room off the swimming area creates extra space for entertaining, which the ambassador does at least once a week. "We have to be very engaged with Canadians," he says.

In addition, every Tuesday after 4 p.m., Saudi students in Ottawa are invited to an open house. There are 25,000 Saudi students studying in Canada and "they



This room leads to the pool and the sweeping staircase.

get homesick" he says. "So they can come here and we serve them Saudi food." There are two chefs at the embassy and "many staff." The basement level of the building has a large kitchen and parking for 35 cars.

One of the showpieces of the building is the sweeping staircase of wood, glass and brass that leads to the second floor family area where a comfortable living and TV room with a fireplace, a large dining room and a kitchen complete with a dumbwaiter to the basement kitchen provide all the comforts of home. Its picture windows offer gorgeous views across the river. The staircase also leads up to the third floor where there are five large bedrooms, one of which has been turned into an exercise room by the ambassador, making it so much easier, he says, than having to go to a gym every day. An elegant elevator emblazoned with its own palm tree makes coming and going quick and easy.

One of the attractions of the residence is a large rooftop terrace; the perfect place to watch Canada Day fireworks, says the ambassador. "I love it here," he says. "Ottawa is my favourite city."

Margo Roston is *Diplomat's* culture editor.



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## New arrivals

**Shinkai Karokhail**  
Ambassador of Afghanistan



As an activist-turned-elected member of parliament, Ambassador Karokhail has fought for the causes of Afghan women for the past 26 years.

She was first elected to parliament in 2005, where she served as co-founder of the Women's Parliamentary Network and the women's caucus.

She also served as director of the Afghan Women's Education Centre (AWEC) for four years. Prior to that, she was a teacher and social worker.

She successfully lobbied for endorsing the national action plan for the Women of Afghanistan as well as gender-based reform in Shiite personal law.

Karokhail studied political science and international relations and also attended medical college at Kabul University. She speaks Dari, Pashto, Urdu and English.

**Edgar Fermán Palacios Bermúdez**  
Ambassador of El Salvador



Ambassador Palacios Bermúdez has spent his career doing ministerial and ecumenical work. He has a master's in social science from the Latin American Faculty of Social

Sciences in Mexico.

He became a minister of Emmanuel Baptist Church in 1969 and continued to work there, intermittently, until 1986. He served as minister at other churches in San Salvador for 12 years before becoming a missionary and associate minister at the Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

Over his years in the ministry, he represented his country at various international conferences and in front of committees, including the Inter-eclesiastical Conference of Germany, the foreign affairs subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere at the U.S. House of Representatives, and the European Conference for Peace in El Salvador at The Hague.

Palacios Bermúdez, a widower, speaks Spanish and English.

**Vesa Ilmari Lehtonen**  
Ambassador of Finland



Ambassador Lehtonen received a master's degree in history from the University of Turku in 1991.

Before beginning his diplomatic career by joining the foreign ministry in 1995, he worked as a journalist and a history and civics teacher, among other positions.

His first posting came one year after he joined the foreign ministry. He was posted to Sweden between 1996-2001, and was sent to Italy, where he served as deputy head of mission between 2004 and 2007.

At the foreign ministry in Helsinki, Lehtonen has mainly served in the European department and in human resources management. Before his posting in Canada — his first as head of mission — he was deputy director general for personnel between 2012 and 2016.

Ambassador Lehtonen and his wife, Pirjetta Manninen, have four children. The two youngest are here in Canada with them.

**Carlos Humberto Jiménez Licona**  
Ambassador of Guatemala



Ambassador Jiménez Licona began his career working as a consultant and professor of economics. He has also already served one seven-year stint as Guatemala's ambassador to Canada.

He joined the foreign ministry as an economic counsellor at the embassy in Brussels in 1987 and two years later, he became ambassador to Belgium, with concurrent accreditation to Netherlands and Luxembourg.

He returned to the foreign ministry in 1992, and became deputy minister of foreign affairs before becoming ambassador to Sweden with concurrent accreditation to Finland. He returned to his deputy minister position for 16 months before becoming an adviser to the foreign minister. From 2000 to 2007, he was ambassador to Canada before being sent to Brazil for four years. Prior to this appointment, he was ambassador to Germany.

Jiménez Licona is married and has degrees in economics and industrial development.

**Lulzim Hiseni**  
Ambassador of Kosovo



Ambassador Hiseni has been in Canada, as chargé d'affaires at the newly opened embassy of Kosovo, since late 2015. Approval from the Canadian government to represent

his country here came in 2016.

