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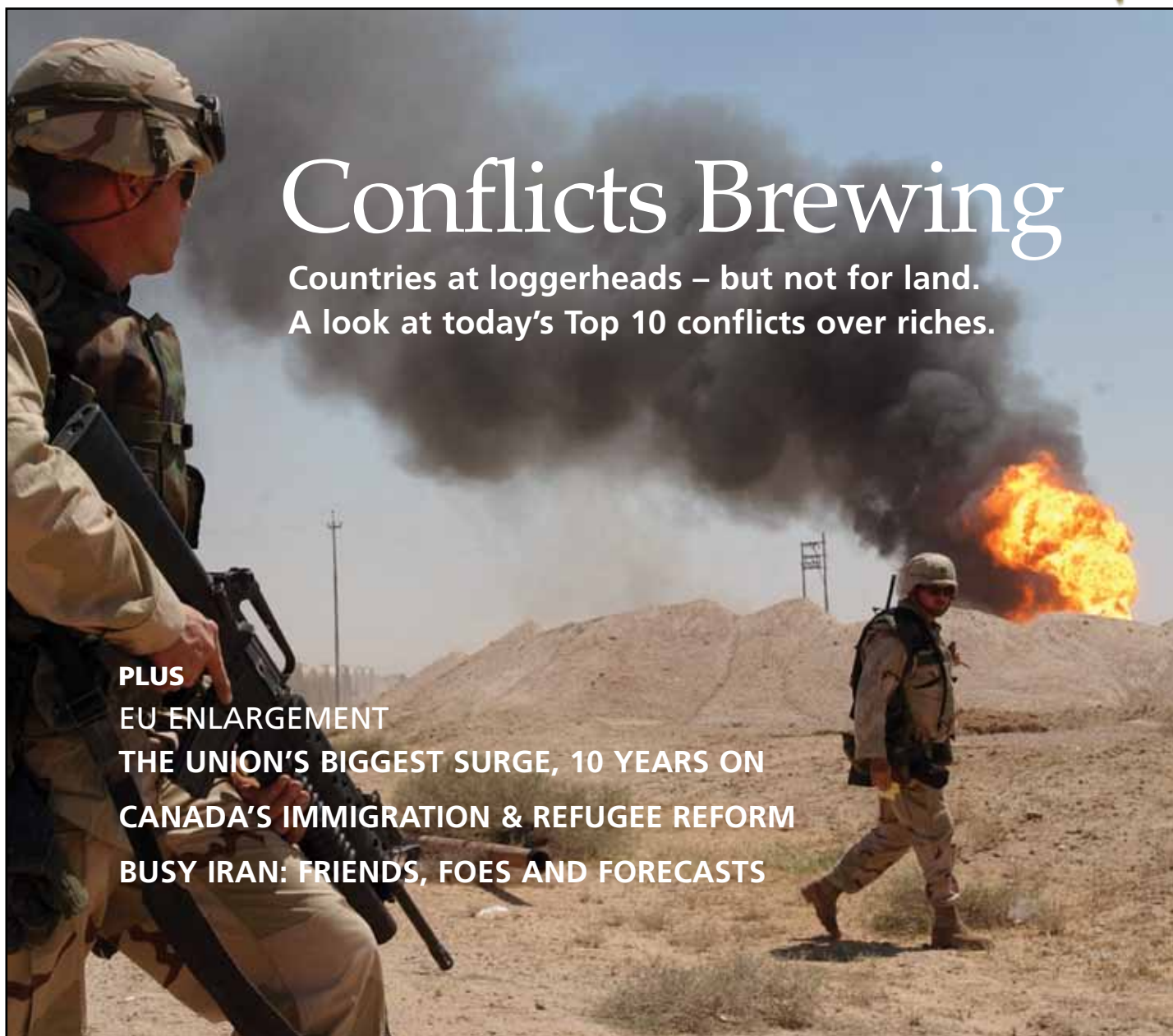
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Brian Lee Crowley on un-socialist Sweden  
George Fetherling on Vietnam's Dragon Lady  
Margaret Dickenson on Swiss dishes  
Argentina's envoy on its tourist treasures





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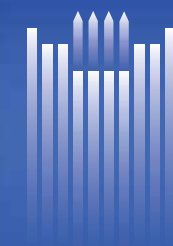
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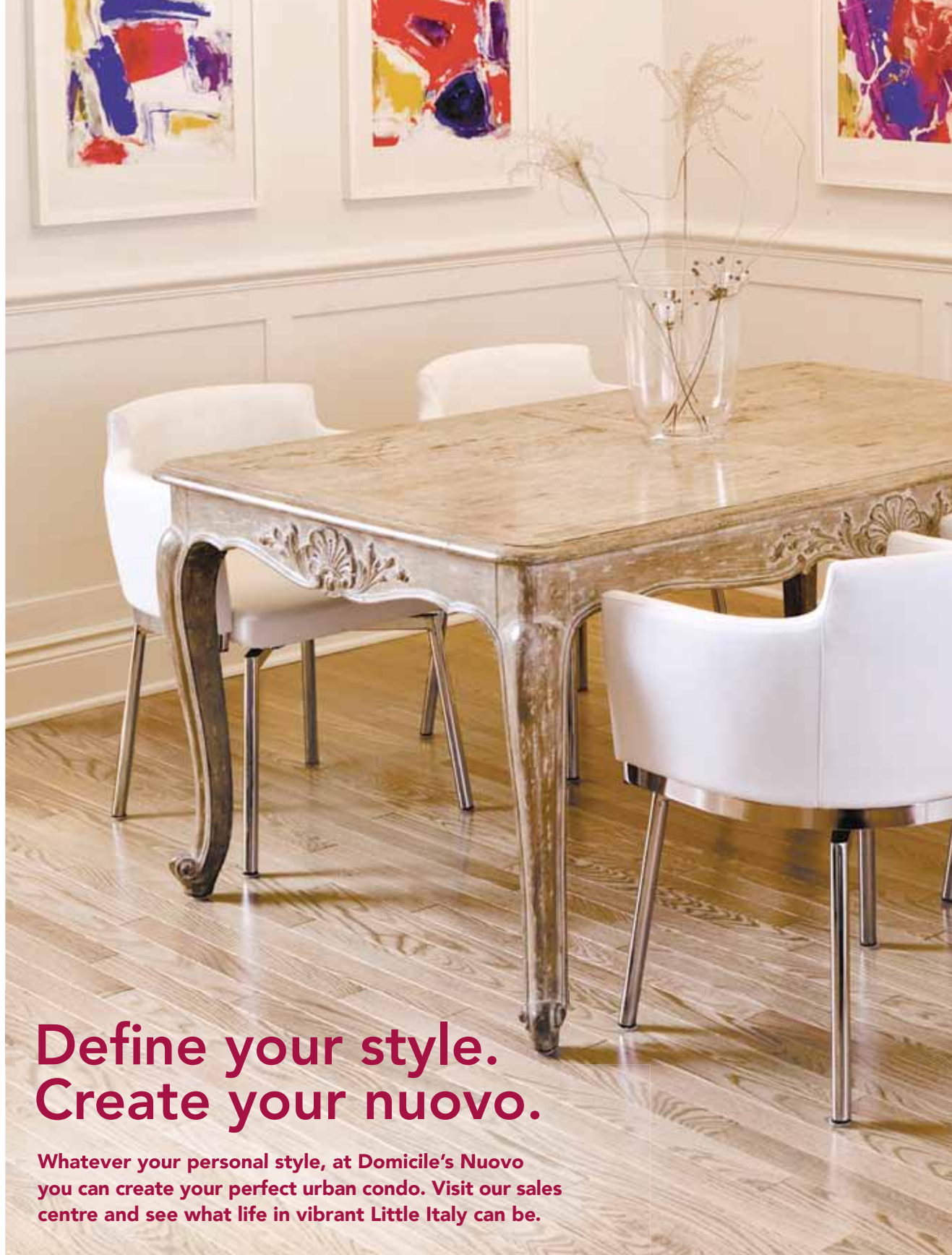
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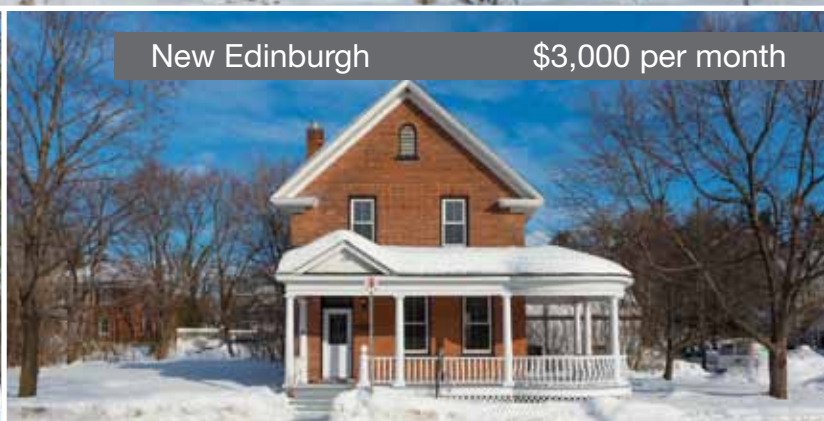
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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
*Diplomat & International Canada* is published four times a year. Subscription rates: individual, one year \$35.70. For Canadian orders add 13 per cent HST. U.S. orders please add \$15 for postage. All other orders please add \$25.

**SUBMISSIONS**  
*Diplomat & International Canada* welcomes submissions. Contact Jennifer Campbell, editor, at [editor@diplomatonline.com](mailto:editor@diplomatonline.com) or (613) 231-8476.

**PRINTER**  
*Diplomat & International Canada* is printed by Dolco The Lowe Martin Group.

**DIPLOMAT & INTERNATIONAL CANADA**  
P.O. Box 1173, Station B  
Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1P 5R2  
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E-mail: [info@diplomatonline.com](mailto:info@diplomatonline.com)  
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Published by Sparrow House Enterprises Inc.



Volume 25, Number 2

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## The world of resources

**F**or as far back as one can imagine, there have been wars over religious beliefs and territory and now, two world wars later, as civil and territorial conflicts and sectarian violence continue across the globe — Ukraine, Afghanistan, Sudan, Nigeria — there are also wars over resources to consider. Recent history has seen a few. Case in point: The U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The ostensible reason for invading was to rid dictator Saddam Hussein's regime of weapons of mass destruction, but it's a widely held view now that stabilizing the oil situation was the primary aim.

As Wolfgang Depner surveyed the globe in 2014, he identified 10 hot spots where wars of a similar kind — those over a finite resource — could potentially break out at some point, or are imminent.

No. 1 on his list was — no surprise here — the Middle East. But some of the others, the Arctic, for example, may surprise you.

Also in *Dispatches*, we look back at an historic event and analyse what it has meant — the good, the bad and the unexpected. It's been 10 years since the European Union took the historic step of inviting 10 new countries into its fold. Eight of them, namely Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Latvia, were post-communist states, and therefore quite culturally distant — at least for four decades — from their western European counterparts in the union.

Today, they are some of the most solid members of the EU. Some of their pre-

decessors — Greece, Portugal, Spain and Italy among them — are giving the EU headaches over their individual financial hardships, while economies such as that of Poland thrive.

We asked three respected political scientists to look back at the historic enlargement and analyse the progress and problems that have resulted. We also have articles written by EU Ambassador Marie-Anne Coninx and Polish Ambassador Marcin Bosacki that give their individual views.

We also tackle topics that include socialism in Sweden, regional conflicts in countries neighbouring Iran and South Africa's tenuous future.

Up front, we have political cartoons from around the world and columnist Fen Hampson's analysis of corruption's cost in governments worldwide. We also include a column by immigration expert James Bissett, who weighs in on Canada's temporary visa policy, something that's weakened the country's relationship with its North American ally, Mexico, particularly since Canada has waived the requirement for the Czech Republic.

We talk trade with ambassadors from Myanmar, Japan and Ireland and also hear from Zimbabwean Ambassador Florence Chideya, who lists her government's efforts to reform after wide criticism of its undemocratic policies.

Our Delights section starts off with books editor George Fetherling's reviews on topics that include Madame Nhu, the so-called Dragon Lady of Vietnam, Pakistan and former Canadian diplomat Chester Ronning.

On our back page, in a feature we call "Photo Finish," we share photographer Mike Beedell's image of a common loon. Mr. Beedell is a Gatineau Hills wildlife photographer who spent the month of February in Churchill, Man., photographing a mother polar bear before and after she gave birth. Our back page is a tribute to late publisher Neil Reynolds, who cherished wildlife.

Jennifer Campbell is *Diplomat's* editor.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### Derek Fraser



Derek Fraser is an associate fellow at the Centre for Global Studies and adjunct professor for political science at the University of Victoria. He has supported democratization in Ukraine, lectured on various topics and organized or contributed to academic and foreign policy conferences, notably on Eastern Europe, Ukraine, failed states, the European Union and China. In 2012, he led a four-month observer mission for the Ukrainian Parliamentary elections. He had a long career in Canada's foreign service. He was ambassador to Hungary, Greece and Ukraine. He was on the board of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, now CIC.

### Brian Lee Crowley



Brian Lee Crowley is managing director of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, Canada's only national public policy think-tank based in Ottawa. Previously, he was founding president of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies.

From 2006-08, he was the Clifford Clark Visiting Economist with the federal department of finance. He has also headed the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, and has taught politics, economics and philosophy at universities in Canada and Europe.

Dr. Crowley has published numerous books and is a frequent media commentator on political and economic issues. He holds degrees from McGill and the London School of Economics, including a doctorate in political economy from the latter.

## UP FRONT

On our cover, in a U.S. Navy photo, an army sergeant stands guard near a burning oil well in the Rumaylah Oil Fields in southern Iraq in 2003 as part of the U.S.'s Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our package on the world's Top 10 places where resource wars could break out, starts on page 36.







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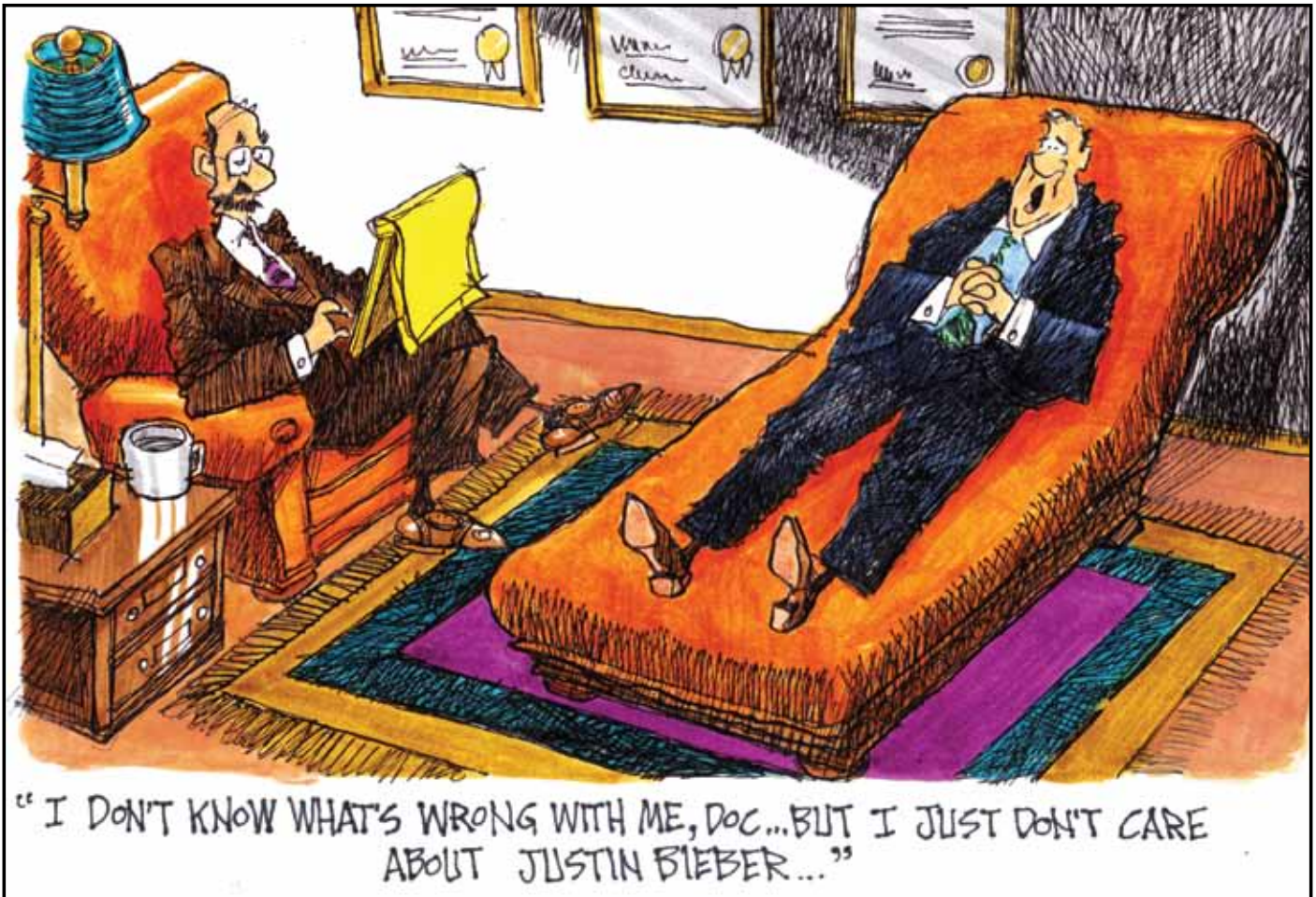
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## Political commentary from around the world



"Biebermania" by Bill Schorr, Cagle Cartoons, U.S.



"Carl Bildt, Rouhani and Khameni" by Riber Hansson, Sydsvenska, Sweden

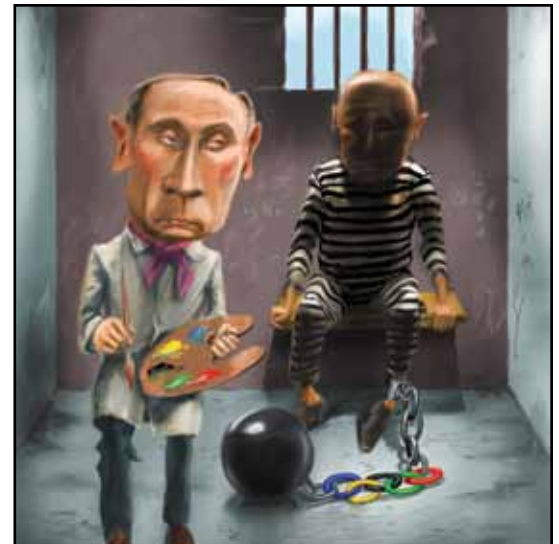


"Military Cuts" by Rick McKee, The Augusta Chronicle, U.S.

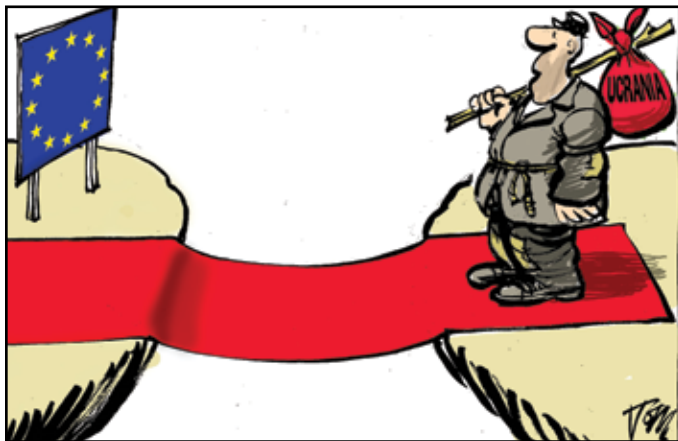




"Ukraine: Redrawing Borders" by Patrick Chappatte, *The International Herald Tribune*, U.S.



"Putin Decorates for the Olympics" by Riber Hansson, *Sydsvenskan*, Sweden



"Ukraine and the EU" by Tom Janssen, Netherlands



"China and Korean Abuses" by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



"Threatening Russia" by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



"Priest Asks Forgiveness" by Dario Castillejos, *Diario La Crisis*, Mexico



"Passing Putin" by Olle Johansson, Sweden

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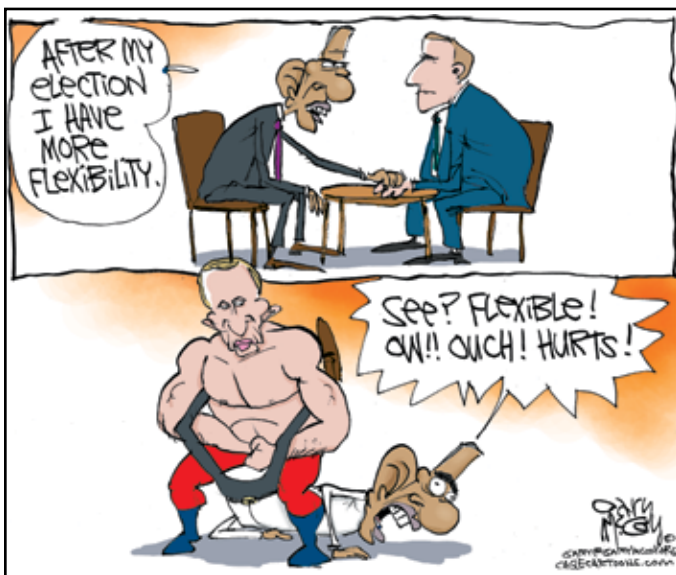
"Nesting Doll" by Adam Zyglis, *The Buffalo News*, U.S.



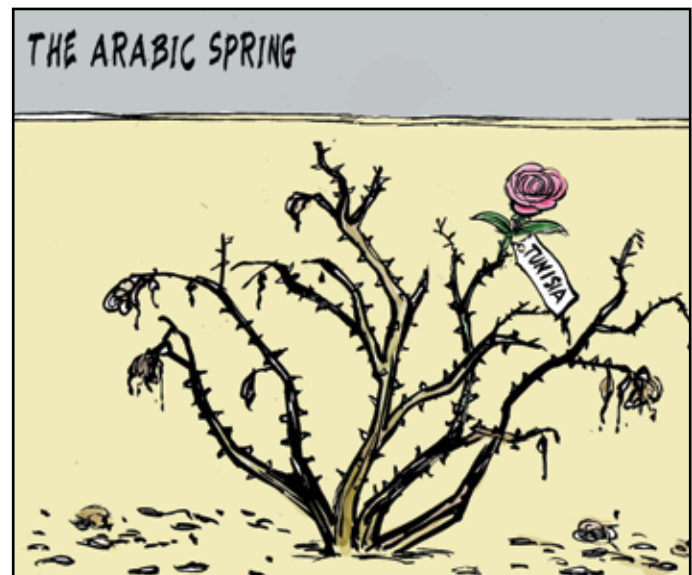
"Ship of State" by Taylor Jones, *El Nuevo Dia*, Puerto Rico, U.S.



"Syria and Rwanda" by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



"Putin Beats Obama" by Gary McCoy, Cagle Cartoons, U.S.



"Tunisia and the Arabic Spring" by Tom Janssen, Netherlands





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**W W W . L A R R I M A C . C O M**

# The heavy price of corruption for democracy

By Fen Osler Hampson and Simon Palamar



There is a story — apocryphal perhaps — that used to make the rounds in Turkish political circles. When he was the mayor of Istanbul, Turkey's current prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was paid a visit by some of the country's leading businessmen about a major construction project.

At the end of the meeting, after he had given the project his general blessing, the businessmen asked him what he wanted in terms of his own cut, suggesting that the usual 10-percent bribe might be reasonable. "Is that the best you can do?" Erdoğan is alleged to have stormed. After meeting privately, the businessmen came back with a higher offer of 15 percent.