After completing two master's degrees, he became a professional translator and worked in France in numerous capacities — including as a researcher and a legal officer — before joining Kosovo's foreign ministry in 2010.

His first posting was as first secretary at the embassy in Belgium from 2010 to 2011 when he became first secretary at the mission in France. He was soon appointed as minister-counsellor at the same mission and stayed for four more years. In September 2015, he was sent to Ottawa to set up the country's first embassy here and in October 2016, he presented his credentials as ambassador.

Hiseni speaks Albanian, French, English, Croatian and Serbian.

**Mahamadou Diarra**  
Ambassador of Mali



Ambassador Diarra's career has been marked by his promotion and defence of democracy. He studied law before becoming a consultant working with ministries, inter-

national organizations and NGOs.

Diarra also taught at the National School of Administration, at a local gendarmerie and in the faculty of law at the University of Mali from 1994 to 1996. Between 1994 and 2002, he created and directed an organization that promoted and defended democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

From 2002 to 2005, he was a political analyst and, from 2006 to 2013, he consulted on governance and justice, both for the government of Mali. In 2013, he became minister of housing and urban development and minister of justice and attorney general.

Diarra's appointment to Canada includes concurrent accreditation to the International Civil Aviation Organization.



**Kyaw Myo Htut**  
Ambassador of Myanmar



Ambassador Htut spent most of his career in the military of Myanmar, serving from 1981 until 2008 and reaching the rank of colonel. He has a bachelor of science de-

gree and a master's in military studies and, during his service in the military, was part of delegations that visited Japan, India, China, Turkey and the Netherlands.

Htut transferred to the foreign ministry as a director in 2008. He was soon appointed as minister-counsellor at the permanent mission to the United Nations in Geneva, where he served from 2008 to 2010. He was promoted to the rank of ambassador at the same posting, where he continued to serve until 2011.

Htut was then appointed ambassador to the United Kingdom from 2011 to 2013, after which he served as ambassador to the United States.

The ambassador is married and has two daughters and a son.

**Henk van der Zwan**  
Ambassador of the Netherlands



Ambassador van der Zwan joined the Netherlands' foreign ministry in 1985 after completing a bachelor's degree at the European School in Luxembourg and a

master's in law at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands.

His first posting was to Tunisia and then Belgium at the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of the European Union. At headquarters, he worked in several sections, including at the department of consular affairs, asylum and migration, the political affairs department, the directorate for personnel and management and the private office of the permanent undersecretary.

Between 2002 and 2006, he was the principal secretary to the queen. He became ambassador to Estonia from 2006 to 2010, returning to headquarters as national co-ordinator for international positions. Until this appointment to Canada, he was chief inspector in the foreign service.

Van der Zwan is married to Jolijn Eikeboom. They have one daughter.

**Jamal Abdullah Al-Sallal**  
Ambassador of Yemen



Ambassador Al-Sallal has a master's in international public policy from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

This appointment brings him full circle as, in his first posting in 1986, he was responsible for Yemeni-Canadian affairs in Washington.

From 1994 to 1998, he was deputy to the ambassador at the Arab League, based in Cairo. He then spent a few years in Sanaa as a member of the Arabic department, director for North American and Canadian Affairs and vice-chairman of the department of North and South America.

In 2004, he became consul-general to Mumbai and a year later, consul-general to UAE. He was ambassador to Iran from 2006 to 2011 and non-resident ambassador to Azerbaijan. Prior to a short stint as foreign minister in 2014, he was ambassador at the United Nations in New York.

Al-Sallal speaks English and Arabic and is married with three children.

## Non-heads of mission

**Afghanistan**  
Mohammad Yama  
Minister-counsellor

**Australia**  
Brittany Emerald  
Noakes  
Second Secretary

**Burkina-Faso**  
Issaka Bonkougou  
Second Counsellor

**Chile**  
Constanza  
Figueroa  
Sepulveda  
Counsellor &  
deputy head of  
mission

**China**  
Meifen Zhu  
Second Secretary

**Colombia**  
German Delgado  
Correa  
Defence, military,  
naval & air attaché

**Cuba**  
Luis Moises

Castaneda  
Gonzalez  
Attaché  
Victor Daniel  
Alvarez Garcia  
Counsellor

**Guatemala**  
Alejandro Fajardo  
Estrada  
Third secretary

**Japan**  
Kaname Sekine  
First secretary

**Kazakhstan**  
Zhanara Abdulova  
Second secretary

**Kuwait**  
Mansour A J  
Ismael

**Lithuania**  
Gitana Bagdoniené  
Third Secretary

**Mexico**  
Jose Fernando  
Castillo Tapia  
Minister

**Myanmar**  
Yin Myo Khine  
First Secretary

**Nigeria**  
Moses Ogbonnaya  
Okoro  
Attaché

**Pakistan**  
Nadeem Haider  
Kiani  
Counsellor

**Russia**  
Nikolay  
Moskvichev  
Counsellor

**Russia**  
Valentin Nadetskiy,  
Attaché

**Saudi Arabia**  
Raed Saoud M.  
Almakhli  
Attaché

**Tanzania**  
Aisha Mussa  
Mandia  
Attaché

**Tunisia**  
Marwa Jabou  
Bessadok  
First secretary

**Ukraine**  
Kyrilo Bohachov  
First secretary

**United Kingdom**  
Janet Elizabeth  
Huntington  
Counsellor

**United States**  
Kevin Frank  
Vorndran  
Attaché

**Venezuela**  
Jissette Carolina  
Abreu Lopez  
Second secretary

**Yemen**  
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1. The embassy of Japan hosted the Sogetsu Ikebana International Ottawa Chapter's annual Ikebana exhibition. More than 400 people attended this free event. Here, Miki Mitchell, an Ikebana teacher from Sandy Hill Community Centre, stands in front of her work. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. Icelandic Ambassador Sturla Sigurjónsson, second left, and his wife, Elin Jónsdóttir, left, attended the Atlantic Salmon Federation's fall run dinner at the Museum of History. Marie José da Silva and Rosa Costa, executive assistant to Portuguese Ambassador José Moreira da Cunha, attended as well. Da Cunha and his wife, Maria (not pictured) and Jónsdóttir and Sigurjónsson offered dinner at their residences during the live auction portion of the event. (Jamie Johnson) 3. Ballet dancers from the Shanghai Ballet Bai Dan, Cao Xue and Yan Wentong performed the ballet "Giselle" at the National Arts Centre. Prior the performance, China's ministry of culture and Heritage Canada, together with the embassy of China, hosted a reception to mark the conclusion of the "Canada-China year of people-to-people and cultural exchanges." (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Armenian Ambassador Armen Yeghanyan and his wife, Maria, who is pictured here, hosted an embassy chamber music concert at their residence in support of Friends of the National Arts Centre Orchestra. Yosuke Kawasaki, concertmaster of the National Arts Centre Orchestra, and pianist Vadim Serebryany, were guest performers. (Photo: Lois Siegel) 5. Serbian Crown Prince Alexander and his wife, Princess Katherine, visited Ottawa, with stops at CHEO and Carleton University. (Photo: Embassy of Serbia) 6. To mark the national day of Vietnam, Ambassador To Anh Dung and his wife, Tran Phi Nga, hosted a reception at the Westin Hotel. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





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1. To mark the 195th anniversary of the independence of the Central American Countries, Guatemalan Ambassador Rita Claverie de Sciolli, Honduran Ambassador Sofia Lastenia Cerrato Rodriguez, Costa Rican Ambassador Roberto Dormond Cantu and Salvadoran chargé d'affaires Xochitl Guadalupe Zelaya hosted a reception at the Rideau Club. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 2. U.S. Ambassador Bruce Heyman visited Algonquin College to promote American produce. He's shown here cooking with student Tomas Ferraton. (Photo: Jana Chytilova) 3. To mark the national day of Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy, right, hosted a reception at his residence. Dr. Abdullah al Rabeeah, special adviser to the King and supervisor general of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid Relief Centre, left, helped cut the cake with Senate Speaker George Furey, centre. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 4. To mark the 206th anniversary of the independence of Chile and the 75th anniversary of Canada-Chile diplomatic relations, Ambassador Alejandro Marisio and his wife, Maria Cecilia Beretta, hosted a reception at Ottawa City Hall. Here, Lorena Silva, artistic director of the Montreal Groupe Folklorique Arco-Iris, performs in colourful traditional dress. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 5. Chilean Ambassador Alejandro Marisio and his wife, Maria Cecilia Beretta. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 6. To mark the 206th anniversary of the independence of Mexico, Ambassador Agustín García López, centre left, and his wife, Katya Anaya de García-Lopez, centre right, hosted a reception at their residence. They're shown with Cirque du Soleil acrobats, who attended the event. (Photo: Ülle Baum)