Again, Erdoğan asked, "Is that the best you can do?" After another round of private discussions, 20 percent was put on the table. Erdoğan asked the same question again. This time, the reply was in the affirmative. "Fine," said Erdoğan. "I am not going to take the bribe, but I am going to cut your contract by 20 percent."

A large part of Erdoğan's public appeal was his carefully cultivated image as Mr. Clean and the fact that he was no ordinary politician. As mayor of Istanbul, he brought a new level of professionalism to the city's administration and its delivery of public services like clean water and proper sewage disposal, especially to the city's poorer neighbourhoods. His AKP (Justice and Development Party) ran on an electoral platform that included a commitment to liberalize Turkey's economy, promote transparency and eradicate corruption. When he became prime minister, Erdoğan followed through on those commitments. The Turkish economy boomed and its successful, moderate, market-based Islamic-style democracy became a model for other Islamic countries. Erdoğan handily won election after election with bigger and bigger majorities.

Today, however, as the Turkish econ-

omy slumps and protesters take to the streets over Erdoğan's heavy-handed and autocratic ways, his reputation has taken a big hit. But what has perhaps been most damaging are corruption charges that have been levelled against his inner political circle. Three cabinet ministers, several major business leaders and even Erdoğan's son have been dragged into a scandal involving shady oil-for-gold swaps with Iran



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

and bribery for major construction projects allegedly approved by Erdoğan himself, among other allegations.

Turkey's corruption scandal is a sad story that repeats itself over and over again in many emerging markets and developing countries. The figures are sometimes mindboggling, as in the case of Russia, where unscrupulous contractors and officials siphoned off billions as the country struggled to ready itself for the Sochi Winter Olympics, driving up the cost of the Games to a staggering \$50 billion.

Corruption is a massive global problem. As countries get richer, so, too, do

their unscrupulous political and business elites. Corruption makes it hard for Western-based firms to do business in emerging markets because they are often forced to line some official's pockets to secure contracts. This is one reason why, some years ago, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development introduced the Anti-Bribery Convention. It targets corruption by introducing penalties against bribery in international business transactions carried out by companies based in the convention's member countries. The goal of the convention is to level the playing field when companies compete for contracts overseas.

But corruption's deeper toll is that it threatens the lifeblood of democratic development, good governance, political stability and market-based reforms, where such institutions are needed the most.

A hundred years ago, American Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis popularized the nostrum that sunlight is the best disinfectant. Brandeis made the comment in reference to the U.S. Congress's investigation of Wall Street bankers, who were alleged to control the nation's finances through a series of shadowy dealings.

Corruption — commonly defined as the abuse of public office for private gain — can be obvious and obscene, or subtle and part-and-parcel of "ordinary" retail politics. A good example of the former is Indonesia's late president Suharto, who allegedly embezzled as much as \$35 billion during his years in office. In democracies, as anti-corruption think-tank Transparency International (TI) points out, big political donations can change public policies. Politicians who receive the donations benefit. So, too, do donors, who presumably gave the money because they expect it will buy the change they desire. Public confidence, however, can take a hit if the public sees too-big money in politics. This is one reason some countries — such as Canada — cap personal political donations.

However, the line between benign and malignant corruption is a murky one. In Thailand, opponents of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra threatened to shut down the government, because, they allege, she is nothing but the puppet of her brother, former PM Thaksin Shinawatra



(himself democratically elected, but deposed in a coup in 2006).

Thaksin's crime, according to the *Bangkok Post's* Voranai Vanijaka, is that even in a country plagued with corruption, he went too far. "Thai people are quite pragmatic...we understand that everybody takes a little bite of the apple. The problem with Thaksin is that he put a sign on the whole apple tree saying 'property of the Shinawatra family'...that's dangerous to do here."

In Bangladesh, the country's notoriously corrupt public sector has contributed to the string of violent *hartal* [protests causing a massive shutdown of shops and offices] that overtook the country in 2013 and the increasingly hostile competition between the Awami League and the Bangladesh National Party (BNP). Transparency International ranks Bangladesh the third-most corrupt country in South Asia.

Bangladesh's public sector is widely acknowledged to be staffed by political appointees and insiders. Even the Electoral Commission, which is supposed to ensure the freedom and fairness of Bangladesh's elections, is considered fair game for political meddling. The results can be seen in Bangladesh's election earlier this year. While the opposition BNP boycotted the election, the Electoral Commission allegedly permitted a number of procedural lapses that allowed 150 sitting MPs to reclaim their seats unopposed. More than 20 people died in election-related violence, and the prospect of reconciliation between the League and BNP seems remote. It is perhaps no wonder then that some employees of SNC Lavalin felt that they had to resort to bribery to secure a major contract, though this does not justify their actions.

As a new government takes power in Kiev, reforming the political system and breaking the power of oligarchs is a top priority. In a poll taken before the current crisis erupted, the same number of Ukrai-



Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra

nians who said the former Tymonshenko government was ineffective at battling corruption said the same thing about her deposed successor, who enriched himself, his family and friends at public expense. Public concern about government corruption crosses partisan lines and finding a way to fundamentally change a democratic system where lining your own pockets has been the norm will be a daunting task, but it is the key to the country's long-term political stability and economic survival.

Corruption promotes a law-of-the-jungle mindset. It erodes public confidence in government and political institutions and the effect is corrosive. Mexicans, for example, rate corrupt political leaders among their country's top major problems, just after drugs, crime and human rights abuses. The challenge is that drug trafficking and violent crime flourish in Mexico, in part, because of the corruption of public officials. State officials in Mexico are regularly implicated in drug trafficking. Many are under investigation. A

former governor of Tamaulipas has been indicted in the United States. And the low regard for public officials extends to state police and the judiciary.

Corruption also engenders the politics of patronage. If democratically elected leaders are supposed to rule in the best interests of their citizens, corruption threatens to short-circuit that relationship. Thaksin Shinawatra famously declared that "provinces that give us their trust deserve special care." Government becomes a path to riches and pits citizens against their governments and against each other.

Many studies have shown that even in otherwise attractive investment environments, the more people believe that the private sector is corrupt, the slower the economy will grow and the fewer foreign dollars will be invested. There is also strong evidence that corrupt countries, even if they are nominally democratic today, may well be less democratic tomorrow. Freedom House's *Freedom in the World Index* and Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index* show that the more corrupt the public thinks a country's public sector is, the more likely it will be less free five years later. In other words, if today's corruption is allowed to go unfettered, there will be a real loss of freedom tomorrow.

As American philosopher Eric Hoffer once wrote: "It has often been said that power corrupts. But it is perhaps equally important to realize that weakness, too, corrupts. Power corrupts the few, while weakness corrupts the many."

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Irwin Cotler

## Human rights crusader retires as MP

*Photos by Dyanne Wilson*

**Irwin Cotler, who has been called the “pre-eminent voice in the fight against oppression,” is retiring after 16 years as an MP, a job he didn’t really want, at least in the beginning. As the tireless crusader for human rights, freedom and democracy, tells *Diplomat’s* editor, Jennifer Campbell, he has no plans to change his causes or his work day, except that he won’t be on Parliament Hill quite as regularly.**

**Diplomat magazine:** What are your plans for after you retire as an MP?

**Irwin Cotler:** The issues — the Holocaust, genocide, human rights and universal lessons — remain. Now there are even more commemorative events. That’s one generic area I’ll be involved in.

I once moved a motion to have a national day of reflection on the prevention of genocide. It was inspired by the Rwandan genocide. We adopted it unanimously in Parliament, but, regrettably, the Rwandans are the ones who are commemorating it every year. So we have to internationalize the advocacy. This year, I’m hoping that on the 20th anniversary, maybe we can do something different. Last year, there was a good forum in Toronto.

Another issue of mine is political prisoners. That will still be with us. My involvement now is with a political prisoner on nearly every continent so as to highlight the globality of the situation. Political prisoners are usually a looking-glass into a country and its situation of oppression. In February, I was in Geneva, at a summit focusing on political prisoners. I was invited to be the guest speaker. We had actual former political prisoners from Vietnam and Burma, just to highlight the situations [there].

The struggle against impunity of bringing war criminals to justice is another one. It’s scandalous that you can have a situation like that of Sudan. [Omar al-] Bashir has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide and still, he can move around freely. And

the fact is that we didn’t bring most of the Nazi war criminals to justice and that’s an indication they can get away with it.

**DM:** Will you continue this work as a lawyer or an activist?

**IC:** I’ll most likely do it in the way David Kilgour has. He’s managed to do it in part because he’s remained involved with parliamentary groupings that invite former MPs. For example, the Parliamentary Forum for Democracy is one. He also remains active with NGOs. For example, we both sit on a New York-based NGO called Advancing Human Rights. It’s founded by the same person who founded Human Rights Watch. Third, he’s taken on specific causes and given them international resonance — the whole question of organ harvest in China, for example. So I think he’s an example of someone who’s stayed involved. There are outlets for former parliamentarians and the like and when I look back, my human rights advocacy began much before I became a parliamentarian.

**DM:** You had a successful career as a McGill law professor and human rights lawyer — why go into the messy business of politics?

**IC:** It was an accident — an utter accident. I was a very happy law professor and was happily engaged in human rights and enjoying what I was doing. Sheila Finestone, the sitting member, was appointed to the Senate and there was a vacancy in the riding. A few people asked me to run. Not many. I remember going overseas and speaking and coming back. I found three things: There was an incipient grassroots movement to get me to run, there were already three candidates who’d declared and the deadline was four days hence. The deadline for nominations was the day after Yom Kippur and I was at the synagogue when the rabbi, who is a close friend of mine, got up and said ‘We’re going to draft Irwin Cotler for the nomination. He’s not agreed, he doesn’t want to do it, but you’re invited to his house two hours after the ending of the fast.’



That night, a whole slew of people came to my house. I said 'No, I'm not interested.' The next day, someone knocks on the door and says 'I'm Jonathan Herman. You don't know me but I've come to take you to get your nomination papers. The deadline is today.' I said I wasn't running. He said 'Let's just go for a drive.' As we were driving, the three people who were running pulled out, so suddenly there were no candidates. My lawyer told me to see at it as a sabbatical. 'You can go there for a year. You'll be a better law professor, you'll have that experience.' So I came for a year... 16 years ago. I was professor on leave for 10 years because it was always a thought I'd go back and the intention was real.



"We will address racism and anti-semitism."

After 10 years, I felt embarrassed, so I went to [the administration]. They said they'd make me emeritus, but I could always come back.

One of the things I want to do: Raoul Wallenberg is the first honorary citizen of Canada and my dream has been, for years, to set up an international human rights centre. I was already heading one up at McGill called InterAmicus. I was going to rename it the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for International Justice. Then I got elected, so the whole thing has been put in abeyance. But the motivations are the same.

I see it as a unique international consortium of parliamentarians, scholars, human rights defenders, NGOs and students, united in the pursuit of justice, inspired by and anchored in Raoul Wallenberg's humanitarian legacy. It would be organized around four thematic projects that

represent that legacy. First, we'd have "Raoul Wallenberg, hero of humanity: acts of remembrance and remembrance to act." Under that, we'd seek to expand the countries of which he's an honorary citizen. Right now it's Canada, U.S., Israel and more recently, Australia, along with his native Sweden. We'd also establish an annual Raoul Wallenberg commemorative day. We have one in Canada, although it's not that well known. We'd also, in the countries of citizenship, establish a Raoul Wallenberg human rights lectureship. We've done that at McGill and I'm hoping now to do it at Yale this April. The last thing under this first theme is determining the fate of Raoul Wallenberg. The person who saved so many was never saved by



"We made international justice a priority."

so many who could have saved him. The answer lies in Russia; that's where the smoking gun is — in the Russian archives. The Wallenberg family has been working all these years with a wonderful group of research scholars who have a critical mass of evidence about what might have happened. A lot of unanswered questions can only be answered by the Russians. They finally agreed to have a conference on this in December 2013 and at the last minute, they cancelled.

The second theme would be The Holocaust, genocide and human rights: universal lessons for our time. Those are dangers of state-sanctioned incitement to hate and genocide, the dangers of indifference in the face of mass atrocities and the danger of impunity.

The third theme is combating racism, hatred and anti-Semitism. One of the

things that came out of Auschwitz was that Jews died there because of anti-Semitism but anti-Semitism did not die. If the Holocaust is a metaphor for radical evil, anti-Semitism is a metaphor for radical hatred. We will address, as did Wallenberg, racism and anti-Semitism.

The fourth, because Wallenberg was a political prisoner himself, by the Russians, will be defending political prisoners.

I'll do all those things whether or not I do it under that banner, but the banner would hopefully create a network of advocacy.

**DM:** Then-prime minister Paul Martin appointed you justice minister and you seem to have squeezed a lot into your



"Aboriginal people should not be wards of the state."

short time in that portfolio. What do you feel was your major accomplishment?

**IC:** There were a number of things that struck me then and since. The first was, we enacted the first-ever legislation to combat trafficking in women and children — the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world. That was an important piece of legislation, symbolically and substantively.

Second was the civil marriage act, giving equal access to gays and lesbians to civil marriage and also including in it freedom-of-religion protection. I thought that legislation really addressed the importance of [both]. For example, that no priest, rabbi or imam would be forced to celebrate a same-sex marriage if it was contrary to their beliefs. What's not known is that my wife, [Ariela], who was prone to do these kinds of things,

came out against me when I announced the same-sex legislation. By then, people weren't surprised because she'd done it before. Her position was that gays and lesbians should have equal rights for everything except for marriage. She favoured civil unions. When I went to move ahead with it, she said 'If you're really going to do this, put in a freedom-of-religion component.' So we drafted the legislation with both those principles in mind. When I think about it, I think it's really model legislation. At the time, I got more angry opposition to that than anything else. But today, it's accepted as a matter of course.

The third thing was quashing convictions of the wrongfully convicted. That was something that I felt went to the whole question of the rule of law and I was pleased to be able to quash more wrongful convictions in one year than my predecessors. Not that they wouldn't have done it, but coming in as a law professor, I knew about them.

The fourth thing was that we made international justice a priority. We didn't look at the justice agenda just being domestic; we saw it as international as well. In that regard, for me, aboriginal justice was a priority but I went to Australia to

discuss it. I led the Canadian delegation to the first-ever Stockholm conference to combat genocide.

[My colleague] Charlie [Feldman] always reminds me of the two judicial appointments I made — two women [Louise Charron and Rosalie Abella]. In appointing two women who were superb, we became the most gender-equal Supreme Court in the world. I saw Rosalie Abella last night at a lecture being given by Justice Harry Laforme, the first Aboriginal ever appointed to an appellate court. And I appointed him in 2004. He gave a very moving talk and one of the things he said stayed with me: More aboriginal high school students are in prison than graduate high school. That was true 10 years ago and it's still true today. It's an appalling statistic.

That was why I tried to make it a priority. I crafted the seven Rs of aboriginal justice: Recognition of them as the original inhabitants of this country, respect for their distinct and constitutional status, redress for past wrongs such as the racist residential school system, representation or overrepresentation as inmates and underrepresentation as leaders, responsiveness to resource development,

reconciliation and renewal. Unfortunately, we've not moved much in the last 10 years and by not moving, we've actually moved backwards. Aboriginal people should not be wards of the state. We've got to treat them with the dignity and the quality and respect they warrant and deserve.

**DM:** The *National Post* described you as "the pre-eminent voice in the fight against oppression and arbitrary measures of autocracies around the world."

**IC:** I was a bit humbled by that description. All I can say is that if you want to know the basis for that involvement in the struggle against oppression, you have to go back to my parents. That's where it all began. My father taught me, when I was a young boy, that the pursuit of justice is equal to all the other commandments combined. I never understood then the profundity of what he was saying, but he would repeat it. As I got older, my mother would hear my father still repeating it and she'd say 'If you want to pursue justice, you have to feel the injustice in your community. You have to feel the injustice and combat the injustice. Otherwise, it [is] a theoretical construct, just an abstraction.' So I think that combined



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teaching of pursuing justice and combating injustice led me to get involved in some of the great human rights struggles of the 20th Century: Human rights in the Soviet Union and the struggle against apartheid.

Those teachings from my parents combined with others. There is in the Jewish tradition an important priority placed on what's called the redemption of captives, what we'd call today political prisoners, such that you're allowed to transgress the Sabbath to do it. That involved me with political prisoners. It's not accidental that I would focus on political prisoners in the Soviet Union, like Anatoly Sharansky or, in South Africa, Nelson Mandela.

The two things converged, you know. In 1979, when I was already counsel for Sharansky, I was arrested and expelled from the Soviet Union. I was referred to as a criminal consorting with other criminals.

In 1981, I go to South Africa as a guest of the anti-apartheid movement. Some Wits University students asked me to give a lecture. I suggested I talk on 'If Sharansky, why not Mandela?' They said perfect. I said 'but Mandela is a banned person so I don't want to get you guys in trouble.' But they liked it and said that's what they

wanted. I gave the talk and after I was detained.

One of the police said 'Do you know [Foreign Minister Roelof Frederik] Pik Botha?' I said 'No, why?' They said 'He's asked us to bring you to him.' So this is where things converge. I come into his office and on his wall, there's a picture of Anatoly Sharansky and some other Soviet prisoners of conscience. He said 'You know who that is?' I said 'Yes'. He said 'I wanted to see you because I couldn't understand how someone like yourself, who represents that great hero Sharansky, who's fighting against the Communist Soviet Union, can, in the same breath, defend Nelson Mandela, who's also a communist and our enemy.' I said I thought Sharansky and Mandela were both fighting for freedom, human rights and democracy. He went on to tell me how I didn't really understand South Africa. The talk went on for about three hours. I told him I thought the Soviet Union was a great human rights violator, but I said South Africa is the only post-World War II government that has institutionalized racism as a matter of law. I said 'Apartheid is not just a racist philosophy, it's a racist legal regime and so, for as long as is necessary, from wherever

I am, I'm going to fight against this racist legal regime.'

Two years ago, I'm back in South Africa for a meeting with some human rights lawyers. They asked if I'd been in touch with Pik Botha and suggested I give him a call. He wasn't near where I was, but we had a long talk [on the phone]. He said he never forgot that exchange we had in 1981, and that I'd spoken to him in a rather blunt fashion. He told me that he became the first South African minister to call for the release of Mandela; he became a member of the ANC [Mandela's party]; and that he actually served in Mandela's government. Political prisoners are the face, the identity of the larger repression.

**DM:** My next question actually refers to Nelson Mandela and Anatoly Sharansky, both of whom you worked with. There are many others. What fight was most rewarding?

**IC:** They were all rewarding. To me, these were inspirational figures. I would come away, always, inspired from the involvement in the struggle. Of course, in the case of Sharansky, I had a much more sustained and deeper involvement because Mandela at least had a wonderful




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legal team in South Africa. I was really kind of a cameo presence. But Sharansky didn't have any lawyers — they wouldn't permit him any. So the struggle there was very engaged, very sustained.

I was talking to Sharansky the other day about Mandela. There was a very profound moral fibre that they both had and a kind of moral courage and a physical courage. Mandela survived 27 years in an African prison, to come out and not only preside over the dismantling of apartheid, but also to be responsible for the establishment of a democratic, non-racial, egalitarian South Africa. It is a remarkable historic achievement, almost without parallel in the 20th Century. And Sharansky, helped bring about, if I can use a Marxist metaphor, the withering away of the Soviet Union.

There's Saad Eddin Ibrahim, whom I represented in Egypt. He was a very courageous Egyptian democrat who's seen almost three revolutions in the hopeful transition to democracy in Egypt. The initial hope of Tahrir Square has not yet been realized but I believe that because of people like him, it will be eventually.

**DM:** That's what Egyptian Ambassador Wael Aboul-Magd keeps promising.

**IC:** Two years ago, I was representing a political prisoner from Tahrir Square named Maikel Nabil [Sanad]. He went on a hunger strike for close to 130 days. I went to see the ambassador about him. I was there to see what he could do about releasing him. I told him 'Not only should he be released in the interest of justice, but it's also in your self-interest.' I told him that I'd met Gorbachev years after Sharansky was released. I pointed out to [Gorbachev] that Sharansky was released within a year of Gorbachev taking power and I asked if there was any connection. He said: 'You remember I visited Canada as minister of agriculture in 1984 to speak to your parliamentary committee on agriculture? They were asking me questions about Sharansky, but I'd never heard of him. I left the Parliament buildings and there was a big demonstration for Sharansky. Everywhere I went in Canada, people were talking about Sharansky. I came back [to the Soviet Union] and ordered up the file. He was a trouble-maker, but it was costing us to keep him in prison, so it became in our interest to let him go.'

I told the Egyptian ambassador that it was the same thing with Maikel Nabil. We'd organized a group of parliamentarians for Maikel Nabil. I said 'You don't

need this.' They did release him.

**DM:** For Nelson Mandela's funeral, Justin Trudeau gave up his seat on the prime minister's plane for you. How important was that?

**IC:** I was going to the funeral anyway. I felt that I wanted to be there. This was something that had been part of world history and not just my own. It is very much part of my family. You could call my four-year-old granddaughter right now and she'd tell you lots about Mandela. My daughter used to get taken to demonstrations as a kid. I remember when Mandela was released and Sharansky was released, she said 'Face it, Daddy, you have nothing to do anymore.' [He also points to a photograph on his desk of his newest grandchild, Zachary, doing a Nelson Mandela arm pump shortly after he was born. 'It's baby Madiba,' he says, laughing.]

What happened was that I got the invitation to go on the prime minister's plane and after that, I found out that Justin had ceded his place. I think it says a lot about Justin. He had an opportunity as the leader of our party to really have international presence and resonance in South Africa in a way more than I would have had. And that he ceded it and that I didn't even know he'd done it, says something about the kind of person he is. When you look for a political leader, you look for qualities of character and that generosity of spirit is something. It's utterly selfless and the exact opposite of any self-aggrandizing of any political leadership.

**DM:** You were a special adviser to the foreign minister on the International Criminal Court (ICC). What are your thoughts on the court? Is it a success?

**IC:** I thought the establishment of the ICC was the most important post-Nuremberg international criminal justice development, that this was going to be the embodiment of the struggle against impunity. I regret that some of the hopes some of us had for the ICC playing a more major role in the struggle against impunity have not been fully realized, but, in part, it's not the ICC that is to blame. It's because we still have not had the major powers become signatories to the ICC. I think we need to make the ICC the centrepiece of our international criminal justice agenda in the struggle against impunity and enlarge the number of countries that become members and try to get a kind of inclusivity about it. It

shouldn't be that so few of the countries in the Middle East are signatories. I think Jordan is the only one.

**DM:** What do you think of the Harper government's much-discussed policy on Israel?

**IC:** I'm supportive of the position as a matter of principle and policy, but I don't like when a position becomes a wedge issue. I don't like when it's said, 'If you care about Israel, then you must vote Conservative.' If Israel is a just and principled cause, it's not just a cause for Conservatives. It's a cause for all men and women who care about justice and principle. I think it's undercutting of the principled nature of the cause by attaching a Conservative label to it.

**DM:** One last question: Bill C-36. You spent a lot of time trying to achieve the balance between the rights of individuals and national security. Do you feel you achieved that?

**IC:** Anne McLellan was minister of justice when it was introduced in Parliament and I got up the day after and said I had 10 civil libertarian concerns about the legislation, whereupon John Manley said 'Irwin, whose side are you on?' Anne McLellan and I were academic colleagues, so we hammered out some changes and seven of the 10 concerns I had were adopted, but I still was raising the other three. And finally, she told me 'You're no longer a law professor. We have to make a decision and we have to act and we need your support.' And she was right. I gave my support. The government did respond to a lot of my concerns and then when I became the minister of justice, I worked on the other three concerns. I tried to enunciate what was my whole approach to anti-terrorism law and policy, which was organized around two foundational principles.