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1. The Kitchener band Twin City Alpine Echo performed at a Bierfest hosted by German Ambassador Werner Wnendt and his wife, Eleonore Wnendt-Juber. Guests enjoyed premium German beer. From left, John (Hansi) Kroisenbrunner, Murray Giiick and Alf Schroth. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 2. The China Institute at University of Alberta, in partnership with the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, held a senior policy forum on Canada-China Relations at the Château Laurier. From left, Marius Grinius, fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and former Canadian ambassador to South Korea, and Ruan Zongze, executive vice-president and senior fellow at the China Institute for International Studies. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 3. Amine Pierre Gemayel, former president of Lebanon, attended a dinner at St. Elias Centre in his honour. Here, he greets the Lebanese community as he is welcomed at the event. (Photo: Sam Garcia) 4. Serbian Ambassador Mihailo Papazoglu hosted a reception on the occasion of the visit of Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic. The event also commemorated 75 years of diplomatic relations between Belgrade and Ottawa. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 5. The Emirates Postal Group and Canada Post Corporation signed a bilateral agreement at the embassy of the United Arab Emirates. From left, Deepak Chopra, president and CEO of Canada Post, and Abdullah Al Ashram, CEO of Emirates Post. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 6. Chung-chen Kung, head of mission at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office and his wife, Triffie Kung, hosted a reception in celebration of the 105th National Day of Taiwan at the Château Laurier. (Photo by Ülke Baum)





1. House of Commons Speaker Geoff Regan and EU Ambassador Marie-Anne Coninx hosted an awards ceremony for the EU-Canada Young Journalist Fellowships on Parliament Hill. From left: Nick Taylor-Vaisey, president of the Canadian Association of Journalists, Coninx, winners Julien Beaulieu and Genevieve Zingg, and Regan. Not shown is third winner, Philippe-Vincent Foisy. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 2. The Czech embassy presented a contemporary photography exhibition titled "On an Egg" at the embassy's gallery. Ambassador Pavel Hrnčíř and his wife, Veronika Holcova, hosted the event. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. Algerian Ambassador Hocine Meghar and his wife, Elbia, hosted a national day reception at the Fairmont Château Laurier. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. The Bollywood Bash Gala, organized by the Indo-Canada Ottawa Business Chamber, took place at the Shaw Centre. From left: Ravinder Tumber, business owner and director of the Orléans Chamber of Commerce; MP Andrew Leslie, chief government whip; Small Business and Tourism Minister Bardish Chagger; MP Jati Sidhu and MP Randeep Sarai. (Photo: Ülke Baum)



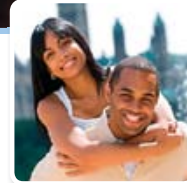
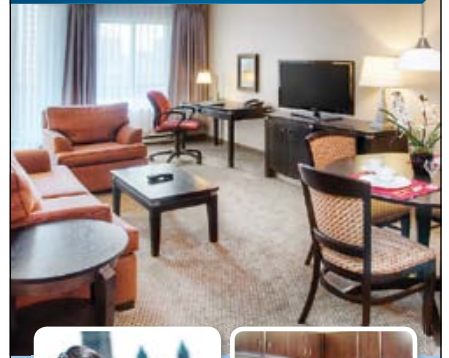
1. Spanish Ambassador Carlos Gomez-Mugica Sanz and his wife, Maria De La Rica Aranguren, hosted a national day reception at their residence. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 2. The French Embassy hosted a thank-you reception for sponsors of the Ottawa Hospital Gala. From left, event co-chairs Whitney Fox and Greg Kane; hostess Sylvie Camia Chapuis; Tim Kluge, president and CEO of The Ottawa Hospital Foundation; Dr. Duncan Stewart, the hospital's vice-president research; and hospital president and CEO Jack Kitts. (Photo: Kara Taylor) 3. Baltic Unity Day, established in 2000 by the parliaments of Latvia and Lithuania to commemorate the Battle of Saule, fought in 1236, was celebrated on Parliament Hill. From left, Estonian Ambassador Gita Kalmet; MP Jamie Schmale, chairman of the Parliamentary Nordic-Baltic Friendship Group; Julijus Rakitskis, minister-counsellor at the Embassy of Lithuania, and Latvian Ambassador Karlis Eihenbaums. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Austrian Ambassador Arno Riedel and his wife, Loretta Loria-Riedel, hosted a reception at their residence to mark Austria's national day and bid farewell. They are shown with Etsuko Monji, wife of the Japanese ambassador. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. German Minister of State Michael Roth gave a lecture at Carleton University titled "The European Union at a Crossroads: A Perspective from Germany." (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. To mark the 93rd anniversary of the proclamation of Turkey, Ambassador Selçuk Ünal and his wife, Lerzan Kayihan Ünal, hosted a reception at their residence. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 7. The Pakistani High Commission and the Canadian Pakistani Association organized Kashmir Black Day. Pakistani High Commissioner Tariq Azim Khan speaks here. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. The winners of the StartUp Tel Aviv contest were announced at Startup Canada's headquarters. From left, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Minister Navdeep Bains, Brenda Halloran, chairwoman of the board of Startup Canada; winner Andrea Palmer, CEO of Awake Labs; Small Business and Tourism Minister Bardish Chagger; Kathryn Forrest, communications manager at Startup Canada; and Israeli Ambassador Rafael Barak. (Photo: Cyprian Szalankiewicz) 2. To mark Nepal's National Day, Ambassador Kali Prasad Pokhrel and his wife, Kamala, hosted a reception at Ottawa City Hall. (Photo by Ülke Baum) 3. Saudi Ambassador and Ottawa Diplomatic Association (ODA) president Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy hosted a casual fall gathering of the ODA at Lac-Leamy in Gatineau. (Photo: Ülke Baum)

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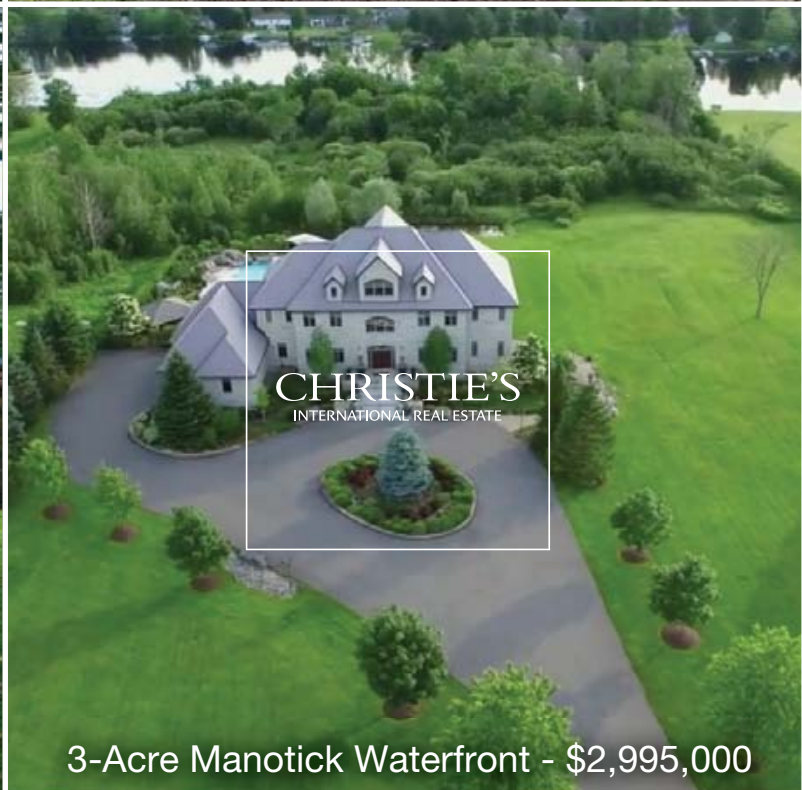
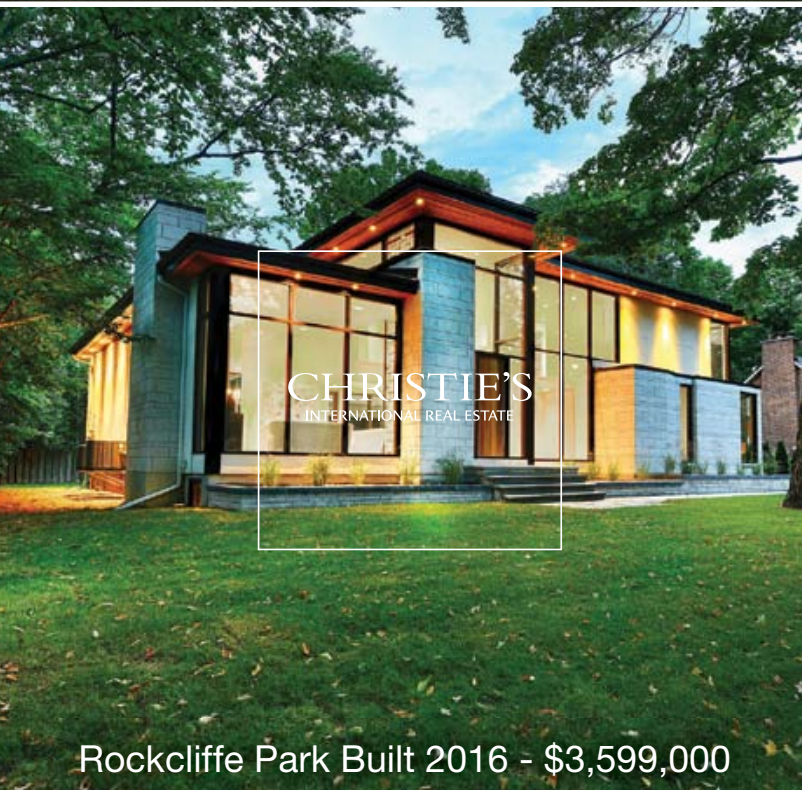