The first was that terrorism constituted an assault on a democracy like Canada and an assault on the individual and collective rights of its inhabitants. In that sense, anti-terrorism law and policy was intended to protect the security of a democracy and to protect the lives of its inhabitants. To that extent, I was fully in favour. The second principle was that law and policy must always adhere to the rule of law. It must always comport with the strictures of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Minorities must be protected against being singled out in any kind of profiling or against any targeting. ■



# Aga Khan Foundation: Bringing world-class health care to hard-to-reach communities

By Rosemary Quipp

**T**he lush hills of Tanzania's Uluguru mountain range have many things to offer: 100 plant species found nowhere else in the world, a forest-capped peak towering at 2,630 metres high and rushing rivers that form the main source of water for the urban population of Dar es Salaam.

But there is one feature strikingly absent for many Tanzanians who live in villages along the flanks of the Ulugurus: a health clinic.

With more than 70 percent of Tanzania's population living in rural and remote areas, many are unable to access basic health services, such as vaccines or ultrasounds during pregnancy, because the time and expense to travel to a clinic is simply out of reach for many families.

This problem is reflected in the statistics: there is a 1-in-38 chance that a woman will die due to complications in pregnancy or labour. (In Canada, that statistic is one in 5,200.) And for every 1,000 births in Tanzania, 54 children will die before they celebrate their fifth birthday.

Many maternal deaths in Tanzania are preventable, but a skilled birth attendant (such as a doctor, nurse or midwife) attends fewer than half of births in the country. Similarly, life-threatening illnesses for children, such as diarrhea and pneumonia, can be easily avoided with access to proper care and preventive measures.

Working with the national and local governments as well as community partners, Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) and Aga Khan Health Services in Tanzania are tackling these challenges head-on by providing better access to high-quality care, particularly for remote and rural populations. The program is supported by Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada as part of the Muskoka Initiative on maternal, newborn and child health announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2010.

"Improving global health, particularly the health of mothers and their children, has a ripple effect over the long term," says Khalil Z. Shariff, CEO of AKFC. "Healthy women give birth to healthy children and healthy children grow to become productive members of their community."

By facilitating health fairs and mobile



A mother brings her son to get immunized at a mobile health clinic in rural Morogoro, Tanzania. Clinic staff provide information to mothers on how to make healthy choices when it comes to nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.

clinics in remote communities, the project in Tanzania is helping rural families access health care services such as HIV testing, pregnancy care, immunizations and vaccinations for children, and advice for parents on age-appropriate care for children, including the importance of breastfeeding.

Since the program began in January 2012, health fairs and mobile clinics have reached more than 15,000 people (including more than 10,000 women) in the targeted regions of the country.

The project staff members also train health professionals and upgrade existing health facilities with equipment and new technology. Video conferencing links, for example, allow doctors in rural areas to consult with specialists in major population centres.

AKFC supports many health initiatives across Asia and Africa, in addition to projects in education, rural development and civil society. Aiming to provide a strong foundation for communities to guide their own development over the long term, AKFC concentrates its work on the fundamental building blocks that a society needs to drive its own development: a healthy population, access to education from early childhood to adulthood, strong civil society institutions and access

to opportunities — even for those living in remote rural areas.

As a member of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network, AKFC is part of a group of development agencies with individual mandates that address a broad swath of social, economic and cultural dimensions of development.

In carrying out its work, AKFC recognizes the considerable resources that Canadians have to share with the rest of the world. These are not only financial resources, but also a wealth of knowledge and skills. In addition to spearheading two of the country's largest fundraising events in support of international development — the World Partnership Walk and the World Partnership Golf Tournament — AKFC facilitates opportunities for Canadians to contribute their expertise overseas through long- and short-term placements.

Headquartered at the Delegation of the Ismaili Imam at Sussex Drive in Ottawa, AKFC regularly hosts seminars, lectures and other events on topics of global importance that are open to the public. Visit [akfc.ca](http://akfc.ca) to learn more.

Rosemary Quipp is a public affairs officer at Aga Khan Foundation Canada.

## For the love of Bach

Photo by Sam Garcia

**T**he Ottawa Bach Choir is an Ottawa institution but it's just as cherished by German transplants in the city, and it has its fans in other quarters of the diplomatic corps as well.

"The Germans are very supportive of us," explains Lisette Canton, founder and artistic director of the choir. "We're the Ottawa Bach Choir, after all. We've gone to Germany many times and this year, we're going to the Leipzig Festival, which is the biggest Bach festival in the world. We're the first Canadian choir invited to sing there."

The choir, founded in 2002 by Dr. Canton, offers audiences a range of choral music from all historical periods while keeping Bach's choral oeuvre as the focus of its repertoire. In its short history, it has received national and international recognition.

And maybe that's why the embassies are so keen to support it. Dr. Canton says diplomats from countries and regions as diverse as Germany, France, Britain, South Africa, China and Taiwan have helped out over the years. The diplomats generally provide drinks and food — whether a buffet, sit-down dinner, or some hors d'oeuvres — and the choir will perform a few pieces for its guests.

Germany has had a particularly close affiliation, having provided a garden party for the past four years. It is planning to do so again this year.

"The Ottawa Bach Choir is a wonderful example of a combination of Canadian and German culture," said German Am-



From left, German Ambassador Werner Wnendt, his wife, Eleonore Wnendt-Juber, choir founder Lisette Canton, artistic director, Colleen Woodhouse, and Ian Sabourin at the Ottawa Bach Choir's Venetian Carnival fundraiser.

bassador Werner Wnendt. "We're very happy to support the choir every year." This year, the Ottawa Bach Choir fundraiser at the German embassy will be part of a week-long festival that will otherwise feature famous performers from Germany. It takes place June 9-12.

The embassy of Turkey was also a big supporter last year. It held a buffet dinner and a short concert. The ambassador says it plans to do the same again this year.

"Last year's event was a huge success," said Turkish Ambassador Tuncay Babali. "There was a wonderful crowd of music-lovers. They performed a small concert and then we had a dinner and reception. This year, we'll have even higher participation. It's a good opportunity for us to showcase our food and cuisine and our love of classical music."

In addition to providing the venue and the food and drink, the embassy is trying to find a way to get the choir to Turkey as part of the European Tour that will have the choir visit Germany, Italy and the Netherlands this summer.

These types of events are a win-win for the choir, Dr. Canton says. "People love going to an ambassador's residence. They get to experience the culture and eat the food. We usually provide a short concert. It's a really nice way to spend an evening. Every little bit of support we can garner is so appreciated."

In January, the choir presented a "Venetian Carnival" gala and fundraiser at the National Arts Centre. In this case, the Germans — Werner Wnendt and his wife, Eleonore Wnendt-Juber — continued to show their support by attending. ■



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# Ireland and Canada: Historic ties in a modern relationship



By Ray Bassett  
Ambassador of Ireland

**F**ive hundred years ago, fishermen from Ireland sailed west to fish cod off the banks of Newfoundland. In time, a vibrant trade relationship began, and by the late 17th Century, merchants in Ireland were exporting supplies such as pork, butter and beef to support the migratory transatlantic fishery.

Eventually, many of those fishermen and traders made the Rock their home, and today, Newfoundland bears the imprint of a strong Irish heritage. More than half its population has Irish roots and Newfoundland bears the distinction of being the only place outside of Ireland to have a direct translation of its name into the Irish language: *Talamh an Éisc* means “the land of the fish.”

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, 4.5 million Canadians declared Irish heritage, a result of successive waves of Irish migration to Canada. The ties that bind our two countries stretch far back into history and the foundation of modern day Canada.

However, the relationship today is also a modern and dynamic one. It is our trade relationship that perhaps best exemplifies this dynamism. Since 2006, Ireland’s goods exports to Canada have more than doubled. Total trade with Canada in goods and services amounted to \$4 billion in 2012. Canada is Ireland’s 15th largest market for goods exports at present. Pharmaceuticals, medical devices and alcoholic beverages (primarily Irish whisky) are the main goods exported from Ireland to Canada.

It may also surprise people to know that Canada receives one quarter of Ireland’s foreign direct investment abroad and today, more than 60 Irish companies



Dublin, with views of the Samuel Beckett Bridge and the Convention Centre, is Ireland's capital.

have an operating presence in Canada. Ireland ranked seventh in 2012 as a destination for Canadian foreign direct investment abroad, with more than \$15.8 billion in Canadian investment there.

The trade relationship, therefore, is strong and ever-growing. But there is always room to grow further. As a small, open economy, Ireland relies heavily on external trade as an important tool of economic recovery. Last December, Ireland successfully exited from a three-year EU/IMF program of support. Three years ago, we faced a shrinking economy and an exploding deficit, but today our economy is growing again. We have seen more than 58,000 new jobs created, and in February, we returned to the debt markets and raised \$5.6 billion through the sale of a new 10-year bond at a yield of 3.54 percent.

Ireland is now a highly competitive and stable location for investment and jobs. We have seen relative improvement in our labour costs, reductions in property costs, increased use of innovation and technology and downward pressure on prices across professional and business services. As a result, we had the honour in December 2013 of *Forbes* magazine labelling Ireland the best small country in the world for business.

With the CETA [Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement] due to come into force, I hope that Canadian investors and traders will see Ireland as a primary destination in which to establish a presence in the EU market. As the country geographically closest to Canada, with a long and historic association, and with an

environment conducive to inward foreign direct investment, Ireland has much to offer Canadian business. At the same time, I hope the CETA will open up further access for Irish businesses to Canada, particularly in the food and dairy sectors. The image of Ireland as a green island is one that bears out in reality. Our dairy industry shares the lowest carbon footprint in the EU and our beef industry, the largest net exporter in the northern hemisphere, is also among the lowest.

Access to Ireland, whether for business or pleasure, has never been better. I am very pleased that 2014 will see a major opening up of air access between Ireland and Canada. In addition to the seasonal direct service already provided by Air Transat from Montreal and Toronto to Dublin, Air Canada Rouge will extend its seasonal service between Toronto and Dublin to year-round service. Irish airline Aer Lingus, starting in April, entered the market with year-round direct flights between Toronto and Dublin. I am delighted that WestJet has chosen Dublin as its first European destination to commence a seasonal service from St. John’s, Nfld., in June. This new route mirrors the first transatlantic flight made by Alcock and Brown when they crossed from Newfoundland to Clifden in County Galway back in 1919. And that’s just another example of historic ties again translating into a modern, dynamic relationship.

Dr. Ray Bassett is the ambassador of Ireland. Reach him at Gurpreet.Bajwa@dfa.ie or (613) 233-6281.

# Myanmar: A new frontier of trade and investment for Canadian business



By Hau Do Suan  
Ambassador of Myanmar

Over the past two years, soon after Myanmar embarked on the path of democratic transformation and economic reforms, many positive and significant developments have taken place in Myanmar-Canada bilateral relations.

The year 2012, in particular, ushered in a new relationship between the two countries. Foreign Minister John Baird was the first Canadian foreign minister to pay an official visit to Myanmar when he travelled to the country in March 2012. In return, Foreign Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin came to Ottawa in October, 54 years after the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1958. One month prior, Trade Minister Ed Fast visited Myanmar and opened a new chapter in trade and commercial relations between Canada and Myanmar.

Moreover, Canada suspended economic sanctions imposed against Myanmar, opened an embassy in Yangon and appointed its first resident ambassador in 2013. A trade commissioner was also sent to Myanmar and there were several parliamentary exchanges. The emergence of such a positive political climate and diplomatic rapprochement has strengthened the friendship, understanding and co-operation between the two countries.

My country's dramatic political and economic reforms have opened up great opportunities for business and investments. In particular, we're looking for companies with capital and technological know-how to further our economic development and create employment. We've just adopted a new foreign investment law that is transparent, clear, simplified and investor-friendly. It will take just a few



A market in Yangon, the capital of Myanmar.

days for companies to establish a business. To further facilitate investment, we've established a one-stop service centre in Yangon to assist with and facilitate investors' requirements.

Myanmar is a country the size of Texas, but with a population of more than 60 million. It is strategically located between two huge consumer markets — China and India. It is also a member of ASEAN, the fastest-growing market of about 600 million people. Moreover, being positioned at the gateway to India and Bangladesh from Southeast Asia, Myanmar will serve as a bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia. In short, Myanmar sits in the midst of more than two billion people, living in one of the fastest-growing markets in the world.

My country is also known for its abundant natural resources, such as oil and gas, gold, minerals, precious stones and lumbers. Its long coastlines and vast fertile lands are ideal for fisheries and agriculture. Besides, Myanmar can provide young, intelligent and relatively cheap labour. We are also expanding service sectors such as tourism, telecommunications, banking and financial services, health care, education and infrastructure.

We are promoting responsible invest-

ments with an aim of building investors' confidence. We are taking steps to practise the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the concept of corporate social responsibility is now widely accepted. According to the *Economist Corporate Network's* recent Asia Economic Outlook 2014, Myanmar is the fourth most preferred investment destination in Asia after China, Indonesia and India.

In recent years, a growing number of Canadian companies and organizations have been exploring business opportunities in Myanmar. Sixteen companies from Canada have so far invested \$46.07 million, just 0.1 percent of total foreign direct investment. I would like to encourage more Canadian investment in areas where Canada has comparative advantage, such as extractive industries, infrastructure, agriculture, value-added and high-tech industries and capital-intensive industries.

There is ample room to improve current bilateral trade, although it is on an upward trend. Trade between Myanmar and Canada for the 2012-2013 financial year totalled \$10 million, an 84.7-percent increase from the previous year. Myanmar exported \$2.8 million worth of fish, garments, rice, beans and pulses to Canada. Myanmar's imports from Canada were valued at \$7.2 million. The main items of import included telephone and communication devices, unmilled wheat seed, pulp, aircraft and parts. As Myanmar's economy is rapidly expanding, there are good opportunities to further promote bilateral trade of new commodities in the future. In this regard, we look forward to the Canadian government re-granting generalized system of preferences (GSP) status to Myanmar, which will significantly benefit our exporters.

I wish to emphasize that this is the best time for Canada to seize the golden opportunity to invest and do business in Myanmar. Canadian investment and strengthened economic co-operation with Myanmar will not only bring mutual economic benefit, but will also help Myanmar's democratic transition and reform process.

Hau Do Suan is the ambassador of Myanmar. He can be reached at [meot-tawa@rogers.com](mailto:meot-tawa@rogers.com) or (613) 232-9990.



# Enhancing Canada-Japan economic relations



By Norihiro Okuda  
Ambassador of Japan

Canada and Japan have long enjoyed complementary economic relations, each specializing in products for which the other has a strategic need. Canada is rich in natural resources and yields a multitude of agricultural products of which Japan is a major importer. Meanwhile, Japan has developed cutting-edge manufacturing technologies and exports a variety of manufactured products to Canada.

For instance, according to Industry Canada, in 2012, Japan's top five export products to Canada were passenger motor vehicles, motor vehicle parts, bulldozers, printing machinery and automotive tires. Japan's top five import products from Canada were coal, rape seeds, copper ores, pork products and lumber. Overall, the total value of exports from Japan to Canada was \$15 billion, and the total value of imports from Canada was \$10.3 billion.

One of the most important missions for our embassy is to strengthen bilateral economic relations between Canada and Japan by improving the business environment to facilitate the free trade of goods and services and further investments without substantial barriers.

The following four priority areas are especially important in realizing this goal. First, we are making efforts to conclude free-trade agreements as soon as possible, including the Canada-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (CJEPA) and the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPP), both of which are currently under negotiation.

Concluding these agreements will promote trade and investment, create new businesses and jobs and benefit every cor-



Tokyo is Japan's capital and business centre.

ner of our two countries.

According to the Report of the Joint Study on the Possibility of a Canada-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, a Canada-Japan EPA is expected to increase Japan's GDP between 0.08 percent and 0.09 percent, and Canada's between 0.24 percent and 0.57 percent. In absolute terms, estimates of GDP gains would be between \$4.4 billion and \$4.9 billion U.S. and \$3.8 billion and \$9 billion U.S. for Japan and Canada, respectively.

Second, we are strongly promoting liquefied natural gas (LNG) export projects in western Canada, based on the Statement of Oil and Gas Co-operation, which was signed between the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan and Natural Resources Canada in October of last year.

After the nuclear accident in Fukushima in 2011, the Japanese government has placed a high priority on secure and stable LNG supplies from around the world at competitive prices. Japan plans to conduct policy dialogues with Natural Resources Canada and relevant provinces, including British Columbia and Alberta. As many Japanese companies are already participating in LNG export projects in British Columbia, with their final investment decisions expected soon, we would

like to closely co-operate with the Canadian government to support such private companies.

Third, we are actively promoting partnership and joint activities between economic organizations in both countries. Notable organizations include the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE), the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC), the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), Japan Chamber of Commerce and the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizai Doyukai). Some of these organizations are already starting new initiatives to work with governments to advance the Canada-Japan EPA and the TPP. Such initiatives are expected to promote business opportunities in both countries, as well as enhance broader business relations between Canada and Japan.

Finally, further scientific and intellectual co-operation is an important priority due to its ability to stimulate further innovation. Under the Canada-Japan Agreement on Science and Technology, signed more than 25 years ago, we have facilitated research activities in a variety of fields including nanotechnology, life sciences and sustainable energy technologies through joint funding projects. We are actively exploring future opportunities to promote the exchange of students and researchers with a view to building broad and robust networks of current and future innovators between Canada and Japan.

As stated above, Canada and Japan share a common policy agenda to actively promote innovative and high value-added businesses, such as high-tech, service and content industries. These businesses will attract new investments and create jobs, leading to further economic growth for future generations.

Promoting trade and investment in these areas is one of the biggest challenges in bilateral relations between Canada and Japan. During my tenure as ambassador to Canada, I intend to work tirelessly to promote such new business and contribute to better relations between our two countries.

Ambassador Okuda can be reached at the embassy of Japan at [infocul@ot.mofa.go.jp](mailto:infocul@ot.mofa.go.jp) or (613) 241-8541.

# Zimbabwe has come a long way in 34 years



**FIRST NAME:** Florence

**LAST NAME:** Chideya

**CITIZENSHIP:** Zimbabwe

**PRESENTED CREDENTIALS AS**  
**AMBASSADOR:** Dec. 13, 2005

**PREVIOUS JOBS:** Civil servant,  
departments of health,  
transport, industry and  
commerce.

**O**n April 18, Zimbabwe will mark its 34th year of independence. This year's independence anniversary comes alongside a number of key national developments, including a new constitution and free and fair harmonized elections held in July 2013. The election, won by the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front [ZANU (PF)] party, was endorsed by the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

ZANU (PF) received 62 percent of the vote against the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party's 39 percent. This translated into 190 and 49 members, respectively, in the country's eighth parliament. ZANU (PF) was thus given a new five-year mandate as the ruling party. Parliament saw an injection of 124 women out of 350 members, amounting to 38 percent, a massive leap towards the gender parity target of 50 percent and more than double the number of women in the 7th parliament. The Embassy of Zimbabwe in Canada joins the nation of Zimbabwe in celebrating its independence anniversary as well as the peace and tranquility prevailing in the country.

As testimony to the credibility of Zimbabwe's elections, in August 2013, the country successfully co-hosted the United Nations World Tourism Organization with Zambia. The event was attended by representatives from more than 90 countries at the mighty Victoria Falls, Mosi-oa-Tunya, one of the seven wonders of the world. The election of Zimbabwe to the position of deputy chair of the African Union and Southern African Development

Community, and co-chair of the Africa Caribbean Pacific-EU parliamentary assembly is further expression of confidence in the country.

It is against this background that Zimbabwe is calling for the removal of

sanctions imposed against the country by western countries. The behaviour for which these punitive measures were put in place has since changed, warranting their abolition. This fact was acknowledged by members of the European Union (EU) delegation, which visited Zimbabwe in February 2014. The delegation noted that the sanctions were scaring away in-

vestors, as no investor would be willing to invest in a "sanction-infested" country. The sanctions have militated against the country's economic development efforts, resulting in suffering for its citizens. The EU delegation disputed the notion, arguing that the sanctions were only targeted at a few individuals and entities, when, in effect, they were affecting ordinary people.

That notwithstanding, the government of Zimbabwe endeavours to accelerate economic growth and wealth creation through the implementation of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation program, known as Zim Asset ([www.zimtreasury.gov.zw/zim-asset](http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw/zim-asset)). This program will be implemented up to 2018 and is meant to give the government and other stakeholders direction in an attempt to beat stagnation and boost economic performance to improve the lifestyle of the people. Under Zim Asset, the government has identified four major pillars it will focus



Victoria Falls, also known as Mosi-oa-Tunya, is one of the seven wonders of the world.



on to rejuvenate economic performance. Those include food security and nutrition, social services and poverty eradication, infrastructure and utilities as well as value addition. This blueprint needs funding to be successful. Zim Asset presents a lot of investment opportunities in all sectors of the economy through various initiatives such as public-private partnerships and issuance of bonds on the local and international markets.

The country is well-endowed with mineral resources, which provide an opportunity for the growth of resource-based industrial activities. Agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, distribution, finance and insurance are some of the sectors with huge opportunities for investment. Furthermore, the country has a highly educated and skilled workforce. Zimbabwe's geographical location facilitates easy access to regional markets such as SADC and COMESA.

Tourism is the fastest-growing industry in the world, and in Zimbabwe, it's a vibrant sector with great potential for growth. The major tourist attractions include Victoria Falls, the Great Zimbabwe monument and a grand medieval palace full of architectural mystique, from which



Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe


Zimbabwe derives her name. There are the sprawling Eastern Highlands and the mythical Lake Kariba, Hwange National Park, the mighty Zambezi River, and Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, which brings together Gonarezhou National Park (Zimbabwe), Kruger National Park (South Africa) and the Limpopo National Park (Mozambique). Investment opportunities in the tourism sector include the construction of hotels and lodges in designated tourism zones and general development of related infrastructure.

Zimbabwe has a vibrant mining industry and one of the largest diamond and


platinum reserves in the world. Investment opportunities in the mining sector include prospecting of these minerals, as well as gold, coal and granite, among others. In Zimbabwe's agro-based economy, opportunities abound for investment in the agricultural sector, for example, and in meat, wood and cotton processing.


When it comes to infrastructure development, investment opportunities include building toll roads, building and upgrading airports, constructing dams, upgrading power-generating facilities and telecommunication systems. The government of Zimbabwe is committed to guaranteeing an attractive operating and investment environment as enshrined in international laws. It also provides incentives such as tax holidays and duty-free importation of raw materials for the manufacture of goods for export.

We look forward to meaningful and effective collaboration with all progressive members of the international community. We are willing to engage even those with whom we have previously been at odds. As one great politician once said, there are no permanent friends or enemies in international relations. ■



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# Temporary visa versus refugee status reforms



By James Bissett

**T**he beginning of the 20th Century ushered in the increased need for global travellers to obtain a visa before entering another country for a temporary period. The visa is a means of pre-screening to ensure people who may be inadmissible for health, security or criminal reasons are prevented from arriving at a port of entry. It is also a means of facilitating the entry of people who are genuine visitors, without intentions of remaining permanently. Although possession of a visa is not a guarantee of entry, it speeds up examination procedures upon arrival.

Canada exempts citizens of most of the developed countries, including the United States and much of the European Union, from requiring temporary visas. Occasionally Canada is compelled to impose a visa requirement on a friendly country, when some of its citizens prove to be abusing their visa-exempt status. This can cause problems.

Forcing visitors from a friendly country to acquire a temporary visa is interpreted as an unfriendly act and damages relations between the two countries. Moreover, it is not in any nation's interest to slow down tourism and inhibit trade by placing restrictions on travel. There is also a risk that the affected country may reciprocate by demanding that visiting Canadians have temporary visas.