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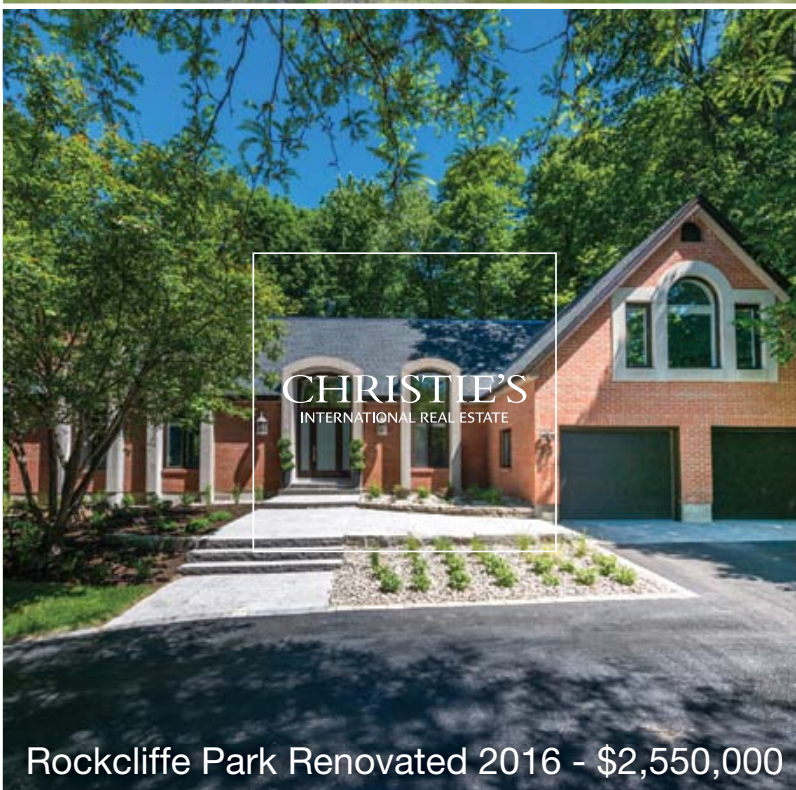
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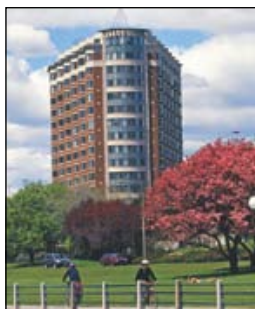
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Uyuni Salt Lake is the world's largest salt flat, stretching over an area of 10,000 square kilometres at 3,600 metres above sea level. The lake is formed by a few metres of salt crust that cover an area containing more than 70 per cent of the world's lithium reserves.



*By Pablo Guzmán Laugier*

**W**ith its great diversity and dramatic differences in topography and climate, Bolivia is one of the world's most unique countries. It offers a wide range of ecosystems from low-lying wetlands and dense rainforests to high plateaus and dry forests. Bolivia, which boasts Amazonian rainforests and the snow-capped mountains of the Andes, offers an unforgettable adventure in the midst of beautiful natural landscapes.

It is also rich in history and tradition, with a total of 36 native cultures. On the whole, this creates an exciting experience, heightened by Bolivia's warm and generous people.

Today, Bolivia, under the leadership of President Evo Morales Ayma, has made historic improvements not only in its economy, which has one of the strongest growth rates in the region, but also by taking the lead on environmental protection,





Cordillera Real is a mountain chain that extends for more than 40 kilometres with peaks that soar to 5,000 metres above sea level.

which is inherent in its ancient culture, and by proclaiming the Law of the Rights of Mother Earth. As Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca has stated, the key to the philosophy of “Vivir Bien” or “Live Well” is Bolivia’s traditional indigenous respect for the Mother Earth, which is vital in preventing climate change.

Bolivia offers a variety of places to visit where you can find high-adrenaline adventures, wild natural landscapes, magical experiences and incredible cities. Here, we list a number of those attractions.

**Death Road:** This single-lane road connects the capital of La Paz to the Coroico Valley. The scenery quickly changes from the cool Altiplano terrain to the Yungas rainforest, with steep hillsides and dangerous cliffs as high as 600 metres. It is a breathtaking experience, with waterfalls and abundant vegetation, ideal for nature lovers and mountain-biking enthusiasts.

**Cordillera Real:** The Cordillera Real is one of the most beautiful landscapes. Its mountain chain extends for more than 40 kilometres, with rock- and ice-filled valleys and more than 80 peaks that soar to 5,000 metres above sea level. This area is especially attractive to hikers who would



Madidi Park is one of the most bio-diverse nature reservations on Earth.

like to take in the beauty of the mountains surrounded by small traditional indigenous communities.

**The pre-Hispanic roads:** Also known as the Inca Roads, they navigate through the ancient Incan Empire, where one can discover the remarkable architectural abilities of the Incas. The Incas overcame many challenges and their infrastructure remains, complete with stoned streets, hanging bridges, stone stairways, fences and ceremonial centres. In 2014, the road system became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visiting this site is a great opportunity for those who love history and architecture.

**Uyuni Salt Lake:** In the south of Bolivia, this is a place where the sky and the Earth come together to challenge the senses. It is the world’s largest salt flat, stretching over an area of 10,000 square kilometres at 3,600 metres above sea level. The lake is formed by a few metres of salt crust that cover an area containing more than 65 per cent of the world’s lithium reserves.

**Madidi Park:** This park is where you can breathe the cleanest and purest air on Earth. It is a place where nature, animals and people live in perfect harmony, preserving traditions and culture. This is one





For those who enjoy Baroque music, the mission in eastern Bolivia is an extraordinary legacy of Jesuit missionaries.



Known also as Sacred Lake, this is one of the bluest and highest lakes in the world at 3,800 metres above the sea level. The lake is the best place to eat fresh trout, crispy sardines and nutritious Karachi soup, which is made from the spiny fish of the same name.

of the most bio-diverse natural reserves in the world with an ecosystem that supports endemic plant life and one of the largest varieties of bird species. The Madidi National Park offers ecological and cultural tour experiences to visitors.

**Lake Titicaca:** Known also as Sacred Lake, this is one of the bluest and highest lakes in the world (at 3,800 metres above sea level). There are archeological ruins, agricultural terraces and islands in which the local people still make ritual offerings to Mother Earth and the sun god. The culture reflects one of the most important pre-Incan civilizations in Bolivia. The lake is the best place to eat fresh trout (the unique *pejerrey*), the crispy *ispies* (small sardines) and nutritious Karachi soup, which is made from the spiny fish with the same name. You can expect cultural exchanges with members of the local Aymara indigenous communities of the area.

**Jesuit Missions:** For those who want to enjoy Baroque music, the Jesuit Mission in eastern Bolivia is an extraordinary legacy of Jesuit missionaries. Their work is reflected in the architecture and culture of the Guarani communities surrounding the churches. An International Baroque Music Festival is held here every spring and attracts visitors from around the world.



**Samaipata:** This is the last known remnant of the Incan Empire. The site, located near the city of Santa Cruz, contains a temple constructed in a large carved rock with hidden natural waterfalls. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

**Tiwanaku:** The Tiwanaku Civilization is one of the oldest Andean cultures and is famous for its stunning architecture and amazing natural monuments. The most famous architectural marvels of the area include the sculpture of the Puerta del Sol, which features engravings that represent the calendar of the Andean world; the Kalasaya Temple, a subterranean temple; and the Akapana Pyramid.

**Potosi and Sucre:** These two large cities, located in southwestern Bolivia, have a full history, with colonial architectural features.

Sucre, also called the White City, is one of the most beautiful colonial cities in Latin America. It is a living museum showing what life was like for the Spanish colonial aristocracy. Its history, warmth, musical diversity and mild year-round climate make this a hard place to leave.

**Potosi:** The city of Potosi is located at the foot of the Cerro Rico, which is famous for its history as the richest silver mine of the modern era. These mines operated during colonial times and created the greatest wealth in the region. The architectural style is known as Andean Baroque. The colonial culture of the city is characterized by its narrow streets and historic museums, churches and convents.

**The Oruro Carnival:** This colourful religious festival is one of UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. It is an indigenous festival that incorporates a Christian ritual with traditional dance. Throughout the festival, more than 100 groups of folk dancers, specializing in 20 different folk dances, perform a pilgrimage to the sanctuary.