Despite these drawbacks, the use of the temporary visa has been the method of choice by successive Canadian governments to stop the flow of visitors from countries whose citizens have been shown to be abusing visa-free privileges. The abuse has been widespread and has been



Canada's imposition of temporary visa requirements on a "friendly country" has been an effective, if blunt, way for Canada to stop potential asylum-seekers. But Prime Minister Stephen Harper heard again at the Three Amigos Summit hosted by Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, that it comes with a price in Canada's bilateral relations with Mexico.

directly related to Canada's generous asylum system.

Canada permits anyone from any country who has entered the country to apply for refugee status and the Supreme Court has ruled that asylum claimants are entitled to due process of law guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This has meant, in practice, that the system for dealing with asylum applications became entangled in long, drawn-out legal procedures, effectively paralysing expeditious decision-making. Even if after months, if not years, a negative decision was made on the claim for refugee status, the individual was seldom removed.

The word soon spread that entering Canada and applying for asylum was an almost iron-clad guarantee for permanent residency, not to mention free housing, medical care, welfare and legal costs, while waiting for a decision from the Immigration and Refugee Board. The first group of individuals who arrived as tourists in 1980 and then promptly applied for asylum were Sikhs from India. When the numbers kept increasing, the government was forced to impose a temporary visa requirement on India. This action stopped the flow, but did not improve relations with India.

Since 1980, there have been a number



of other “friendly” countries whose citizens entered as visitors, but then applied for asylum, including: Pakistan, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Bulgaria, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Mexico. Again, Canada reacted by imposing a temporary visa requirement on these friendly countries. As was to be expected, the countries concerned did not welcome this decision, which they regarded as an unfriendly act. Some reacted by imposing temporary visas on Canadian travellers and others, such as the European Union, threatened to do so.

Nevertheless, the use by Canada of the temporary visa proved to be an effective, if blunt, measure to stop potential asylum-seekers from reaching Canadian territory. But this was always done as a desperate last step and always after many thousands of bogus asylum seekers had already entered.

In 1980, Canada received 1,600 asylum claims and by 1988, the number had reached 45,000. It is estimated that close to one million claims have been registered in the past 30 years. In 2008, asylum claims were filed by citizens of 188 countries, including 22 of the 28 countries of the European Union and 2,300 claims from the U.S.

Canada was not alone in experiencing the asylum-seeker phenomenon of the 1980s, when thousands of people from developing countries began to move into the industrialized countries of Western Europe and North America. Most of these travellers gained entry and then applied for refugee status, as they were entitled to do under the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. It is estimated that from 1980 until the end of the 1990s, more than five million asylum claims were registered in Western Europe and North America. The numbers accelerated at great speed. In 1980, Western European countries had 20,000 asylum claims; by 1992, the number



Immigration reform, now overseen by Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander, was long overdue, argues James Bissett.

had risen to 560,000. Germany alone had 438,000 claimants that year and 322,000 in 1993.

All of the Western European countries reacted to the overwhelming numbers by enacting stricter methods for dealing with asylum seekers. Germany acted quickly in 1993, despite having to change its 1949 constitution, and passed new and tough asylum laws. The most common feature of the new laws was the designation of certain countries as “safe” for refugees and prohibiting asylum claims from individuals coming from those countries.

Normally, those countries chosen for designation were ones that were demo-

cratic, followed the rule of law, had a good human rights record and were also signatories of the UN Refugee Convention. The designation measure was not only effective in stopping the flow, but had the added advantage of avoiding the need to use the temporary visa requirement; thus maintaining good relations with the “designated” country.

Notwithstanding the success of the EU countries in stemming the flow of asylum seekers, successive Canadian governments refused to enact legislation adopting the “safe country” provision. Indeed, any attempt to reform Canada’s outdated and dysfunctional asylum system was fiercely

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resisted by a powerful refugee lobby composed of refugee advocates such as the Canadian Council for Refugees, immigration lawyers and consultants and a multitude of NGOs and agencies (described by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration as “stakeholders.”)

These “stakeholders” were often supported by a compliant media wanting to demonstrate sympathy for anyone claiming asylum despite evidence that only a small percentage were found to be genuine refugees.

Finally, after a quarter of a century of tolerating a dysfunctional and seriously flawed asylum system that had damaged bilateral relations with many countries, was terribly costly to the Canadian taxpayer and was a threat to Canada’s ability to control its borders, the government decided reform was essential.

In June 2012, Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney ushered in new refugee legislation that incorporated the “safe country” provisions similar to those used by EU countries. There can be little doubt that it was the outcry by the Czech Republic and Hungary, backed by threats from the European Union, of retaliation over the use of the temporary visa imposition that played a part in convincing the government to act.

The new law had an almost immediate effect in reducing the asylum-seeker intake. The flow of asylum seekers was cut in half from 20,000 claims registered in 2012 to 9,700 in 2013. Moreover, the average wait time for a claim to be heard by the Refugee Board in 2012 was 20 months. In 2013, it was reduced to two months. In the three previous years, 25 percent of the asylum claims were filed by claimants from “designated countries,” but in 2013 that number had been reduced to 8 percent.

The reform — long overdue — should now enable Canada to play a more useful role in assisting the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (currently António Guterres) in his efforts to care for and protect the more than 43 million refugees under his mandate. As well, it is doubtful that Canada will be forced again to impose temporary visas on friendly countries.

James Bissett is a former Canadian ambassador and was executive director of the Canadian Immigration Service from 1985 to 1990. He is on the board of directors of the Centre for Immigration Policy Reform.



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An oil-well set ablaze by the occupation forces of Iraq at the Al Maqwa oil fields in Kuwait during the Iraq invasion of 1991, a precursor to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

UN PHOTO



# Resource Wars

The search for dwindling resources, including oil, could mean war in the future.

*By Wolfgang Depner*

It is an article of faith among large sections of the left-leaning intelligentsia that the United States invaded Iraq in 2003 simply to secure the country's oil reserves. It's one thing to hear this line from Noam Chomsky, but another thing to hear it from a figure such as Sir David King, Britain's former chief scientific adviser to the government of Tony Blair. It was Blair, remember, who famously supported the U.S. invasion because Saddam Hussein's regime allegedly possessed weapons of mass destruction, not oil wells.

While King never articulated this position when he held his old job, he was notably not alone. "It was certainly the view that I held at the time, and I think it is fair to say a view that quite a few people in government held at the time," he said in a 2009 interview with the *Guardian*. "But ... the chief scientific adviser's view on that matter was not sought."

He has since made it clear that he considers the Iraq war to be the first "resource war" of the 21st Century. "Future historians might look back on our particular recent past and see the Iraq war as the first of the conflicts of this kind — the first of the resource wars," he said in a lecture the same year as the *Guardian* interview.

And he thought oil would not be the only target of such conflicts. In a future defined by human population growth and climate change, water and land would become increasingly more valuable and contested. "Unless we get to grips with this problem globally," he said, "large, powerful nations will secure the resources for their own people at the expense of others."

Access to resources has always played a part in the history of human conflict, and King's thoughts should be seen in light of other developments — such as the rise of China as a global power, gathering resources for a burgeoning economy, and the relative decline of the United States as a global stabilizing force. With all this in mind, we take a look at the top 10 regions or countries likely to suffer resource-related conflict or already carrying the scars of such conflict in their past. Sadly, a cursory glance at this list reveals that Africa's resource riches may be more curse than blessing, and a similar shadow hangs over the Middle East. These parts of the world have a long tradition of being the object of resource exploitation, but the list also illuminates the growing importance of the Pacific and Arctic. As readily accessible resources dwindle, previously neglected areas will take centre stage, along with new resource seekers.

Conflict will remain a constant, according to a U.S. academic who studies the geopolitics of oil. Jeff Colgan at American University in Washington identifies eight ways oil means war or near-war: (1) outright war with states using armed force to acquire oil reserves; (2) petro-aggression, as oil wealth shields aggressive leaders from domestic opposition and encourages them into risky foreign policy; (3) the spilling over of civil wars in oil-producing states into neighbouring states; (4) financing of insurgencies through oil revenues; (5) conflicts that break out, triggered by fears that one country might dominate the oil market; (6) clashes that happen over oil transit, such as shipping lanes and pipelines; (7) resentment of foreign workers in oil-producing states that help extremist groups recruit locals; and (8) oil as a source of friction in multilateral relations.

These mechanisms have been responsible for between one quarter and one half of interstate wars since 1973. No wonder the most important oil-producing region, the Middle East, remains the most volatile. We'll look at it first.

## 1. Middle East:

The Middle East will likely remain the focus of energy-related security issues in the foreseeable future. That's a central message in the most recent *World Energy Outlook* as published by the International Energy Agency in 2013. Consider some of its predictions as background.

First, China is about to become the largest oil-importing country and is expected to replace the U.S. as the largest oil-consuming country in 2030. The demand for oil in India will exceed Chinese demands by 2020. So the world's two most populous states will find themselves in competition for oil.

Second, some of the largest energy producers will also become some of the leading users. Oil consumption in the Middle East will overtake consumption in the European Union by 2030. In other words, the world's leading producers are increasingly becoming their own customers.

Third, unconventional sources of hydrocarbons (such as Canada's oil sands) and ways of producing renewable energy are on the rise. Fourth, the U.S. is "moving steadily" towards meeting all of its energy needs from domestic resources by 2035 thanks to hydraulic fracturing (fracking) of shale oil and gas.

In short, emerging economies, particularly China, India and the Middle East, will drive the demand for global energy, while energy sources themselves will become increasingly diverse. But the International Energy Agency leaves no doubt that the Middle East will remain king of the hill in the longer term, no matter what. Yes, rising energy production in countries not belonging to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) will temporarily reduce the region's influence. But non-OPEC production will start to fall back in the middle of the next decade and most increases in global supply will come from the Middle East.

So the world's major powers, whether established or emerging, will continue to see the Middle East as crucial to their political and economic interests.

## 2. South Sudan

The short civil war that scorched much of South Sudan over Christmas 2013 seemed to be over in January, when forces loyal to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir captured Bor, the last major city held by forces belonging to Riek Machar, Kiir's former vice-president. Both men struggled over control of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and their ruptured relationship escalated into an intense conflict between the country's two largest tribes, Kiir's Dinka and Machar's Nuer.

Within weeks, the conflict claimed 10,000 lives and displaced close to 200,000 people as both sides vied for control of the northern cities where most of South Sudan's oil is located. Alas, predictions of peace were premature. Western diplomats are concerned that South Sudan's neighbours will turn the state into a battleground for their respective grievances. At the start of the conflict, neighbouring Uganda, Kenya and Sudan sided with Kiir, fearing a prolonged civil war would endanger relations with South Sudan, said to have the third-largest oil reserves in sub-Saharan Africa.

Sudan's budget depends on transit fees South Sudan pays for shipping oil across its territory to the Red Sea and Uganda and Kenya both recently signed a deal to build an export pipeline. Machar's rebellion represented a threat to regional



A vessel approaches an oil refinery in Fujairah, UAE.





Civilians fleeing the fighting seek refuge at a UN compound in Bor.

economic interests, one that has inspired unusual alliances.

The most intriguing of these is Kiir's alliance with Omar al-Bashir, president of Sudan, from which South Sudan seceded in 2011 after decades of civil war. In the 1990s, al-Bashir backed Machar as the South Sudanese feuded among themselves. Now, he may seek to develop a sustained relationship with Kiir, despite the fact that they can't stand each other. Whether this brings peace to South Sudan is a different question. Kiir's victory might have allowed the Dinka to re-establish their historical dominance over the Nuer and smaller ethnic groups, but it hardly addresses the larger problems that confront South Sudan. The country remains divided and possesses few, if any, viable institutions that could withstand destabilizing influences.

Which brings us to the current situation. Relations with Sudan have been historically frayed despite recent improvements and al-Bashir, who faces charges for crimes against humanity, has proven himself to be an erratic partner. Case in point, tensions between Sudan and Uganda have worsened in recent weeks. In fact, some fear their disagreements may spill over into South Sudan, an ally of Uganda. Meanwhile, Eritrea is seen as a middle-man for Sudanese weapons that end up in the hands of South Sudanese rebels, a prospect said to anger rival Ethiopia, which has served as a mediator in the South Sudanese conflict. In other words, what began as a local conflict threatens to morph into a regional one. "As far as

the regionalization of the conflict goes, the question is not if, but when," Casie Copeland, South Sudan analyst for the International Crisis Group think-tank, told the *Pakistani Daily Times*.

The world's major powers also have interests. For China, South Sudan is an increasingly important oil supplier, after NATO's intervention in Libya damaged Chinese-owned refineries there. China doesn't want this repeated in South Sudan, where it has made significant energy investments.

South Sudan is significant for the U.S., because it played a central role in creating the world's youngest state. Its inter-ethnic disputes threaten to undo this and turn South Sudan into another Somalia. Indeed, it was almost Black-Hawk Down revisited when the American military had to evacuate U.S. citizens from Bor; three of its aircraft faced gunfire and wounded U.S. soldiers had to be airlifted to a Kenyan hospital.

### 3. Niger

Rife with ethnic-religious conflicts and devoid of institutions, this fragile African state has five major ethnic groups, a Muslim majority, about 17 million people and

an embarrassment of largely unexploited riches.

This combination of present dysfunction and future possibility compels competitors from every corner of the globe to seek fortune in one of the most inhospitable places on the planet. The southern Sahel is a harsh desert so hot it hurts to breathe, according to Robert Fowler, the Canadian-born diplomat held hostage several months by Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) during his time as a UN envoy in Niger.

This former French colony first made global headlines in 2003 when then-U.S. President George W. Bush announced that the British government "has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." Later reporting revealed this falsehood relied on forged intelligence reports that claimed Iraq had tried to purchase yellowcake — enriched uranium — from Niger, the world's fifth largest producer of that mineral. Ten years later, the country's uranium reserves are contributing to a conflict with ramifications far beyond its borders.

Niger plays a pivotal part in the energy portfolio of its former colonial master, France, and, by extension, the European



French troops en route to Mali as part of Operation Serval. The French have an interest in Mali and its immediate neighbours, particularly Niger.

Union. Up to 76 percent of France's energy comes from nuclear power and almost 40 percent of the uranium it needs comes from Niger, according to Stratfor Global Intelligence. The French government has a direct role in the affairs of Niger through Areva, its state-owned nuclear power company, which operates two mines in Niger that produce roughly seven percent of global uranium output.

So France possesses an immense strategic interest in Niger and its immediate neighbours, including Mali, where French troops have been trying to stabilize a weak pro-Western government since their arrival (Operation Serval) more than a year ago. President François Hollande has framed this intervention as a counter-insurgency against Islamists threatening to destabilize the southern flank of the Sahara from Senegal to Chad. Security wonks increasingly call this region "Sahelistan," an allusion to the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan and Pakistan. Critics see Hollande's move as part of a neo-colonial agenda to protect the French economy. This critique gained more currency in February 2013 when France deployed soldiers to protect an Areva mine near Arlit to prevent an attack similar to the one that had killed 37 employees when Islamist militants seized a gas plant in neighbouring Algeria.

Several weeks later, an Islamist suicide attack against this very uranium mine killed one Areva employee and injured 15 others. The environmental fallout from Areva's mining has further stoked local resentment against France and its allies in Niger's government.

But if Niger remains beholden to France for its political and economic security, it also finds itself in the middle between China and the United States. The former seeks to exploit Niger's oil reserves, while the latter sees Niger as an important front in its anti-terrorism efforts. Agendas are bound to clash.

#### 4. South China Sea

It will likely take several years before China's first aircraft carrier will be in full service, because the *Liaoning* still lacks operational fighter jets. Yet this floating symbol of China's emerging global ambition was the focus of an incident that symbolized the China-U.S. struggle for supremacy in the South China Sea.

On Dec. 5, 2013 a small Chinese warship escorting the *Liaoning* nearly clashed with the *USS Cowpens* in international



Guided-missile destroyers *USS Cowpens* (foreground) and *USS Fitzgerald* sail in formation in the Pacific. A close-call took place between the *USS Cowpens* and a small Chinese warship accompanying the *Liaoning* in December.

waters. While accounts vary — Chinese officials claim the American guided-missile cruiser harassed their aircraft carrier — it was the most serious incident since 2009, when five Chinese naval ships surrounded the American surveillance ship *USNS Impeccable* patrolling in an area that China claims as an "exclusive economic zone."

Incidents such as this are the most likely to provoke an armed Chinese response, according to the Council on Foreign Relations. It deems the risk of conflict in the region as "significant" for two reasons. The first is resources. China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines have competing jurisdictional claims over the right to exploit the region's potentially extensive reserves of oil and gas. The second issue is freedom of navigation, the question of whether U.S. military vessels can freely operate in exclusive economic zones. The U.S. says yes it can, citing common practice and the absence of rules in the UN Conventions on the Law of the Sea. China, however, insists reconnaissance without prior notification and permission violates domestic and international law. So in the last few years

there has been a high-stakes game of cat and mouse as both sides test the resolve of the other.

These tensions shape, and are subsequently shaped by the "rising apprehensions about the growth of China's military power and its regional intentions," as the Council on Foreign Relations notes. Such fears are bound to increase as China and its neighbours compete for access to the area.

An emerging flashpoint are the Senkaku (also known as Diaoyu) islands in the nearby East China Sea. While Japan, Taiwan and China claim these islands, China recently expanded its Air Defence Identification Zone to include them. Its rules specify that all aircraft entering the region must notify Chinese authorities and are subject to emergency military measures if they don't.

The U.S. immediately tested this claim by flying two B-52s through the zone without notice. A day later, the *Liaoning* set sail for the South China Sea and its close encounter with the *USS Cowpens*. Expect this sort of brinkmanship to intensify, especially in light of U.S. defence agreements with nearby countries, including Japan and the Philippines.





The Russian flag planted in the Arctic seabed.

## 5. The Arctic

Almost a decade has passed since a Russian mini-submarine planted its country's flag on the seabed at the North Pole. Was it the opening salvo in a scramble for the riches of the Arctic, or just a stunt by Russian President Vladimir Putin to promote his corrupt, territorial regime? Opinions differ, to say the least.

If we believe Michael T. Klare, who has written extensively on this subject, the incident was part of the race for a shrinking supply of natural resources, a race he predicts will stoke worldwide rivalries and leave behind devastating environmental, economic and political consequences. This "race for what's left" is bound to be intense in the Arctic, where "some of the world's largest untapped reserves of oil and natural gas" are waiting to be found.

Writing in *Foreign Affairs*, Scott G. Borgerson agrees with the larger narrative that accelerating climate change will open a treasure trove of resources, including massive deposits of valuable minerals and nearly a quarter of the world's estimated undiscovered oil and gas. This "Arctic boom," Borgerson says, will involve more than just mining and drilling. It will also improve access to wood, water and a wide variety of commercial activities, including increased air and ship traffic, as melting ice turns "once-fabled shipping shortcuts" like the Northwest Passage into reality.

But unlike Klare, Borgerson believes the economic potential of the region will encourage co-operation, not competition,

because a "shared interest in profit has trumped the instinct to compete over territory."

Arctic countries, he argues, have begun "making remarkably concerted efforts to co-operate rather than fight, as the region opens up, settling old boundary disputes peacefully and letting international law guide their behaviour." And, he notes, the Arctic possesses at least two conditions to dampen future conflict. Most countries with territory above the Arctic Circle have the money for the infrastructure necessary to exploit the region, but also protect it. Most of them (minus Russia) have well-functioning legal systems and clear regulations favoured by foreign investors. "Thanks to good governance and good geography, such cities as Anchorage and Reykjavik could someday become major shipping centres and financial capitals — the high latitude equivalents of Singapore and Dubai," Borgerson writes.

But Borgerson understates the difficulties that lie ahead. The region is difficult to reach, under-populated and under-resourced. This hampers any response to emergencies, environmental or otherwise. Issues such as the status of the Northwest Passage — Canada claims it as an internal waterway, the U.S. insists it be international — remain unresolved.

Finally, the number of would-be actors in the region is not limited to countries with Arctic shorelines. In addition to its eight full-time voting members, the Arctic Council also includes 12 non-voting

observers, including China, which has expended much effort to gain a foothold in the region and is pushing for a greater role on the council, something not everyone likes.

## 6. Nigeria

These days, Africa's most populous, and arguably most important, nation rarely appears in western media accounts unless they involve Boko Haram, the Islamist group that has claimed to establish a Sharia-conforming state in northern Nigeria. These stories are often formulaic, neatly conforming to the narratives that sprang to life after the events of 9/11 — Christians versus Muslims, modernity versus religious intolerance, good versus evil.

It's true that Boko Haram's actions are indefensible and its agenda reprehensible. But a closer look also reveals that it is only the most recent threat in a tapestry of corruption and violence that has pervaded Nigeria since the late 1950s, when multinational companies began to exploit the oil in the Niger Delta. The group's narrative relies on the notion that Nigeria's Christian south has disproportionately monopolized the country's leadership and profited from its oil at the expense of the north.

In fact, neither north nor south has benefited from the oil. Despite being one of the largest oil producers in the world, Nigeria finds itself towards the bottom of



Multinational oil companies began exploiting Nigerian oil in the 1950s. Shown here is Abuja, the capital.

the UN Development Index, thanks to a corrupt elite whose allegiances transcend religious and regional loyalties. This helps explain the appeal of Boko Haram's message, which blames western modernity for all that ails northern Nigeria. This message might be simplistic and misleading, but is a variation on the larger point that economic inequality leads to violence. It's a rerun of the mid-to-late 2000s, when the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta waged an insurgency against the Nigerian government and western oil companies held responsible for the social inequality and environmental devastation that defines the Niger Delta.

In short, Boko Haram is neither the first, nor the last, armed militia to challenge the Nigerian state at considerable cost in blood, property and stability throughout the region.

## 7. Democratic Republic of Congo

Two sorts of people live in the Democratic Republic of Congo — those who try to exploit its resources and those who suffer at their hands. This sociology has defined Africa's second-largest and fourth most populous state since the days of 19th Century European colonialism when Belgium's King Leopold II declared the country his "private property."

Belgian colonial rule ended in chaos decades ago, but exploitation of the Congo



A Guatemalan member of MONUSCO, the largest and arguably most robust intervention mission in the UN's history, in the DRC.

continued through the immediate post-colonial period, the Cold War and the ethnic wars that then erupted across Africa. The current gang of plunderers has a multi-

national flavour: corrupt local politicians, ruthless warlords from inside and outside the country and a shadowy network of global financiers who sustain these groups while siphoning the country's wealth into their own pockets. To appreciate this form of contemporary capitalism, consider Congo's role in the trade of coltan, a rare ore used in electronics and other industrial goods. Up to 80 percent of global coltan reserves lie in the Congo, yet officially the country plays no major role in its global markets. Most of Congo's coltan leaves the country through unofficial channels as competing warlords operate ad hoc mines, where workers, many of them prisoners captured from rival militias, slave away under dangerous conditions, often with nothing more than their bare hands.

The mineral then finds its way onto international markets through a network of dubious dealers, many based in Belgium. Yes, would-be users of coltan are aware of this system, but its opaqueness makes it difficult to know where their purchases come from. This system has perpetuated the violence that has gripped Congo since the mid-1990s and cost millions of people their lives, because it flushes money into the hands of competing warlords who use it to equip and pay their troops.

The DRC also suffers from other pathologies — unresolved ethnic tensions, non-existent institutions — that plague most African nations. It's no surprise to learn that the coltan reserves are in the contested Kivu region where Congo borders its much smaller neighbours, Uganda and Rwanda, both of which have sought coltan profits through sponsoring rebel groups opposed to the DRC's government. The UN is trying to stabilize this region through one of the largest, most expensive and most robust interventions in its history, with some success. But the DRC will likely remain a deadly El Dorado for greedy privateers.

## 8. The Caspian Sea Basin and Central Asia

The 19th Century witnessed what historians call the Great Game, the political struggle between Czarist Russia and the United Kingdom for strategic supremacy in Central Asia, as Russia tried to reach the Indian Ocean in challenging British control of the Indian subcontinent.

We may well see a New Great Game, this time revolving around the oil and natural gas in the same region. While



Russia has been keen to maintain control of the pipelines that carry energy from the landlocked Caspian Sea to foreign markets.



these reserves across Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are likely not as extensive as the Middle East's, they have attracted all the major energy-consuming nations.

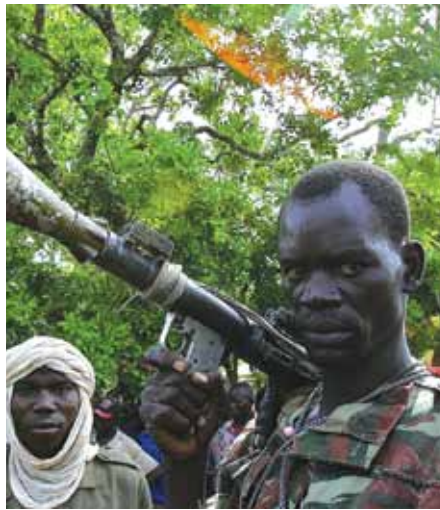
The region also includes Iran and Russia, even though neither requires such resources because each is rich in its own right. But each pursues strategic interests there, especially Russia, which considers the area its "Near Abroad," the term used to describe the former Soviet republics ringing its borders. Russia has been particularly keen to maintain control of the pipelines that carry energy from the landlocked Caspian Sea Basin to foreign markets.

Geography has made the Caspian Sea Basin attractive to Chinese interests because that country's relative proximity means it can import oil and natural gas through pipelines. This calms Chinese anxiety about losing access to the Middle East, because it can't defend oil shipments across seas against the strength of the U.S. navy.

This said, the pipelines that cross the region are not exactly traversing realms of peace and prosperity: Russia and Georgia remain at odds over the status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia following a five-day war in 2008; Islamist separatists have embroiled Russia in Chechnya; Armenia and Azerbaijan dispute the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian enclave located inside Azerbaijan. The region beyond the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea is just as rife with potential flashpoints among simmering ethnic tensions, corruption and repression in the Central Asian republics. Beyond that, the agony of Afghanistan could easily spill across borders to the east and south, namely China and Pakistan.

## 9. Central African Republic

How do you spell "quagmire" in French? *The Economist* asked this about France's most recent military involvement in its former colony. In late 2013, Paris deployed 1,600 troops to the landlocked country as part of a UN mission to end sectarian violence that had started when Muslim Seleka rebels embarked on a reign of terror that raised the spectre of the Rwandan genocide. It's still uncertain whether France's involvement has stabilized the country, which borders six neighbours, including Chad, whose government has



A rebel in northern Central African Republic.

been accused of siding with the rebels. Christian militias have retaliated against the country's minority Muslims, who make up about 10 percent of the population. This violence has cost countless lives, displaced thousands of people and brought further misery to one of the worst-governed states in Africa.

There are multiple reasons for the bloodshed, but many would insist that it has little to do with religion. Before recent events, Muslims and Christians had long co-existed in peace. Observers would instead point to a battle for control over the country's natural resources. While rich in diamonds, timber, gold, uranium and oil, the Central African Republic remains among the poorest African nations, thanks to decades of political turmoil and corruption.

As Reuters news agency noted, the Seleka rebels launched their uprising to get at resource wealth, especially the oil being exploited by the China Petroleum Corporation. These efforts failed, but the failure hardly means the end of instability, no matter how long France chooses to remain the region's gendarme.

## 10. Ivory Coast

Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan could not have been clearer when he addressed a group of potential international investors last December. "We are really open to all the world," he said. "We are now normal ... and we want the rest of the world here."

Duncan's message was intended to assure his listeners that the government of his West African country was legitimate and stable after more than a decade of conflict, and to convince them that Ivory

Coast offers untapped business opportunities, especially in gold mining. The country lies along the Birimian Greenstone Belt, a rock formation two billion years old and stretching from Senegal to Ghana. According to the *Guardian*, it contains some of the richest gold deposits in the world. So Ivory Coast might overtake its neighbour, Ghana, to become Africa's second-largest producer of the precious metal after South Africa.

Mining would diversify the country's economy, which for decades has relied on the sparser returns from cocoa, coffee and cashew exports. But the gold rush is impending while the country is still seeking a solution to the problem that caused the preceding violence in the first place: ethnic disputes over farmland.

This issue occurs against a backdrop of the global rush for arable land. Private companies and governments from China, India, Saudi Arabia, Europe and the U.S.



Militia clothing, boots and equipment are destroyed during a disarmament and demobilization mission in Ivory Coast.

Coast lease and buy land in the developing world to grow food, biofuel and cash crops. Critics have decried this land grab as neo-colonialism and warned it threatens global food security in the face of climate change and warned also that it could trigger social unrest as foreign corporations ignore the locals. Ivory Coast has offered a historical precedent for what could happen if businesses or governments compete over non-renewable resources.

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# EU Enlargement: Ten years later

Is the EU's eastern expansion still a success story?

By Joan DeBardeleben, Crina Viju and David Long



On May 1, 2004, 10 countries became new members of the EU: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Celebrations took place across Europe.

**I**n May 2004, the EU embarked on its largest expansion, with the admission of 10 new member states, eight of them previously part of the Soviet bloc. In a Brussels speech two years earlier, European Commission president Romano Prodi predicted this move would be “one of the most successful and impressive political transformations of the 20th Century.”

And when the Nobel Peace Prize followed in 2012, the selection committee credited the EU with opening “a new era” in European history, because “the division of East and West has to a large extent been brought to an end....”

To gain admission, the eight post-communist states (plus Malta and Cyprus) had to meet unprecedented requirements. The

hope was that the new members would integrate, be able to implement EU law, and realize its political and economic values. Nonetheless, the expansion had risks as well as opportunities for the EU — and for the new members.

Would adding more than a third to a sometimes unwieldy group paralyse already difficult EU decision-making? How would new members and old be affected economically? Would open borders encourage mass migration from East to West, causing brain drain on one side and social instability on the other? And would the enlargement push the East-West divide further east, creating new tensions with Russia?

Ten years after, the balance sheet is strongly positive, despite remaining chal-

lenges. By joining NATO as well as the EU, the new member states (except Malta and Cyprus) have been brought under the Western security umbrella. The EU's increase in size and weight has made it an international powerhouse, especially economically. It has sewn together a previously — and sometimes mortally — divided continent. And it has encouraged and supported the democratic aspirations of the new member states. That curious mythic thing called Europe has created tangible policy implications, above and beyond the powers of individual states.

While the expanded EU has not erased the East-West divide in Europe, it has not aggravated it. Though Russia has strongly objected to NATO's eastern bulge, it has been more accepting of the EU's expanded



borders. Only when the EU's influence has extended into Russia's "privileged interests" (a term used by then-Russian president Dmitry Medvedev in a 2008 interview) has Russia been threatened and threatening — as in the Ukrainian crisis.

But whatever difficulties there are in getting along with Russia in the shared neighbourhood, they are not primarily a product of EU enlargement. Indeed, Poland has become a strong voice for constructive engagement with Russia ever since Donald Tusk became prime minister in 2007. In 2011, for example, Poland and Russia co-operated on visa-free cross-border transit between Poland and Russia's exclave Kaliningrad Oblast. The sense of security that EU membership provides for states bordering Russia may well, over time, reduce the emotion that lingers from their difficult shared histories. However, beyond the EU's borders, the Ukrainian crisis is sparking new division in Europe.

The EU has always been in a state of becoming rather than being, adapting to new members while preparing for further applicants. That said, the 2004 "Big Bang" expansion eastward required a rethinking of decision-making. But precedents made that easier — notably when the U.K., Ireland and Denmark joined in 1973. This big change required renegotiation of EC funding. Particularly controversial was the Common Agricultural Policy and the UK's net contribution. The admission of Greece in 1981, the Iberian enlargement of 1986 and the addition of Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995 had lesser effects on the union's fundamental processes, but still required adjustments as they changed the balance of influence within the union. For example, the 1995 enlargement shifted policies regarding the North and the environment. But more members also meant less influence for the Big Three — the UK, Germany and France. While most new members have thrived economically, even before the latest crisis Greece has done relatively poorly.

Before and after the 2004 enlargement, there were attempts to accommodate the now much-larger size. After a failed attempt to adopt an EU constitution (blocked by referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005), negotiations led to the Lisbon Treaty, which went into force in December 2009. It extended the use of "qualified majority voting" — a requirement demanding the agreement of 55 percent of member states representing at least 65 percent of the EU's population —

to additional policy areas such as external border control and asylum. This has eased decision-making. While it is often difficult to gain consensus among the 28 member states of the EU on some issues, such as social policy and foreign policy, differences are, by and large, not a result of EU enlargement. Most disagreements have not fallen on an East-West axis.

Economically, on balance, enlargement has been a success, even if the crisis that took off in 2008 (and the ensuing Eurozone crisis) has complicated matters. Despite those relatively poorer countries arriving all at once, they have not con-



On balance, enlargement has been a success in spite of the 2008 crash that led to protests against austerity measures in Greece.

tributed to the EU's sovereign debt crisis. The new members have been among the least debt-laden in the union. One of them, Poland, was the only EU country that escaped an economic slowdown following the 2008 crash.

Though the 2008 crunch was tough for weaker economies, they have largely emerged intact enough to adopt the euro. The first new member states to adopt the euro were Slovenia (2007), Cyprus and Malta (2008), then Slovakia (2009), Estonia (2011) and Latvia (2014). Eurobarometer surveys reveal higher levels of trust in EU institutions among respondents in the new member states than in the EU overall, and more trust in EU institutions than in their national ones.

The expansion of the EU has brought

economic benefits to the new members as well as to the 15 countries (the EU-15) that were part of the club before the 2004 expansion. Financial assistance, such as that provided to Central and East European candidate countries under the PHARE program before they joined the EU, has partly continued for the new members, even if in a different form. For example, benefits are now channelled through cohesion and structural funds that aim at reducing regional disparities in the EU.

But economic advantages for new members have mostly resulted from single-market integration. Trade had been partly liberalized and barriers to foreign direct investment were eliminated before 2004; however, EU membership reduced risk for investors even further, since EU states are perceived to have more stable institutions and better economic prospects. So after 2004, there was an explosion of foreign direct investment, portfolio investment and private and official borrowing from global credit markets and international financial institutions. In 2012, the level of foreign direct investment ranged between approximately 35 percent of GDP in Slovenia and 85 percent in Estonia; about 80 percent of the new members' exports went to the rest of the EU, and about 10 percent of the previous 15 EU members' exports went to the newcomers.

A less tangible — but nonetheless real — effect of increased trade and investment is sharing of knowledge, technology and ideas; this has meant increased productivity, business transparency and corporate accountability. More diverse and better consumer goods and economies of scale have brought lower prices and transaction costs, reducing the costs of doing business. Additionally, open doors for the free movement of labour give people greater freedom of choice, while their remittances represent a cash flow for some of the new members: Poland saw about 33 billion such euros come home from 2004 to 2011.

At the same time, the EU-15 have also gained. There's now a larger market for their products, services and investment. And since the new member states have lower labour costs, some firms based in the EU-15 countries moved plants to the new ones, lowering production costs and increasing efficiency.

It wasn't all economic sunshine. The new members had to pay and pay as they adopted almost 100,000 pages of EU rules and regulations. The European Commission estimated in 1998 that it would cost the 10 countries of Central and Eastern

Europe (eight that joined in 2004 plus Romania and Bulgaria) 100 billion euros to implement EU environmental regulations and 50 to 90 billion euros over 15 years to upgrade roads and railways to Western standards. EU assistance would cover only four percent of these costs. But paying up has meant better roads and better environmental quality.

However, EU rules and regulations deprived the new member states of some advantages — new labour market regulations raised labour costs and killed jobs. Likewise, Western standards of food production pushed some producers out of business, but such requirements have improved the quality of life for many residents of these countries.

Getting into the EU exposed the new member states to international financial markets through trade, financial integration and large capital inflows. But reliance on international finance was not always a good idea. Lax domestic policies, such as no restrictions on capital flight, meant they wouldn't develop enough exports to finance more domestic consumption. Their banks wouldn't match the growth in credits with a growth in deposits. When the global economic crisis erupted, many businesses couldn't compete internationally. Joining the EU was not the direct cause of these difficulties, but it created an environment that encouraged this problematic strategy.

Enlargement has not been without costs for the EU-15 either. Some received lower amounts of cohesion and structural funds to address regional disparities once the May 2004 accession took place. This is because regions qualify for this financial assistance if their per-capita gross domestic product (GDP) is lower than a certain percentage of the EU average. Once the poorer countries of Central and Eastern Europe joined, the EU average decreased. Likewise, extending some EU policies, such as the common agricultural policy, to new member states has created more problems for the EU as a whole thanks to the creation of more farmers' lobby groups that will push in the future for more agricultural support.

But one fear hasn't materialized. There has been no important flood of migrant workers from the east taking jobs from the domestic workforce in the west. At first there were limits on labour migration into certain EU-15 countries, but these restrictions have now expired. People from the eight post-communist states living in EU-15 countries increased from 900,000 in



In May 2004, the EU's annual "open-door day" coincided with celebrations for the 10-member enlargement. Hungarian marathon runners arrived in Brussels wearing the 10 flags of the new member states.

2004 to 2.4 million in 2010, most of them in the U.K. and Ireland. This represents less than one percent of the working-age population of the EU-15. The number of such migrants to Germany and Austria has slightly increased since restrictions on mobility into these countries were removed in 2011. And research shows that migration has boosted GDP in EU-15 countries that liberalized their labour markets.

Another fear was that businesses would move to the new member states, seeking cheap wages and lax rules and regulations. In fact, this happened in the short term from some EU-15 countries. However, as jobs flowed to the new states, opportunities arose for new investment in the EU-15.

Will this success story be repeated? The countries of the West Balkans (successors to the former Yugoslavia, plus Albania) remain on the EU's enlargement agenda. Croatia was admitted in 2013, and Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro are candidates. Past instability in this region notwithstanding, the mission to stabilize Europe remains a fundamental *raison d'être* of the union.

Beyond that, the future is less clear. Additional enlargements, if they occur, will likely be bit-by-bit, not a dramatic shift like the one in 2004. Turkey (in accession negotiations since 2005) and Ukraine (which has not been given a membership

date) are large countries whose admission to the EU would have geopolitical significance. Turkey would move the EU presence to the Middle East, and the prospect of Ukrainian membership is deeply unsettling for Russia, as can be seen from the latest crisis. Such speculations also run up against "enlargement fatigue," a concern that the EU may become overstretched. Before it does stretch again, existing policies, such as those designed to prevent sovereign debt crises, need to be consolidated and implemented.

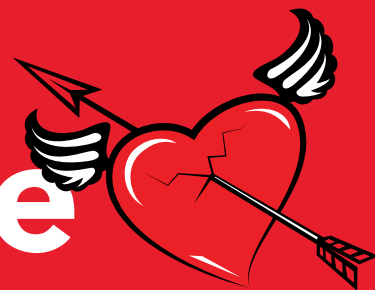
Looking to the East and South may require other tools as well. Most challenging right now is finding an accommodation with Russia that does not sacrifice the interests of the EU's other eastern neighbours. Finding a response to instability in Northern Africa and the Middle East will require a more unified and resolute EU policy.

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# An historic EU enlargement

The 2004 enlargement, which brought 10 new member states into the European Union, has been a win for those countries, and a win for the EU as a whole.

*By Marie-Anne Coninsx*



This acrylic painting by a group of students from Nivelles, Belgium, is called *The European Tree*. It won first prize in a contest designed to help students understand the concept of European citizenship.



**W**hen 10 Central and Eastern European countries joined the European Union on May 1, 2004, enlarging the union from 15 to 25 member states, a new chapter in Europe's history books was written with the new members claiming their rightful place within the European family.

It was an historic development and the most ambitious initiative in Europe's enlargement process — the largest single enlargement in terms of number of countries, territory and population. The 10 acceding countries — Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Cyprus and Malta — brought nearly 80 million European citizens to the Union, along with their dreams of freedom and prosperity.

For years, EU enlargement has been a force driving personal freedom and economic vitality. It has been a force spreading stability and democracy and advancing the rule of law and the protection of human rights to its new members and even beyond its borders.

Enlargement has increased the EU's global standing by giving it a bigger weight in world affairs, whether in trade talks or addressing issues such as climate change, energy security and regional stability. Enlargement has also helped boost the EU's crisis management capacity. With the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and under the leadership of Catherine Ashton, high representative for foreign affairs and security policy and vice-president of the European Commission, the EU has been able to effectively lead peace-making, peacekeeping, recovery and reconstruction missions in a more coherent manner.

There's little doubt the 2004 enlargement resulted in major economic, socio-political and institutional changes. Both the new and old member states stood to gain from the 2004 enlargement. To be eligible for EU membership, acceding countries had to adopt all EU rules and regulations, fast-tracking the modernization of their economies, which in turn generated stronger economic stability and more opportunities for businesses and the labour market. They had to reform their judiciaries and public administrations, making them more transparent and efficient.

Figures show that there were benefits across the board. Trade between the old and new member states increased more than threefold in the years since the 2004 and 2007 enlargements and the flow of

foreign direct investment into the acceding countries also climbed. Even more telling is the fivefold increase in trade among the new members themselves. Six of the 10 members have introduced the common currency, the euro, and others will follow suit. Most recently, Latvia adopted the euro in January 2014.

Increased intra-EU mobility has also had a positive impact. Contrary to fears that enlargement would trigger a mass wave of Eastern Europeans emigrating West and jobs moving East, workers from the new EU countries in fact helped ease labour shortages while contributing to economic growth in receiving countries.



The new European Central Bank headquarters is expected to be completed this year.

In short, enlargement has helped expand the borders of the EU's highly-integrated internal market that today has more than 500 million consumers. It has fully liberalized the labour market, although that was done over a transition period. It has kept state protectionism at bay. It has helped enrich the EU's cultural diversity and has created new regional co-operation initiatives and advanced multilateralism.

Naturally, challenges did arise along the way. Making the transition to a single market, reforming institutions and accommodating cultural and linguistic differences has certainly not been an easy task.

Accession is indeed a long, complex process, a balancing act with the absolute aim to create a level playing field among all members. It requires goodwill, com-

mitment and direct engagement from all concerned: citizens, civil society groups, national authorities and EU institutions.

May 2014, the 10th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement, is also a good time to ponder the future. The EU has created a unique model of society many European nations aspire to join. Countries are lining up to join the EU, despite the talk of "enlargement fatigue." The EU's doors remain open for European countries committed to its agenda.

In 2013, the EU welcomed Croatia, its newest member, continuing a trend that will contribute to the consolidation of stability and prosperity in the entire western Balkans, a region that not so long ago was torn by conflict.

Negotiations for Serbia's accession began in January 2014, while accession negotiations with Montenegro have been under way since 2012. The Commission has recommended since 2009 that accession negotiations be opened with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Negotiations are ongoing with Turkey, while in Iceland, at the time of writing, a political debate is under way on the direction the country should take with regard to its EU membership application.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidates. Countries aspire to join the EU because they know membership means peace and stability. They know membership will help them recover from recent conflicts in the region and consolidate the rule of law. They know it creates a win-win situation for the current and future member states and allows them to join the largest single market in the world.

The accession perspective provides strong encouragement for transformation, for political and economic reform in the acceding countries. Reforms in the area of the rule of law, including judicial reform, and the fight against corruption and organized crime benefit the countries concerned and the European Union as a whole. These reforms reinforce peace, stability and democracy in Europe and save the EU money that would otherwise have to be spent on crisis prevention, reinforced border controls and combating illegal immigration.

Next month, as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement, I am more convinced than ever that enlargement is one of Europe's greatest achievements.

Marie-Anne Coninx is the European Union ambassador to Canada.



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# Poland's amazing accession

Don't write the EU off too soon. Poland, the biggest country in the largest expansion in the history of the EU, is the success story both economically and politically, and a model for states such as Ukraine.

By Marcin Rafał Bosacki

**T**he past 25 years of regained independence after the fall of communism were the most successful in the last 400 years of Poland's history. To a large extent, that's thanks to entering into the EU.

This is why 2014 will be a special year for my country. It is an opportunity to celebrate the anniversary of a series of events that have had an enormous impact in shaping contemporary Poland, and the whole of Europe. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the successful end of the long fight with communism, which first began in Poland in 1980 with the creation of the Solidarity movement, and consequently spread to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the 15th anniversary of Polish accession to NATO, the alliance that strongly enhanced a sense of security in our part of the world.

This year, we also celebrate the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession into the EU, together with nine other countries. This was the single largest enlargement in the history of the EU in terms of the number of people and the number of countries that joined at the same time. Though EU officials frequently referred to this enlargement as "an historical opportunity" and a "moral imperative" that reflected the desire of the EU to admit these countries as members, many people were afraid of welcoming states that were clearly less developed than their Western European counterparts, as a result of 45 years of communism and Soviet domination.

Time has proved that these concerns were totally wrong.

It is the enlargement that has created growth and wealth all over Europe. Exports from the original 15 member states to the EU-10 countries — those that joined in 2004 — has almost doubled in the last 10 years. It's even more striking if you break it down by country. Britain's exports to the 10 countries that joined after 2004 rose from \$3.3 billion in 1993 to \$15 billion in 2012; France's, from \$4 billion to \$24



Enlargement celebrations take place in 2004 in Brussels. Poland hasn't looked back after its accession.

billion; Germany's, from \$22.5 billion to \$143 billion.

Prior to 2004, due to its size, Poland was often mentioned as one of the biggest question marks and a potential threat to the stability of the EU's economy. On the contrary, it turned out that Poland quickly became an important EU player and leader in many fields. Our GDP reached \$790 billion (from about \$228 billion in 1990), international trade amounted to almost \$400 billion (from \$30.5 billion in 1990) and public debt in relation to GDP was reduced to 49 percent (from 92 percent in 1990). The percentage of young Poles who are studying reached 50 percent. According to an OECD study, Polish students are among the best in terms of reasoning skills in science, reading and

interpretation, as well as mathematical skills (respectively 9th, 10th and 14th place in the world). Finally, we took 8th place in the ranking of non-English-speaking countries whose citizens have the best knowledge of the English language.

Our economy is currently a powerhouse that is developing at a rapid pace. We have joined the club of states listed as "very high" on the Human Development Index. This contrasts to where we began in 1989 — below the USSR. Right now, we are the 21st largest world economy and we're still growing. In recent years, Poland's GDP, despite the turbulence in the global and European markets, has grown steadily. For the last 20 years — as the only country in the Western world — we have recorded uninterrupted economic growth, an average of 4.31 percent over the past nine years (in comparison to 1 percent for all of the EU).

That is why we are looking to the future of our continent with optimism. We challenge the notion of Europe's (or the West's) decline. We are convinced that Europe's powerful weight in the global economy will remain stable. Despite the recent crisis — which was not generated in Europe — the EU proved to be strong enough to overcome even the most complex challenges.

To make sense of the state of the EU, let us remind ourselves of the facts within the big picture. EU countries generate roughly a quarter of the world's GDP. That is more than the U.S.; it's more than the combined GDP of China, Japan and the 10 ASEAN countries. Europe is the world's largest aid donor. More than half the money spent on helping poor countries comes from the EU and its member countries. The EU is the world's largest exporter and the second-largest importer. We Europeans are investing in jobs and growth in many parts of the world, including Canada. Just in the past four years, the Polish companies KGHM, Kulczyk Holding and PKN Orlen invested more than \$3.3 billion in Canada.