The heavy masks and highly embroidered, colourful costumes imitate pre-Columbian dresses made by local craftsman, while different dances and music tell stories about the traditions of the area. For example, the Morenada dance was inspired by the sufferings of the African slaves brought to Bolivia to work in the Silver Mines of Potosi. The Oruro carnival is an exciting event where you can experience the bliss, joy and passion of the dancers, musicians and festival participants.

A new Bolivia invites you to see more of its culture, history, archeology and bio-diverse landscape. My country awaits you.

Pablo Guzmán Laugier is ambassador of Bolivia.



Sucre is one of the most beautiful colonial cities in Latin America.



The Amazonian Rainforest runs through nine countries. Bolivia is one of them.



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Photo by Bill Blackstone

## Celebration time

A listing of the national and independence days marked by countries

January		
1	Cuba	Liberation Day
1	Haiti	Independence Day
1	Sudan	National Day
4	Myanmar	Independence Day
24	Maldives	National Day
26	Australia	Australia Day
31	Nauru	National Day
February		
4	Sri Lanka	National Day
6	New Zealand	National Day
7	Grenada	Independence Day
11	Iran	National Day
15	Serbia	National Day
16	Lithuania	Independence Day
17	Kosovo	Independence Day
18	Gambia	Independence Day
22	Saint Lucia	Independence Day
23	Brunei Darussalam	National Day
23	Guyana	Republic Day
24	Estonia	Independence Day
25	Kuwait	National Day
27	Dominican Republic	Independence Day
March		
3	Bulgaria	National Day
6	Ghana	National Day
12	Mauritius	National Day
17	Ireland	St. Patrick's Day
20	Tunisia	Proclamation of Independence
23	Pakistan	Pakistan Day
25	Greece	Independence Day
26	Bangladesh	National Day
April		
4	Senegal	Independence Day
16	Denmark	Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II
17	Syria	National Day
18	Zimbabwe	Independence Day
19	Holy See	Election Day of Pope
26	Tanzania	Union Day
27	Sierra Leone	Republic Day
27	South Africa	Freedom Day
27	Togo	National Day
27	Netherlands	King's Day



MIKE BEEDELL WWW.MIKEBEEDELLPHOTO.CA



Photographer Mike Beedell met this gentoo penguin and its chick at Brown Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula. Although clumsy on land, these creatures are exquisite flyers beneath the seas. Gentoos are the fastest underwater penguins, reaching speeds of 36 kilometres per hour. An estimated 300,000 pairs live on the Antarctic Peninsula and sub-Antarctic islands. They lay two eggs and both adults share incubation responsibilities. Breeding takes place from December to March. The cacophony around a gentoo colony is an aural adventure not soon forgotten and the smell is overwhelming. They propulsively shoot pink feces from the nest and constant vigilance is essential. Also not to be missed are the hilarious pebble-stealing tactics of jealous avian neighbours, who constantly play a game of one-upmanship by pinching nest stones from others to add to their properties. Gentoos can often be seen waddling along snowy highways like drunken sailors. They walk long distances to their nests, which are usually treasured stone outcrops with pebbles. Their favourite food includes crustaceans such as krill, as well as squid and small fish species. These birds have predators on land and sea. Skua sea birds, the pirates of Antarctica, steal the chicks around the nests and voracious leopard seals and killer whales consume them at sea. Gentoos weigh up to six kilograms and can reach 80 centimetres in length. Their life span averages 15 to 20 years. Penguin chicks learn to swim without their parents' tutelage.

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At the corner of Wellington West and Island Park Drive in the popular Westboro neighbourhood, Mizrahi Developments presents its award-winning brand with a 12-storey condominium building of architectural note. Featuring a copper mansard roof and pale limestone exterior, the design by Page + Steele/IBI Group Architects has been recognized by Ottawa's Urban Review Design Panel as a distinctive landmark.

Here, you are as close to the outdoor wilderness in the Gatineau region of Quebec as you are to the cultural attractions at the centre of the capital; and you can live in a sanctuary of superior craftsmanship, custom-designed to your specific requirements, with a level of service that makes you feel you're in a five-star boutique hotel. Your home can fill an entire floor with your own private elevator.

Every residence feels like a stand-alone home, crafted with details such as coffered ceilings, matched marble floors and solid wood doors that require four hinges. It's the way they built mansions in the old-world era. Mizrahi Developments believes our built environment has the power to enhance and enrich our lives, and this is what we work passionately to achieve.