Within Europe, Poland is increasingly



influential in political terms as well. Today, we are not the source of problems, but a source of European solutions. We now have the capacity, and the will, to contribute and take responsibility for the future of Europe. We are a model of a successful transformation from dictatorship to democracy. We progressed from an economic basketcase to an increasingly prosperous market economy. We train judges from Tunisia, staff from NGOs in Egypt and we support pro-democratic changes in our Eastern neighbourhood. I was rarely so proud in my life than when I had a chance to be one of the trainers in a civil society/democratic institutions workshop in Myanmar (Burma), another country that started on a path to democratic changes. To our surprise, one of the students was Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the Burmese opposition and Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

We offer solutions for further development of the EU and stabilizing its neighbourhood. The Eastern Partnership, with its focus on Eastern European prosperity, the European Endowment for Democracy and the Common Security and Defence Policy are just a few examples of that co-operation. During the Polish presidency at the Council of the EU, we also played an important role in presenting initiatives to fight economic crises. It was Poland that led EU efforts to solve the crisis in Ukraine peacefully and democratically. The bloodshed on the streets of Kiev has been stopped by an agreement negotiated by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, and his counterparts from Germany and France.

A recent World Bank report professed that Poland has started a “new golden age” of its history. That might be a bit of an exaggeration, but our success is indisputable. This, however, did not happen all by itself. We owe it to tens of millions of hard-working, innovative and determined Poles and to good policies of different governments in the last 25 years. Governments from the left and the right undertook many crucial steps to lay foundations for today’s success, from privatization to pension reform to being one of the first nations on Earth to introduce a public debt anchor within our constitution (60 percent of GDP).

European Union support was also a key element, primarily due to significant financial resources supporting the development of our country. We are grateful to all those who supported our struggle to change the country and join the West,

Chart 1. The cumulative economic growth in Poland and in EU27 (GDP in 2003=100)

SOURCE: POLISH MFA BASED ON EUROSTAT DATA.

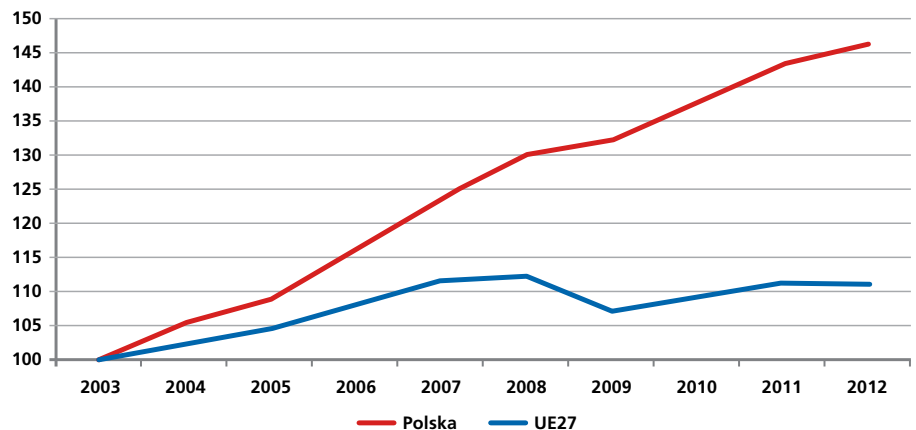
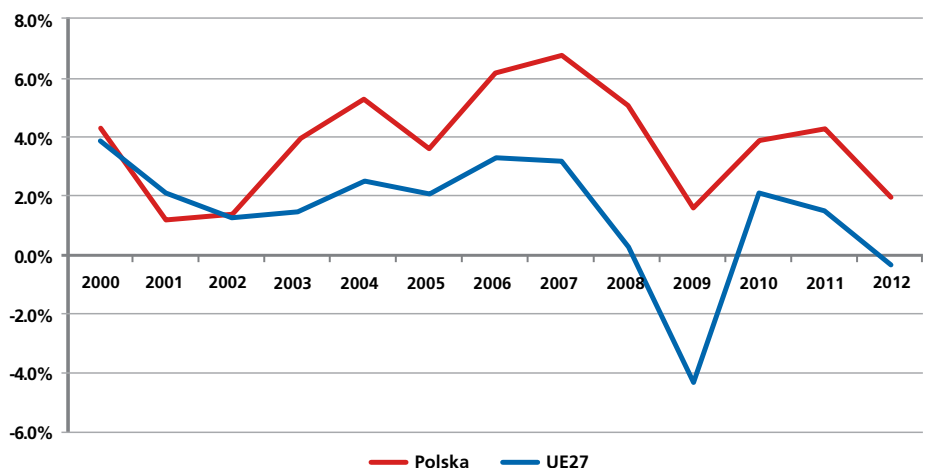


Chart 2. Economic growth in Poland and in the EU27

SOURCE: POLISH MFA BASED ON EUROSTAT DATA.



including our allies as well as Polish diaspora all over the world. We will always remember that Canada was the first country to ratify our accession to NATO in early 1998.

Today, the European Union is not only the world’s largest economy but also the largest region of peace, democracy and human rights. No wonder people to the East and South of our borders are taking Europe as an inspiration and Poland as an example. Just a few weeks ago, Vitali Klitschko, leader of the pro-democratic and pro-European movement in Ukraine, told hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Kiev: “Look, we can be like Poland one day, too.”

We like to say — only half-jokingly — that Poland’s place on the map of Europe has recently changed dramatically. Until

1989, we were located in the mysterious and frozen Eastern Europe. Then, after getting rid of communism, we became part of Central Europe. Since the outbreak of the global crisis in 2008, with our financial discipline and strong growth, we have moved again: to hard-headed, efficient Northern Europe, becoming a vibrant and significant state.

So this year, when millions of Poles at home and across the globe will celebrate 25 years since the defeat of communism and the resurrection of an independent Polish state, it is also a chance for us in Canada to highlight my country’s achievements. Poland is back on the world stage — democratic, prosperous and vibrant again.

Marcin Rafał Bosacki is Poland’s ambassador to Canada.

# Iran's other side: the South Caucasus

By Andrew Zhalko-Tytarenko

**T**he recent loosening of anti-nuclear economic sanctions against Iran will change its role along its northern frontier, which faces the South Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and Turkmenistan. Iran will be able to sell more oil, and the ensuing revenues, linked with new means of transportation, will allow it to throw its weight around, to bring grief to some of its neighbours and satisfaction to others.

Iran has been active in Central Asia over the past two decades. In the east, Iran-Turkmenistan relations have been sometimes tense, mostly due to irregularities in Tehran's payments to Turkmenistan for natural gas, but overall they have remained positive. Existing pipelines allow Iran to buy up to 20 billion cubic metres of Turkmenistan natural gas per year, and after the anti-nuclear embargo is lifted, Iran will be able to use all available capacity of the pipelines.

Another eastern interest for Iran is construction of a railway linking Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran. This project would allow Central Asian oil and other mineral resources to reach Iranian ports for further export.

But to the west, below the Caucasian Mountains running northwest to southeast between the Black and Caspian seas, Iran borders — and would benefit from — Eurasia's oldest "frozen conflict:" Nagorno-Karabakh's 1991–94 war in southwestern Azerbaijan between the majority ethnic Christian Armenians and Muslim Azerbaijan itself. So geography dictates Iranian involvement and merits a closer look at Iran-Azerbaijan relations.

This has been a rocky history, complicated today by the two countries' competition to sell their oil and gas internationally. And then there's the ethnic dimension. Three western provinces of Iran together have a population of about eight million, and more than 70 percent of these people are Azerbaijani. There is a sentiment for reunification among them on both sides of the border. The separatist Southern Azerbaijan National Awakening Movement



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani met with Azeri President Ilham Aliyev at the 2014 Davos Economic Forum, where Rouhani offered assistance in oil servicing, a field in which U.S. companies already operate.

was established in Iran in 1995 to separate these three provinces from Iran and merge them with Azerbaijan.

During the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Azerbaijan reached out to Iran for normal relations, but they deteriorated later. More than 10 years ago, then-Azerbaijani president Heydar Aliyev reportedly said, "When I say 'Iran,' I think 'Southern Azer-

baijan'," a not-so-veiled claim to Iranian territory. In November 2010, Azerbaijan's president, Ilham Aliyev, called for tougher Western sanctions against its neighbour. Anti-Iran demonstrations in Azerbaijan continued through 2011 and 2012. Iran responded accordingly.

Then Israel, Iran's chief *bête noire* for decades, got into the act. It supplied





This map shows the existing and planned oil and gas pipelines from Baku, Azerbaijan, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline.

military drones to Azerbaijan, and helped Azeris produce their own. Israel's Elbit Systems Ltd. (a defence electronics manufacturer employing 11,000 people worldwide) and other companies were part of the modernization of Azerbaijan's armaments. The possibility of an Israeli air strike on Iran's nuclear projects included the option of landing its jets at Azeri airfields (one of them, Lankaran, close to the Iran border, is operational now). Since 2010, the country has also acquired two squadrons of Russian air defence missiles.

None of these weapons would be much use against Armenia, the longstanding enemy with no military aircraft, but they can provide air defence against Iran, the possible new threat.

Azerbaijan also co-operates with the U.S. military. Blackwater (now called Academi) mercenaries trained Azerbaijan's marines and the U.S. provided vessels for the Azerbaijan navy. The prime targets for all this Azerbaijan hardware are still Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, but the possibility of conflict with Iran was part of its planning.

From its side, Iran has beefed up its military along its northern border and in March 2013 it launched the *Jamaran-2*

destroyer in the Caspian Sea. It will enter service in 2014 and be a powerful argument in the dispute with Azerbaijan over the offshore Sardar-e Jangal oilfield. Iran will have more money for arms after oil revenues start coming in and will probably spend it.

It's impossible to distinguish between state-sponsored and grassroots Shia religious extremism in Azerbaijan as long as Iran remains a Shia Muslim state. Azerbaijan's security ministry is alert to Iran-sponsored networks in Azerbaijan and reported on them in 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012 (twice). In all these cases, Azerbaijan claimed that Iran's Revolutionary Guards had targeted Israeli interests in Azerbaijan. All of which further tangles relations between the two countries.

The election of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani brought some change. He and Azeri President Ilham Aliyev met at the 2014 Davos economic forum, where Rouhani offered assistance in oil servicing, a field in which U.S. companies already operate, so it will be an uphill battle for Iran. Some improvement of Azerbaijan-Iran relations is likely, but disputes over Caspian Sea shelf oil and gas will overshadow it.

The relaxation of the tensions between

Iran and the West, and Iran and Azerbaijan could possibly to flow open the tap for Azerbaijani natural gas into Europe. There are plans to use a combination of the existing Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline (BTE) and the proposed Trans-Anatolia pipeline, to carry the gas through Turkey to Europe. These and other pipelines share a narrow corridor along the Kura River in Azerbaijan, uncomfortably close to its Nagorno-Karabakh "security belt" districts.

So, fixing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is critical for Azerbaijan, and Iran and Russia know this. From the standpoint of their economic interests, it is to their advantage to preserve the volatile situation of Azerbaijan and have less competition for their own oil and gas sales.

The realities of the economic blockade of Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan since 1993 and sanctions against Iran practically forced both countries to build closer relations and get maximum advantage through their 42-kilometre common border. In 2007, Russia's Gazprom company built a 140-kilometre natural gas pipeline for Iranian natural gas to Armenia from this gap. Armenia exports electricity to Iran in exchange. Trucks between Armenia and Iran also cross here. After the sanctions on Iran are lifted, this road will



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With Ilham Aliyev making some headway in meetings with Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, some improvement of Azerbaijan-Iran relations is likely, but disputes over Caspian Sea shelf oil and gas will overshadow it.

become an important alternative to Georgia's ports for Armenia.

The possibility of closer Armenia-Iran co-operation is a stimulant for the Minsk Group countries (peace brokers who came together following the Nagorno-Karabakh war) to be more, but not very, receptive to Armenia's demands. Armenia wanted Iran to send peacekeepers to the contact line between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, and Iran responded enthusiastically. But Minsk Group members such as Russia, the U.S., France, Turkey and Azerbaijan wanted no such Iranian troops in the region, so the idea died. Nevertheless, ideas like this will keep coming back, mainly because of Russia's revitalized interest in the region and Iran's sanction-free strength.

In September 2013, Russia persuaded Armenia to drop plans to sign the association agreement with the European Union in favour of the Eurasian Union, Russia's project to build a rival to the EU. The arguments Russia used are not known, but they succeeded just as an announcement was made about reactivation the Abkhazian railway between Armenia and Russia. Coincidence? Who knows?

For its part, Iran could provide Armenia with access to its ports if the Armenian rail network were to be connected to the Iranian one. Such an Iran-Armenia

railway could provide a land gateway for Russian access to Iran, and possibly to Iran's Indian Ocean ports. This would benefit Russia, Armenia and Iran and bolster ties among them.

Naturally, the stronger such a de-facto alliance, the weaker will be Armenia's willingness to concede anything to Azerbaijan. This would guarantee a continuation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, a near-war that threatens the export routes of Azerbaijan's oil and gas through the South Caucasus. Russia and Iran, oil producers, would benefit from continued high risks for Azerbaijan energy exports along this route.

The increase of Iran's oil revenues after the sanctions are gone will allow it to energize its role in the South Caucasus, supporting Armenia and freezing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in place. So, tension in the South Caucasus is, remotely or not, one possible result of lifting sanctions on Iran.

Currently an independent consultant, Dr. Zhalko-Iytarenko is the former head of the National Space Agency and member of National Disarmament Committee of Ukraine. He is grateful to Robert M. Cutler, senior research fellow at Carleton University, for fruitful discussions on the subject of this article.



# Understanding Ukraine

By Derek Fraser



Ukrainians took to the streets in December and January to overthrow the government of former president Viktor Yanukovich.

**T**he political crisis that led to the downfall of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich stemmed from Ukraine's inability to make a permanent transition to a stable democracy since it became independent in 1991. To understand this difficulty, we must examine three factors: Ukraine's history, the role of the EU and the influence of Russia.

The transition from authoritarianism to democracy is difficult. As the history of most Central and Southern European countries in the 20th Century illustrates, many countries that try democracy for the first time fall back at least once into dictatorship.

## The Burden of Ukrainian History

Compared with the countries in Central Europe that achieved independence

about the same time, for several reasons, Ukraine has been hampered in achieving a stable democracy:

- Ukraine was only obliquely affected by the gradual evolution of Western Europe from authoritarianism to pluralism;
- It had no tradition of the separation of powers nor the rule of law;
- Ukraine had no previous experience as an independent state, to give it a sense of national identity and cohesion;
- It also lacked much of the apparatus of a state;
- It had never experienced democracy;
- It had no knowledge of a market economy.

Two other factors have influenced Ukraine's democratic prospects — the EU and Russia. Unlike the states of Central

Europe and the Balkans, Ukraine did not, after the fall of communism, receive an offer of EU membership and Ukraine has, at times, faced severe pressure from Russia seeking to block Ukraine's move towards democracy and the West, and to force it into Russia's economy and security organizations.

## The role of the EU

The EU's relationship with Ukraine has been one of missed opportunities. Successive Ukrainian governments have sought membership in the EU. In the opinion of many observers, an earlier offer of EU membership could have totally changed the political landscape in Ukraine by producing a consensus among all major parties in favour of democracy.

In 2004, the EU did introduce the European Neighbourhood Policy for the EU's eastern and southern neighbours such as Ukraine. This policy was, however, intended to spread democracy and free markets without offering membership. The policy was proposed to the democratic government that emerged from the Orange Revolution, that of Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. The Ukrainians were not enthused by the idea because there was no membership offer and the amount of assistance proposed was inadequate.

The EU, having missed the boat with Yushchenko, a democrat, then offered in 2010 a more generous association and free-trade agreement to his successor, the thugish Viktor Yanukovich. The proposed association agreement hinted at eventual EU membership, but still was stingy in its offer of financial assistance.

#### The policies of Yanukovich

In reaction to the incompetence of Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, Ukraine followed the past pattern of many other European states by, in the 2010 presidential elections, choosing the dictatorial Yanukovich. President Yanukovich pursued two major goals — to enrich himself and his family through corruption and to remain in power through repression.

Nevertheless, Yanukovich accepted the EU's offer of an association agreement, and the EU's conditions of political and economic reform.

Yanukovich believed the EU's conditions were not serious and furthermore, expected that the IMF would relax its requirement for economic reforms in return for a loan of \$14.3 billion. He therefore continued his policy of repression and ignored economic reform. He did away with the rule of law. He threw his chief rival, Tymoshenko, and others of her party, in jail. He hobbled the media, harassed the opposition, fixed elections and neutralized parliament.

In consequence, since the EU maintained its conditions, Yanukovich announced on Nov. 21, 2013 that Ukraine would not sign the association agreement.

However, Ukraine's refusal to comply with the IMF's terms left the country in imminent danger of a currency collapse and sovereign default. If the money could not come from the West, Russia was the alternative. To understand the significance of this shift, we must turn to Russian policy towards Ukraine since its independence.

#### Russian policy towards Ukraine

Relations between successor states to a vanished empire often remain unsettled for a long period after the breakup. What makes the Russian-Ukrainian relationship especially difficult are three factors.

The current Russian leadership apparently refuses to accept the reality of Ukrainian independence. Putin has repeatedly described the Russians and Ukrainians as one people. He has also stated that Ukraine's independence in 1991 was a



President Viktor Yanukovich enriched himself through corruption and coercion.



Mr. Yanukovich threw his main rival, Yulia Tymoshenko, in jail.

mistake.

Moscow regarded the coloured revolutions that, from 2003 to 2005, shook Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and especially Ukraine as the result of Western plots. Moreover, the revolutions raised the spectre of a democratic revolution in Russia.

Following the admission of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to NATO and the EU in 2004, Moscow also considered the attempt by repeated Ukrainian governments to join NATO and the EU, was the result of a Western attempt to weaken Russia. Putin reportedly told Bush at the NATO Bucharest Summit in 2008 that Ukraine was "not a real nation," that much of its territory had been "given away." He warned Bush that if NATO put Ukraine on the path to membership, Russia might instigate the partition of Ukraine.

When it appeared likely last August that the Ukraine would sign the EU Association Agreement, Russia temporarily blocked the import of all Ukrainian goods. In September, Putin's point man on Ukraine, Sergey Glazyev, stated that Ukraine could expect worse if it went ahead with the EU Agreement. Glazyev also stated that if Ukraine signed the association agreement, Russia could possibly intervene if pro-Russian regions of the country appealed to Moscow.

In turning to Russia, instead of the IMF on 17 December, Yanukovich received the promise of the 15 billion Euros he sought in order to avoid bankruptcy. In return, however, he had to surrender a substantial part of Ukrainian sovereignty. In particular, vast sectors of the Ukrainian economy were to come under joint control. Ukrainian customs regulations were to be aligned with those of Russia's Customs Union. Trade agreements with anyone else would require Russian approval.

Bringing Ukraine back into Russia's orbit through Ukrainian membership in Russia's planned Eurasian Economic Union (to replace the existing Customs Union next year) and the Common Security Treaty Organization would be highly advantageous to Russia. It would in Russia's estimation, make a success of the two organizations. It would also give Russia control of Ukraine's international economic policy and its defence policy.

#### Prospects for Stable Democracy after Yanukovich

What began as a simple demonstration on the Maidan Nezalezhnosti, or Independence Square in Kyiv, by students against the refusal of President Yanukovich



to sign the EU Association Agreement, grew and multiplied with each attempt at suppression until demonstrations were occurring in most of Western and Central Ukraine. The Maidan demonstration survived, at the cost of 88 lives, the final brutal assaults ending in February by the security forces. Then, Yanukovich's parliamentary supporters turned against him, and his security guards deserted him, leading to his flight from Kyiv on Feb. 21.

The overthrow of Yanukovich is an event comparable to the Orange Revolution of 2004. If the new government is allowed to survive, it gives Ukraine a second chance to accomplish what the victors of that revolution failed to do — namely, establish a stable democracy.

The first steps of the new government have unfortunately been exploited by Putin to justify efforts to destabilize, or break up Ukraine. The flight of Yanukovich without having signed into law the elements of the compromise agreed to with the opposition, forced parliament, so as to allow the government to proceed, to pass a series of decrees, notably relieving the president of his powers, and choosing an interim president and prime minister. The High Administrative Court has rejected a challenge to the legality of parliament's actions.

Nevertheless, Putin has maintained his position that the new Ukrainian government is illegitimate. He has refused to deal with it and he refuses to recognize the early presidential elections on 25 May. Instead he has announced his support for the return to power of President Yanukovich for the purpose of making Ukraine into a federation with the states enjoying responsibility for foreign policy, an arrangement that would give Russia de facto control of certain parts of the country.

Certain initiatives of the new constellation of forces have especially aroused the opposition if not the fear of the people in Yanukovich's heartland — South-Eastern Ukraine — since they seemed to confirm Russian propaganda that the new government was the result of an anti-Russian neo-Nazi coup:

Prime Minister Yatseniuk's coalition cabinet apparently included only one minister from Eastern Ukraine;

Although the government is, in the main, centrist, out of eighteen ministers, it has three from the rightist party, Svoboda;

The Ukrainian parliament cancelled a law passed under President Yanukovich allowing Russian to be used as an official language in areas with a large Russian-

speaking population. The new law was, however, vetoed by interim President Turchynov.

Parliament's abrogation of the language law nevertheless provided the excuse for President Putin to equip himself with the legislative authority to invade Ukraine in support of supposedly oppressed Russian speakers.

In view of Russia's repeated warnings that it might promote the secession of parts of Ukraine if Ukraine decided to align itself with the West, the Russian takeover of Crimea should have come as no surprise.



Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly described the Russians and Ukrainians as one people.

The annexation of Crimea may prelude further Russian attempts at annexation and destabilization. In his March speech on the occasion of the annexation of Crimea, Putin implied that those in the Russian-speaking South-East of Ukraine should also join Russia. He declared Russia's guarantee of Ukraine's further stability and territorial integrity depended on Ukraine ensuring that the rights and interests of Russian speakers were fully respected. To stir up trouble, Russia has repeatedly sent agitators over the border into the cities in the Russian-speaking areas. In late March, the White House warned Russian troops may be massing for an invasion of Ukraine.

President Putin has a strong motive

to destabilize Ukraine further. Ukraine's signing the EU's association agreement in March, if allowed to stand, would end Russia's hope of bringing Ukraine into Russia's customs union. On the same day, Russia imposed a total boycott on Ukrainian goods.

If Ukraine's second attempt at democracy is to succeed, therefore, an extraordinary amount of Western economic and political support will be needed. In the face of the Russian trade boycott on Ukrainian exports, the economic support that the West has so far promised Ukraine, may be insufficient. And in view of the danger of Russia attacking the Ukrainian mainland, the West is right to threaten substantially increased sanctions in such a case.

The burden we would bear would be considerable, should Russia try again to annex parts of Ukraine. Then we could be faced with a general Russian war with Ukraine, the mass movement of refugees and a shift in the balance of power in Europe.

For the long run, we have to recognize that Ukraine can only be secure if its independence is accepted by Russia. Henry Kissinger has suggested a neutral status for Ukraine similar to that of Finland during the Cold War.

- Ukraine would have the right to choose freely its economic and political associations;
- Ukraine would not join NATO;
- Ukraine should be free to create any government compatible with the expressed will of its people;
- Russia would recognize Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea in return for increased Crimean autonomy and a renewed guarantee of Russia's naval base.

For the Russians to accept Ukraine's neutrality, it should be embedded in a wider East-West rapprochement. The EU might actively pursue Catherine Ashton's declared willingness to negotiate a common economic space with Russia's Customs Union in return for a guarantee by Russia of the right of countries such as Ukraine to remain outside of the union. In addition, the EU might amend the association agreement so as to allow Ukraine to have free trade with the EU and Russia's Customs Union.

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# South Africa's time of trouble

By Robert I. Rotberg

**C**APE TOWN: Nelson Mandela's death leaves political South Africa without any living moral compass. Symbolically, but tellingly, President Jacob Zuma was roundly booed when he spoke at Mandela's memorial service. The country's vibrant media carry constant stories about the declining popularity of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), Mandela's party and the nation's historical liberation movement.

Even committed ANC supporters are appalled by the seemingly endless and all-encompassing corruption of their party, their leader, politicians in general and the nation at large. No day goes by without reports in the press of one or another ANC luminary's attempt to benefit financially from his or her position. Whether it is tenders awarded suspiciously and the rumour of large multimillion-dollar kickbacks, spouses or relatives of high functionaries being discovered on ministerial or other payrolls, or wild expenditures on automobiles, fortified houses (such as Zuma's new \$25-million mansion in a small village in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal), travel perks or other lavish shenanigans, state funds are allegedly being allocated and expended improperly each day.

President Zuma has become the object of mockery at dinner parties, *shebeen* (unlicensed African saloon) gatherings and conversations among wage-earners and other labourers. His excesses, detailed in the South African press — his house, his implication years ago in the purchase of armaments, frigates and submarines from France and Germany, his multiple (currently four, plus two previous) wives and 21 children and his disdain for HIV/AIDS — have created a massive loss of legitimacy for the South African presidency and the party. Several years ago, Zuma admitted having unprotected sex with a young woman and said he "took a shower afterwards...." to limit the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Platinum miners, postal workers and others frequently lay down their tools, striking for higher wages, but also for greater respect, and — like so much of the



South African President Jacob Zuma is the subject of criticism in his country and abroad. But that doesn't mean he won't be re-elected.

nation in its southern summer of discontent — because the social contract between rulers and the ruled has frayed considerably. There have been serious township protests (34 in January in Gauteng Province alone) about water shortages, bad and dangerous policing, the appalling lack of safety and security in the African townships (16,200 murders nationwide in 2013 — among the 10 highest rates per capita in the world, after Honduras, El Salvador and Venezuela), and about the government's abysmal failure to build roads, houses and infrastructure. The educational system is in shambles, too, with the quality of teachers and schools poor, capacity shortages everywhere and overall accomplishments being underwhelming. There is a shortage of electrical power as well, with no near end to blackouts and load shedding (rolling blackouts to control demand.) Householders and industries both suffer.

With the ANC itself experiencing a loss of legitimacy similar to Zuma's loss,

with the South African economy faltering well behind the rest of Africa (yearly GDP growth is only about 2.7 percent compared to the rest of the continent's average 5-percent growth) and with the South African rand plummeting against the U.S. dollar, the British pound and the euro, the country is experiencing a great weakening of confidence among all of its constituents. Overseas investors, once supportive of South Africa as a BRICS economic growth prospect, now include South Africa as one of the "fragile five" along with Turkey, India, Brazil and Indonesia.

But all of this dismay and disillusionment does not mean that the ANC will lose the national parliamentary election scheduled for May 7. Observers believe the party's loss of legitimacy will probably cause a fall in its popularity and its overall vote from 63 percent to 51 or 52 percent of the poll, still ensuring its control of parliament, the presidency (decided by parliament after the election) and nearly all of South Africa's nine provinces. Africans (80 percent of the country's electorate) are not likely to abandon Mandela's liberation party, no matter how disaffected they may be. Nor is the ANC likely to remove Zuma as its standard-bearer. He has a firm control of the party machinery at the local level. Because South Africa uses a pure proportional representation system with only nominal constituencies, he controls its parliamentarians and parliament.

To the ANC's left, there is a new Economic Freedom Front party led by Julius Malema, described in milder characterizations as loud-mouthed and brash, a 32-year-old populist firebrand who was removed last year as head of the ANC Youth League for verbally abusing his elders (such as Zuma) and behaving disrespectfully to the party as a whole. Malema, however, may soon face a major corruption indictment based on his operations in the Youth League and Limpopo Province. He also confronts serious charges for "negligent, reckless driving." Some opinion polls suggest that Malema and his party could attract 10 percent of the total vote.



The ANC's main rival for parliamentary prominence, however, is the Democratic Alliance (DA). In the last election, it won 17 percent of the total vote and thus has 17 percent of the seats in parliament. It gained solid majorities in the Western Cape Province and in the city of Cape Town and thus administers both of those important political jurisdictions. Helen Zille, its charismatic leader, is the Cape premier and Patricia de Lille, another key DA operative, is mayor of Cape Town.

In late January, these two formidable women, each of whom is widely praised for running efficient service administrations in the province and the city (Cape Town has four million residents), were joined by Mamphela Ramphele, former vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town (the best university in Africa) and former World Bank official, as a central figure in the Democratic Alliance as it moves toward the election. Ramphele, whose stark criticisms of the ANC earned her national fame and notoriety, last year formed a new political party — Agang, or “Build” — but after that party had gained very little following, she abandoned it to become the nominal presidential candidate of the DA. Then, a week later, she suddenly reneged on her decision to join the DA, leaving both parties and the public agog at her indecision and political naiveté.

Merging Agang with the DA was meant to help position the DA (the descendant of the party of Helen Suzman and other white progressives, and one led by Zille, a white) as a truly multiracial party. Ramphele and de Lille, and Lindiwe Mazibuko, its young parliamentary leader, are black. Some opinion polls suggest that the DA could obtain 30 percent of the vote in the national election. That would not be enough to displace the ANC, but it would plausibly double the national standing of the DA and position it to provide a strong central opposition to the ANC.

Even without Ramphele and Agang, the DA hopes to win control of another province or two, conceivably the rural Northern Cape Province and Gauteng, the industrial heartland province around Johannesburg. That may be a stretch, but with its new, more thoroughly black leadership, together with Zille's astute guidance, the DA may just have a chance, given the falling off of ANC popularity almost everywhere.

If the ANC continues to govern South Africa after the election, as is very likely, the country's slide into illegitimacy may

well continue. Discontent will flourish. Corruption will grow. Scandals will multiply. The trade union federation ties to the ANC may wither. Investors will stay away. Even domestic businesses will slow their activities. South Africa may more and more rely on China.

Zuma is unlikely to change his transactional method of governing, or the ANC,

2013, and presumptive national deputy president after the national poll in May.

Ramaphosa is well-educated, well-read, sophisticated and accomplished. If anyone has the ability, assisted by Gigaba, to reform the ANC from within, he is that person. However, he is from a disdained minority ethnic group — the Venda — and the Zulu (Zuma's people) and the Xhosa



The Democratic Alliance hopes to win control of the rural Northern Cape Province and Gauteng, the industrial heartland province around Johannesburg, pictured here.

to reject opportunities for enrichment. But just conceivably, Zuma's new deputy president — Cyril Ramaphosa — may be able to reform the ANC from within. Ramaphosa, 61, and Malusi Gigaba, 42, now minister of public enterprises, are younger than Zuma (72 by the time of the election) and other old-guard party stalwarts. Ramaphosa was a young, university-educated trade-union leader in the 1980s when he led the anti-apartheid struggle from within South Africa. He was the key ANC negotiator of the post-apartheid peace settlement that led to Mandela's election in 1994 and a new national constitution. In 1996, Mandela was persuaded to give the succession to Thabo Mbeki, who became president, not Ramaphosa. The latter went on to become extremely wealthy thanks to successful Black Empowerment Enterprise investments. Now he is back, the ANC and Zuma having elected him ANC deputy president in

(Mbeki's people) comprise much larger ethnic pluralities. Gigaba is a Zulu.

But if Ramaphosa becomes deputy president this year, and if Zuma survives, the next general election will be in 2019. That is a very long time to wait, given South Africa's current crisis of governance. Whether South Africa can stagger through five more years of deficient leadership, poor education, weak energy and slow economic growth is questionable. Ramaphosa and the ANC may need to find some way of replacing Zuma and turning South Africa back onto the healthy track that Mandela inaugurated.

Robert I. Rotberg was Fulbright Research Professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University and is a senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation and Distinguished Research Associate of the North-South Institute.

# Not your grandmother's Sweden

By Brian Lee Crowley

For many Canadians, “Sweden” and “socialist” have simply always belonged together in the same sentence. Today that is still true, but the sentence now reads, “Sweden is no longer socialist.”

For those who haven't followed political developments in this Scandinavian country in recent years, such a statement may seem improbable and even outlandish, a bit like saying winter has ceased being cold. The two just seem to go together.

But while Sweden's degree of socialism depends a little bit on what you mean by that term, there is little doubt that it has been furiously backpedalling from many of the nostrums of social democracy for decades. Moreover, it has been doing it in a typically low-key, off-hand sort of way that belies the profound nature of the changes sweeping the country.

The Sweden of socialist lore never did have a huge share of the economy owned by the government. What it did have was some of the highest taxes in the industrialized world (a top marginal income tax rate of 87 percent), one of the most elaborate offerings of social services of any welfare state, from childcare to social welfare to pensions, and monopoly control by the state in the provision of those services, giving the highly unionized public sector workers huge bargaining power. Each one of these pillars of Swedish socialism has come under concerted attack in recent decades.

## Taxes and the size of government

Start with the tax burden. Social democracy Swedish-style was premised on the idea that ownership of the means of production was largely irrelevant; what really mattered was who got to decide what to do with the wealth the economy generated. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), at its height in 1990, Sweden's total tax burden (i.e. all taxes combined) as a share of the economy (or GDP) was more than 52 percent. After a near quarter-century of decline, it now clocks in at 44.3 percent. Total government spending peaked at roughly 68 percent in 1994 (when the budget deficit was 11 percent of GDP) and has fallen by 20 percentage points. That's still higher than Canada,



Swedish Prime Minister John Fredrik Reinfeldt

for example, but the scales have tipped decisively in favour of allowing private citizens and firms to control the majority of economic decision-making.

The size of the tax burden was a critical component in finally driving Swedes away from the big government status quo.

While the top marginal rate for personal income tax reached 87 percent at its peak, that was not the end of the tax take. In fact, combining all taxes (including on income from capital and small business earnings, for example) marginal tax rates could reach more than 100 percent for

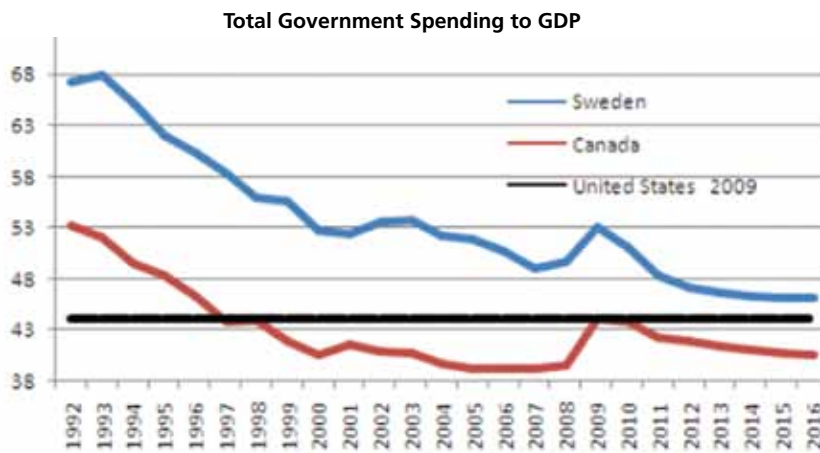


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those with high incomes. Children's author Astrid Lindgren (of Pippi Longstocking fame) wrote a famous article in 1976 showing her effective marginal tax rate was 102 percent. She was actually losing money on selling additional books. That article was widely seen as a contributing factor to the defeat of the Social Democrats in 1976 after 44 years in power.

Personal income tax has fallen, with the top marginal rate now still an eye-watering 56.6 percent, but the government's long-term goal is to reduce it to 50 percent. Corporate income tax, too, has fallen, with Sweden taking 22 percent of profits, well below Canada's target of a combined federal and provincial rate of 25 percent. Death duties, wealth and property taxes have been eliminated altogether. Consumption taxes remain high, but the total burden is down, with Sweden relying on a more sensible mix of taxes than Canada.

At the same time it has been reining in taxes, the Swedish government has been committing itself to balanced budgets, which are already back after a brief period of recession-induced stimulus spending. And that stimulus spending chiefly took the form of tax cuts, not higher public spending on services and public works.

A Sweden committed to socialism might have been expected to balk at such a major slimming of the state. But Swedes understood that their predilection for massive taxation and government spending had actually undermined their standard of living. The fourth wealthiest country in the world in 1970, Sweden had fallen to 17th by 1993. And since the beginning of Sweden's massive reforms, economic growth has responded positively, although unemployment remains relatively high in Swedish terms at just a touch more than eight percent.

When the current conservative government was re-elected in Sweden in 2010, it was largely due to the success of the government's policy of cutting taxes and reducing welfare to pay for it. For a society whose hallmark had been high taxes in exchange for cradle-to-grave social services, this, too, was a remarkable reversal.

#### Welfare state reform

Welfare state reform hasn't just been a matter of cutting benefits, although there has been some of that. Much more important, Sweden has been at the forefront of subjecting formerly monopolistic public services (schools and hospitals, for example) to the bracing winds of competition.

As in Canada, health care used to be the

almost-exclusive preserve of the public sector. No more. The change was symbolized by St. Göran's Hospital, Sweden's largest, which was privatized more than a decade ago. More than 200 clinics have been set up by private health-care providers around the country and Swedish health-care consumers have a wide array of choices.

Interestingly, former state employees have been at the forefront of the changes. Instead of obstructing the move to more private provision, for example, the nurses' union became one of the loudest voices pushing for its members to be able to opt out and create their own professional services companies, offering their services on negotiated terms to public and private providers.

Parents in the Swedish education system have similarly been empowered to opt out of the public system, with what is



St. Göran's Hospital, Sweden's largest, was privatized more than a decade ago.

essentially a universal voucher. The large majority of new schools in Sweden come from private providers. While there have been widely publicized problems with individual schools, what the critics forget is that a voucher-based system gives parents the power to shift their child to a more satisfactory school, whereas under the old system of public-sector monopoly, the state decided what school children would attend and there was little ability to avoid poorly performing schools.

Pensions, too, have been reformed. Like many western countries, Sweden was seduced by the old pay-as-you-go model under which today's pensions were paid out of the pension premiums of current workers, with no reserves being set aside against future pension obligations. It is a system that can work when the labour force is expanding, but not when it is crumbling throughout the West under the weight of aging populations.

Sweden not only put its pension system on a more secure, savings-based track,

but also specifically tied future benefits to future economic conditions. Instead of making unqualified promises that pensioners will receive a given level of benefit, the Swedish government has made it clear benefits will be adjusted if their planning assumptions do not pan out.

As for those cradle-to-grave benefits such as social welfare and unemployment benefits, access has been tightened and benefit levels cut. And in accordance with their famous Lutheran work ethic, the Swedes press benefit recipients hard to return to work at the earliest possible moment.

Critics on the left, who yearn for the old days, try to make out that Sweden is abandoning its long-standing commitment to egalitarianism with these reforms. While the direction of the reforms is clearly towards a more market-friendly system, one also has to put those reforms in context. The starting point was one of a huge state and public services designed to protect the poor.

The reforms have tempered, but not eliminated, these egalitarian leanings so that, according to *The Economist*: "Once you allow for the progressivity of public services, the OECD reckons, Sweden's Gini [coefficient, a widely used measure of inequality] drops to 0.18. That still leaves it as the world's most equal place, as well as one of the fastest-growing and fiscally stable countries in the rich world."

In other words, socialism in Sweden is hardly dead, but it is no longer an article of faith. Swedes have demanded that high taxes and generous public services be subject to stringent analysis to see whether they really contribute to a higher standard of living. The answer seems to be that Sweden had too much of a good thing and governments of all political stripes that have pursued these changes have enjoyed widespread backing from the public.

That's not to say that there aren't dissenting voices. But when the Social Democratic Party, the architect of Sweden's original welfare state, now campaigns against the centre-right government on the grounds that it has not done enough to create an entrepreneurial culture in Sweden, you know things can never go back to the way they were.

Brian Lee Crowley ([twitter.com/brianleecrowley](https://twitter.com/brianleecrowley)) is the managing director of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, an independent non-partisan public policy think-tank in Ottawa ([www.macdonald-laurier.ca](http://www.macdonald-laurier.ca)).

# Slaying the Dragon Lady

By George Fetherling

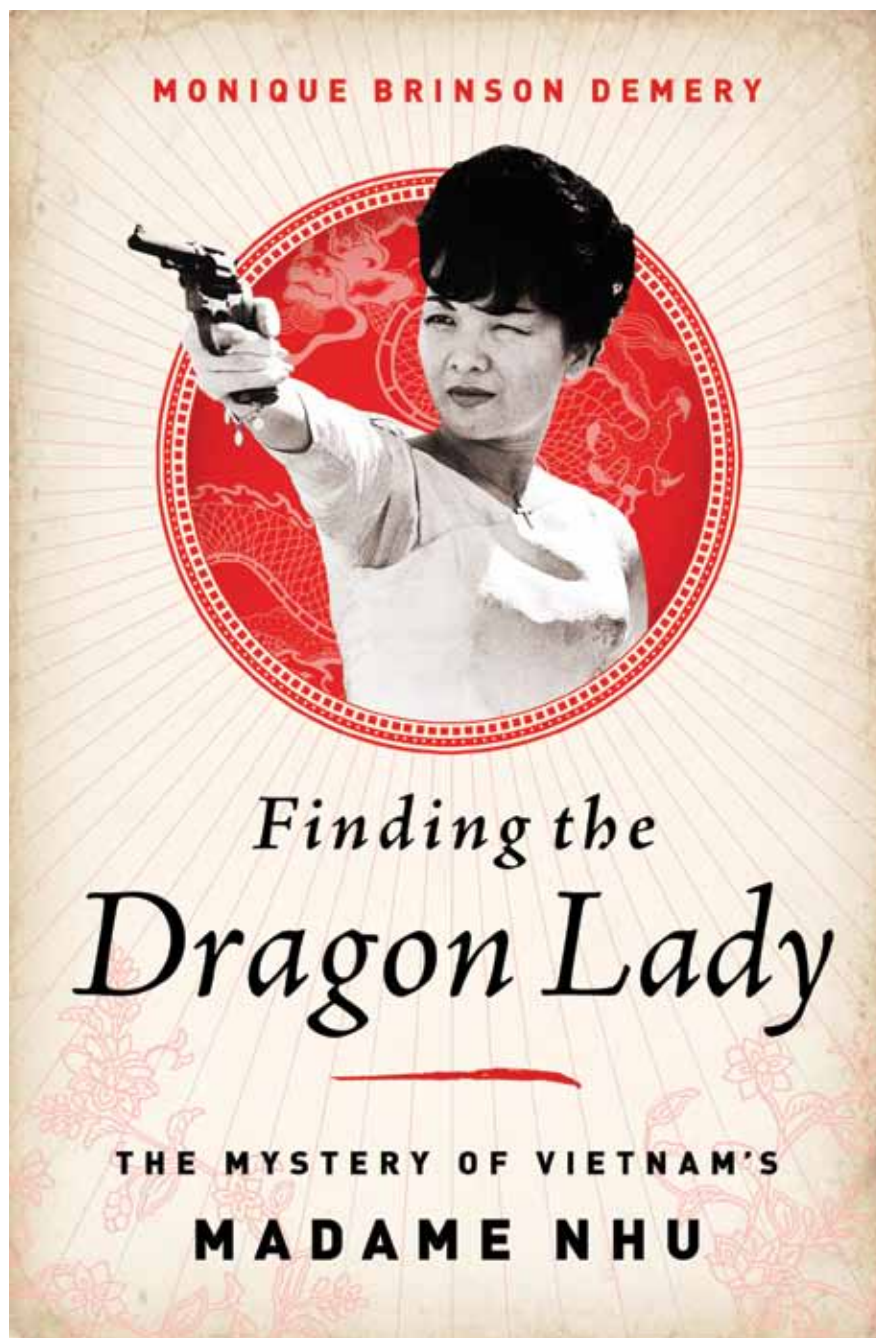


GEORGE FETHERLING

The “Dragon Lady” was the name of a sexy Asian “villainess” in *Terry and the Pirates*, a popular newspaper comic strip of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s, however, people in the U.S. often applied the decidedly unflattering nickname to Tran Le Xuan, better known as Madame Nhu. She was a 98-pound Vietnamese woman of distinguished family with remote connections to Bao Dai, the last emperor. She was also the wife of Ngo Dinh Nhu. That made her the sister-in-law of Ngo Dinh Diem, the president of anti-communist South Vietnam. As Diem was a lifelong bachelor, Madame Nhu served as her country’s de facto first lady. That’s where the trouble began, for she was no Jacqueline Kennedy.

*Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam’s Madame Nhu* by Monique Brinson Demery (Publishers Group Canada, \$30) is a spirited retelling of Madame Nhu’s reign as probably one of the world’s worst goodwill ambassadors (or one of the best ill-will ones). It’s also a search for a kind of hidden treasure. Ms Demery is a youngish Harvard-educated American of French ancestry whose academic specialty is Vietnam. She knew that following a coup d’état in 1963, Madame Nhu had fled to exile in Europe, where she lived in fear of communists, Americans, the *New York Times* and who knows who else. In 2005, Ms Demery, by telephone from Chicago, managed to track her down in Paris, where the quarry secluded herself when not equally secluded in Rome.

Once the Dragon Lady was satisfied that neither her caller nor anyone in the caller’s family was a spy or a cop, she set



Tran Le Xuan, better known as Madame Nhu, earned her “Dragon Lady” title when she suggested other Buddhists join Thich Quang Dur, who publicly set himself on fire in protest against the policies of her husband’s government.

out the rules: In the future, Madame Nhu herself would initiate all the calls — at unannounced times. “I learned that it was better to let Madame Nhu talk,” the author writes. “She would stay on the phone lon-

ger, and it would inevitably lead her back to the past. From there, I could tease out little vignettes from her childhood and ask her what she remembered about the different eras of her life.” It was quite a story.



Le Xuan was born in the north in 1924, when the French regime in Indochina had almost 30 more years to live. She spoke proper French and in later life couldn't understand the Vietnamese dialect spoken by people in central Vietnam. When the students at Madame Parmentier's ballet school in Hanoi mounted a production of *Snow White*, the young Le Xuan (the name means "beautiful spring") knew that the title role "would go to one of the fair-skinned French girls [and that] she might as well steal the show with a magnificent, if cruel, performance" as the wicked witch. Talk about being typecast.

She was 15 when she met Ngo Dinh Nhu, who was twice her age. Three years later, in 1943, once she had converted to Catholicism from Buddhism, they were married. At the time, her husband, who came from a family of big landowners, was affiliated with the Japanese invaders in an administrative capacity. Demery suggests that Madame Nhu aided her husband's political career through her (the phrase sounds much better in French) *coucheries utilitaires*. The Second World War was followed immediately by what she considered *une guerre bizardouille*: the curious armed conflict by which the Viet Minh under Ho Chi Minh drove out the French. It was a bloody affair that segued into civil war, from which the Nhu clan's fierce anti-communism derives. At one point, communists blew up Madame Nhu's grand piano with explosives, believing it was a radio used to communicate with the enemy. Other than that, there was no low comedy, but only tragedy. One of her brothers-in-law was murdered — some say by being buried alive — and she was taken prisoner. She endured privation with the steadfastness of Scarlett O'Hara.

When the country was partitioned into communist North Vietnam and U.S.-backed South Vietnam, Diem became, by degrees, the president of the latter. His ascent had American support, but was over the objections of the now-deposed French. They hated him for such policies as "renaming streets after Vietnamese patriots, nationalizing French industries and making the remaining French in Vietnam feel as unwelcome as possible," Ms Demery writes. Diem's brother, who was commonly held to be the brains of the family, served as his chief political adviser, and his brother's wife, the Madame, became drunk with luxury and power.

Everyone knew her tastes and methods, and nobody doubted her tenacity. She swanned round the palace in Saigon.

She built an estate up in the mountains at Dalat that had 50 gardeners. She elected herself to the National Assembly, had her father made finance minister and appointed other close relatives to high diplomatic posts. Diem set up what he named the Service for Political and Social Research, or secret police, whereas his sister-in-law founded a small private all-female army to do her own dirty work. She called its members "my little darlings." One western observer (male) remarked that her dresses were like the sheaths that conceal knives. Among her fashion accessories



Tran Le Xuan, aka Madame Nhu

was a crucifix made of diamonds.

Madame, having worked hard to improve her English, paid flirtatious visits to the United States, but it was clear that she was no diplomatist. When John F. Kennedy sent his vice-president, Lyndon Johnson, and a party of others to Saigon, she shocked Lady Bird Johnson and the president's sister, Jean Kennedy Smith, by giving them a tour of her bedroom. It was entirely carpeted in the skins of tigers — with heads attached and paws and claws intact.

Gradually, she and her family lost much of their influence, especially by ruthlessly persecuting the Buddhist majority. Diem's other problems were infiltration by northern insurgents and growing disloyalty in his own armed forces. In November 1960, there was a coup attempt that, while not actually proposed by officials in Washington, wasn't opposed by them, either. Then, in February 1962, two disaffected South Vietnamese fighter jet pilots attacked the palace. One bomb fell in the room occupied by Diem, but failed to detonate.

Another one, intended for the Madame, destroyed her private living quarters, but miraculously, left her only with some burns.

The Dragon Lady's media image reached its nadir in June 1963 when a Buddhist monk named Thich Quang Dur publicly set himself on fire in protest against government policies. Madame Nhu trumpeted the incident as "a barbecue" and offered to supply gasoline and matches so other Buddhists could follow suit. Later, she extended the offer to David Halberstam of the *New York Times*, the author of *The Best and the Brightest*, and even offered her assistance. When the western media threw up their hands, she feigned an apology by saying that she thought barbecuing a person was an English idiom that she was using properly. JFK and his advisers felt they had to get rid of the Nhuses.

On Nov. 2, 1963, while Madame Nhu was busy shooting off her mouth in California, Diem and his brother were killed in a coup that, as she said, correctly for once, took place "with either official or unofficial blessing of the American government." Hearing the news, President Kennedy reacted in a coy and disingenuous manner, saying privately that the



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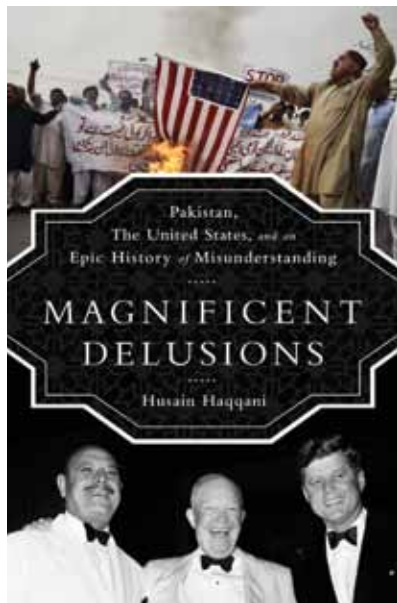
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brothers must have been murdered as two such “good Catholic boys” would never have committed suicide. When Kennedy was himself killed only 20 days later, the Vietnam problem passed to Lyndon Johnson — the same Lyndon Johnson who



once sighed that Diem was “the only boy we got out there” and publicly called him “the Winston Churchill of Asia.”

When Monique Demery and Madame Nhu finally met face to face, in Paris, Madame picked the spot: a quiet Catholic church where no one would overhear them. She opened the meeting by saying: “You are an angel. You have been sent to help me finish [my] memoirs. Then everything will be revealed.” She died in 2011, age 86. The following year, Ms Demery somehow came into possession, through a mysterious third party, of the Madame’s diary. The first entry was dated 1959. The final one was written in June 1963, when the monk immolated himself and the outside world at large began to turn on her.

## PAKISTAN DILEMMA

Pakistan has received \$40 billion in U.S. foreign aid in the years since the country’s founding in 1947. The figure hints at the complex and (both sides agree) dysfunctional relationship between the two nations: the subject of a pair of new books.

The first is *No Exit from Pakistan* (Cambridge University Press, US\$27.99 paper) by Daniel S. Markey, the senior fellow for India, Pakistan and South Asia affairs at the Council on Foreign Relations. The other is *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding* (Publishers Group Canada, \$32) by Husain Haqqani, who was Islamabad’s ambassador to Washington from 2008 to 2011. The books tell essentially the same tale. Namely, of how for three decades the country has been ruled by the military (for more on this, also see *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan* by Aqil Shah, Harvard University Press, US\$35) that has been given fortunes to fight communists and, more recently, terrorists, but has used the funds to redouble its defences against India. The results have turned supposed allies into bitter and mutually uncomprehending antagonists, as in such matters as America’s use of drones and Pakistan’s harbouring (or some equivalent word — take your pick) of Osama bin Laden. Of the two books, Mr. Haqqani’s is the controversial one. He is a Pakistani liberal, a rare bird indeed, whose diplomatic career ended when he was accused of writing a memo seeking U.S. help in keeping the military in check. The scandal, inevitably called Memogate, led the Pakistani supreme court and others to denounce him as a traitor. He now lives in exile in Boston.

## DISMAL SCIENTISTS

There’s far more to be said about Walter Friedman’s fine book *Fortune Tellers: The Story of America’s First Economic Forecasters*



Roger Babson was the inventor of the employee suggestion box and the modern paper-towel dispenser.

(Princeton University Press, US\$29.95) than there is space in which to say it. Prof. Friedman, a historian at the Harvard Business School, writes smoothly and wisely about some of the U.S. economic forecasters who suddenly started appearing in the first years of the 20th Century. They include respectable figures such as John Moody (1868–1958), founder of the bond-rating service that still bears his name, and the serious economic theorist Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950), who once served briefly as Austria’s finance minister, but fled to the U.S., where he pooh-poohed the whole idea of self-proclaimed economic soothsayers even while being one in his own way.

In the 19th Century, the word *forecast* was almost always applied to the weather rather than to wealth. Its application to finance and especially the stock markets came with the recession of 1907 and was reinforced by the depression of 1921 and the Great Depression that succeeded the market crash of 1929. These were events that nearly all of the by then numerous, successful and even famous forecasters either failed to foresee or even recognize or at least didn’t fully understand. Prof. Friedman’s book is rich in these influential cranks, which is what they were, even by the loose standards of their day.



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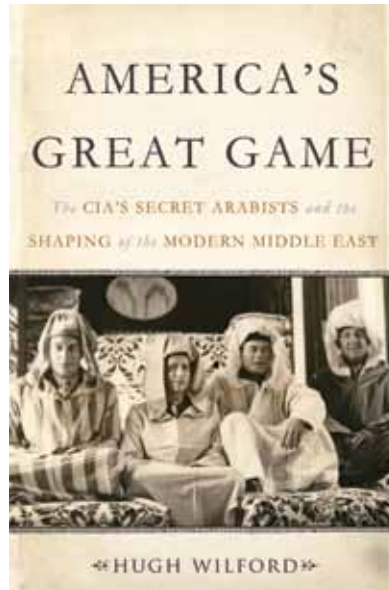
My favourite among these (I've written about him previously and gleefully) is Roger W. Babson (1867–1947), a bear during the 1920s boom. He did in fact predict, sort of, the cataclysmic events of October 1929, if not their effect. He incited disagreement from Irving Fisher (1867–1947), perhaps the shrewdest of the lot, who nevertheless said, to his everlasting embarrassment: "Stock prices have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau." Fisher had been wrong before, at the time of the 1907 tumble, so wrong that he contemplated suicide, but instead embraced the Catholic Church because "she gives me certainty." Like Mr. Babson, Mr. Fisher was a dietary faddist (and the inventor of what we would call the Rolodex), but he was scarcely Mr. Babson's equal as an eccentric. The statistical newsletters that made Mr. Babson rich were based on a system of mathematical divination that he claimed derived from the thoughts of Sir Isaac Newton. He was trained as a civil engineer, but had worked wiring doorbells before getting a bank job in Boston. He was the inventor of the employee suggestion box and the modern paper-towel dispenser. He forced his employees to keep windows wide open throughout the New England winters, so his secretaries had to wear hats and coats indoors and type wearing mittens, using little hammers to strike the keys. He believed in world government and once established a foundation for the study of gravity (Newton once again). Its goal, he explained, was to find ways of promoting human flight without recourse to airplanes, balloons or rockets: arms only, please. In all, he wrote 50 books, one of which he literally carved in stone.

#### AND THEN, VERY BRIEFLY

**W**e often hear the phrase "the Great Game" (Rudyard Kipling coined it) referring to the espionage war between Britain and Russia during the late 19th Century in oil-rich parts of Central Asia. Hugh Ford's book *America's Great Game: The CIA's Secret Arabists and the Shaping of the Modern Middle East* (Publishers Group Canada, \$34.50) tells how, starting in the late 1940s, the brand new CIA, then a more liberal and noble-minded institution than now, struggled to win over Iran and the Arab countries. Two key players were Theodore Roosevelt's grandson, Kermit Roosevelt, and Kermit's cousin, Archie Roosevelt.

"Treaty port" is another recurring phrase in writings about Asia. It usually refers to the system that the West forced

on China after the Opium Wars, allowing the creation, for trade purposes, of foreign quarters in certain sites on the China coast and along the Yangtze River, free from Chinese law. We read much less about the somewhat similar, but less coercive and less one-sided arrangement that the Japanese permitted in Yokohama and Kōbe. To the Japanese, the setting up of "foreign



concessions" presented an opportunity to study western methods. Peter Enns of Mount Allison University analyses the matter in *Opening a Window to the West: The Foreign Concession at Kōbe, Japan, 1868–1899* (University of Toronto Press, \$32.95 paper).

His name is fading now, but Chester Ronning (1894–1984) was indeed an extraordinary Canadian, an all-round public man. The mere title of his 1974 book, *A Memoir of China in Revolution: From the Boxer Rebellion to the People's Republic*, gives hint of his breadth as well as his longevity. He was an Albertan who went to China in 1922 to teach and never lost touch with the country. In later life, he was Canada's ambassador to Norway and high commissioner to India. Lester Pearson dispatched him to Hanoi in 1965–66 to try to help dampen the worsening Vietnam War. In *The Remarkable Chester Ronning, Proud Son of China* (University of Alberta Press, \$34.95 paper), Brian L. Evans, a professor of Chinese history of the same university and a former member of the Canadian embassy in Beijing, has produced a balanced, discerning and engaging biography.

George Fetherling's most recent book is *The Writing Life: Journals 1975–2005* (McGill-Queen's University Press).



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Photo by Bill Blackstone

# The birth of a nation

By Anthony Wilson-Smith

**A**mong Canada's defining events, the Battle of Vimy Ridge in the First World War ranks high. It was a triumph — a major victory for the Allied side after a long, bloody stalemate — and a tragedy. In the four-day battle, 3,598 Canadians died and another 7,004 were wounded. In the near-century since it ended, on April 12, 1917, it has become something else: an event bordering on myth. "In those few minutes," said Canadian Brig.-Gen. A. E. Ross of the victory, "I witnessed the birth of a nation."

Observed through history's rear-view mirror, Vimy Ridge's significance is clear. At the time, however, the bringing together of the Canadian Corps' four divisions, for the first time, seemed to simply throw fresh blood onto the killing field that the seven-kilometre-long ridge north of Arras, France, had become over nearly three years. As historian Tim Cook describes it, the ridge was "an open graveyard," bearing the remains of some of the more than 100,000 French soldiers killed or wounded in previous efforts to remove the Germans. For the Allies, winning the ridge would destabilize German lines across the region. For the Germans, the ridge was the "hinge" of their line, protecting their newly constructed Hindenburg Line and a long stretch into Flanders. A loss would leave those entrenched positions open to the Allied guns above them.

The Canadians were under the command of British Lt.-Gen. Sir Julian Byng (later governor general of Canada). A popular leader with a keen eye for talent, he had great confidence in the Corps' 1st Division leader, Canadian Maj.-Gen. Arthur Currie. Together, they prepared and rehearsed meticulously with their troops for the battle. The men were shown models and maps, given precise information on the location of enemy strong points, and infantry soldiers were assigned tightly defined roles such as machine gunners or grenade throwers (instead of the usual presumption they would all be riflemen). Their instructions: Follow your commanding officer and if he goes down, follow the next in rank in descending order.

They attacked at 5:30 a.m. on April 9, Easter Monday, amid bitter-cold wind,



Vimy Ridge is the site of one of the most moving memorials anywhere, a limestone structure built atop Hill 145, inscribed with the names of the 11,285 Canadians who died in France with no known grave.

sleet and snow. The first wave of more than 15,000 Canadians struck hard, successfully capturing the front line. Three days later, they ran the Germans right off the ridge, having captured its main heights — "Hill 145" and "the Pimple." The log of the 2nd Division's 6th Brigade described the battle's first day: "Wounded men sprawled everywhere in the slime, in the shell holes, in the mine craters, some screaming to the skies, some lying silently, some begging for help, some struggling to keep from drowning in craters." Yet the Canadians did what no other army could — winning the Allies a pivotal victory that shifted the course of the war towards their final victory the following year.

The victory featured new tactics, but most of all, blood and courage. Four Canadians won the Victoria Cross. (See further details in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* produced by our Historica Canada organization at [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/vimy-ridge/](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/vimy-ridge/) and our *Heritage Minute* video <https://www.historica>

[cacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/vimy-ridge/](http://cacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/vimy-ridge/)).

Two months later, Byng was promoted and the newly knighted Currie took his place. The battle became symbolic of Canada's contributions and sacrifices in the war — more than 60,000 dead — and gave prime minister Robert Borden the post-war impetus to push for autonomous recognition for Canada from Britain. It led to Canada's change of status from colony to dominion and commonwealth member. Vimy Ridge became the site of one of the most starkly moving memorials anywhere, a limestone structure built atop Hill 145, inscribed with the names of the 11,285 Canadians who died in France with no known grave. Just as they are remembered there, so is Canada's role in the war that, sadly, did not live up to its description as the one that would "end all wars."

Anthony Wilson-Smith is president of Historica Canada and publisher of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.



# Warning: This column contains sulphites



PIETER VAN DEN WEGHE

**W**e often romanticize wine. We think of it as a product made when humans gently coax nature into making drinkable art. While true, that image contrasts with that of wine production as a business. Whether a winery is family-run or a multinational giant, grapes are the raw material and wine the finished product. Though less poetic, this perspective can help us understand the decisions all winemakers make to ensure their wine is successful. Using sulphur is one such decision. Often included as a preventative measure, but sometimes as a fix, using sulphur in wine production is, for many grape growers and winemakers, less a choice than a requirement.

Sulphur is a naturally abundant non-metallic element that, while essential for life, is also an antioxidant and a germicide. The term sulphite that appears on wine labels as a warning is a catch-all term for the many forms sulphur can take. Because of its effectiveness in controlling oxidation and microbial growth, sulphur use in low concentrations has become widespread throughout the food and beverage industries. When it comes to wine, it has major roles in the vineyard and the winery.

In the vineyard, sulphur has, since the mid-19th Century, become a common treatment against the fungal disease known as oidium. At that time, growers discovered dusting the vines with powdered sulphur in the summer months was an effective preventative measure. As an alternative to chemical and biochemical agents, this form of sulphur application continues to be common practice in many wine-producing regions and is even sanc-



Punset's excellent 2008 Barbaresco is grown in this, the Piedmont region of Italy.

tioned by organic grape growers.

Sulphur can also be used in the winery. When burned, it becomes a gas, sulphur dioxide. Many wineries use a traditional method in which they suspend lit sulphur wicks inside casks and barrels to disinfect them against the bacteria that cause acetic acid. Beyond sterilizing equipment, sulphur dioxide can also be applied directly to grapes and wine to prevent oxidation, bacterial spoilage and undesired fermentations. When skilfully used, sulphur dioxide delivers wines with no detectable negative aromas. When used haphazardly, it can remain in the wine in excessive amounts and emit an unpleasant and distracting odour of burnt matchsticks. Decanting and aeration typically lessen the aroma's potency.

Excessive sulphur dioxide can also be changed by fermentation into hydrogen sulphide, which smells of rotten eggs. If left untreated, hydrogen sulfide can further react with other chemicals present in the wine to create more complex sulphur compounds called mercaptans. Mercaptans vary in their offensive aromas from burnt rubber to rancid garlic, and taste bitter and astringent. At this point, the wine is essentially beyond help.

Beyond displeasing aromas and flavours, sulphites are considered one of the 10 priority food allergens. While sulphites

don't trigger a true allergic reaction, individuals with sensitivity to sulphur may experience a reaction similar to a food allergy. In particular, those who have asthma are at a higher risk.

While the use of sulphur dioxide is very common, some winemakers eschew its practice. For instance, those who produce "vin nature" would either not use it at all, or only in very small quantities when bottling white wines. For those who are sensitive or wish to avoid sulphur, these vin natures and also organic and biodynamic wines are often the best option to avoid a reaction. Beyond that, red wines typically have lower amounts of sulphites as they naturally contain antioxidants acquired from contact with the grape skins during fermentation. White wines usually have more sulphites and sweet wines tend to have the highest level.

The 2012 Triomphe Chardonnay from Southbrook, Canada's first biodynamic winery, is a big, delicious Chardonnay available from Vintages for \$22.95. An organic red option is Punset's excellent 2008 Barbaresco from the Piedmont region of Italy. It provides dense flavours and structure and is priced at \$52.95 at Vintages.

Pieter Van den Weghe is general manager and wine director at Beckta dining & wine.

## Swiss cuisine: cheese, chocolate and beyond



MARGARET DICKENSON

**S**witzerland has existed for centuries as a small, compact, alpine country nestled amongst France, Germany, Austria and Italy. As Ambassador Ulrich Lehner notes: Originally Switzerland was a poor country of farmers who were employed as soldiers beyond their borders by foreign powers. The Vatican's Swiss guard was one such force and remains

the only one dating from that era.

Indeed, Switzerland was known as a farming nation, specializing in milk and dairy products, especially cheeses, but where, in time, the cultivation of sufficient quantities of wheat could not meet the needs of its growing population. The Swiss resisted accepting the potato, despite its 15th-Century introduction to Europe from South America by the Spanish. Only in the 18th Century did a series of relatively cold, wet periods and resulting famines brutally illustrate the always-present risks of relying singularly on grain crops as a staple. The potato quickly gained widespread popularity that, to this day, is critical when discussing Swiss cuisine.

Traditional Swiss cuisine is not known for its delicacy, but rather its somewhat plain dishes made with simple ingredients. Dairy products are part of virtually every recipe. Cheese and potatoes pre-

dominate, often in unusual combinations with meat.

Adding to its uniqueness, Swiss cuisine also bears significant testimony to the regional influences of its neighbours, manifested in a trio of French cuisine in the west, Italian to the south and German in the north and east of Switzerland. This migration of influences makes perfect sense. For centuries, Swiss cheese has been sold in markets in northern Italy. In exchange, the Swiss were able to acquire Italian products such as rice and pasta, which were difficult for the Swiss to produce themselves.

There is, however, a variety of rice cultivated in Ticino, located in south eastern Switzerland, which boasts the most northerly point of global rice production. In contrast to the waterlogged fields of Asian rice cultivation, the Ticino variety grows in dry conditions in the Maggia Delta and is used to make risotto. But a truly Swiss



Margaret's Raspberry Toblerone Cheesecake



version of saffron risotto is made with the only saffron grown in the country — from Mund, in the canton of Valais, and ranked among the best in the world.

Foods commonly associated with Switzerland include cheese, fine chocolate and muesli. Ambassador Lehner explains: “Historically, cheese, one of Switzerland’s few exports, was nourishing food for armies.” Today, among hundreds of Swiss cheeses, Emmentaler, Gruyère, Appenzeller and Vacherin may be the most familiar and widely consumed, but many others claim a long and interesting history. For example, “Tête de Moine” (monk’s head) has been produced by monks at the Belletay Monastery in Jura since 1136. It is a fresh milk cheese, matured on spruce wood pallets for at least three months. In 1982, it witnessed a type of renaissance with the invention of the “girolle,” a hand-operated device that artistically scrapes the cheese off in fancy delicate rosettes often presented with fresh fruit.

Fondue and raclette, both originally regional dishes, rank as the most popular of cheese dishes. The ambassador refers to them as being “very social” dishes usually reserved for cold weather entertaining with friends. Fondue consists of melted cheese (50 percent Vacherin and 50 percent Gruyère), white wine, cornstarch (to achieve the correct consistency), garlic and spices, and is presented in a ceramic pot placed over a gentle flame. Cubes of bread speared onto long-handled forks are dipped into the melted cheese. A couple of glasses of dry white wine or tea ease digestion.

Raclette is melted cheese, poured next to steamed potatoes, seasoned with pepper and then eaten with pickles and small onions. Traditionally, a whole raclette cheese was cut in half and placed on its side on a plank over an open fire. As the cheese melted, that portion was cut off. Today, for larger gatherings, half of a raclette wheel is placed on a metal frame and exposed to direct heat. As the cheese melts, individual portions are scraped off. Many Swiss homes also possess small electric ovens with little square pans they use to melt individual portions of cheese, thus “allowing diners to eat at their own rhythm,” explains the ambassador.

Another traditional Swiss food is rosti, made with grated raw potatoes or leftover cooked ones. Whether they prefer their rosti fried or oven-baked with crispy surfaces, fans of this dish extend far beyond Switzerland (for example, in North America, hash browns are a variation of rosti).

In Switzerland, rosti appears on menus in both high-end and modest restaurants, be it served with veal, sausages or fried eggs. Zürcher geschneitztes — strips of veal with mushrooms and onions in a cream sauce served with rosti — is a local specialty in the Zurich region, but versions under different names are found in other parts of the country.

Rosti was originally a breakfast food before Dr. Maximilian Bircher-Benner, an early advocate of organic medicine and unprocessed foods, created the nutritious “Birchermuesli” or muesli, which now appears on breakfast tables worldwide.

Also popular is aelplermagronen (alpine herdsman’s macaroni), a frugal



The girolle is a hand-operated device that scrapes the cheese off in fancy delicate rosettes.

one-dish meal incorporating ingredients generally on hand in herdsman’s alpine cottages — Italian macaroni (exchanged for cheese), potatoes, onions, bits of bacon and cheese. Traditionally, it is served with apple sauce. Another alpine specialty is air-dried beef (“bunderfleisch” or “viande séchée du Valais”), a favourite appetizer when serving fondue or raclette. For winter survival in the remote alpine valleys of Graubünden (eastern Switzerland) and Valais (south central Switzerland), locals rub lean beef with salt and alpine herbs, then dry it at below-freezing temperatures in the fresh mountain air.

## Dyanne Wilson Photography



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There are many other traditional Swiss dishes: meat pies (“pastetli”), hot pots, stews, casseroles, sauerkraut and sausages — every region has its own variety of the latter (among them, sauerkraut and tongue sausages). Veal, beef and pork are popular as are game (particularly rabbit, venison and quail) and fish (trout, perch, pike and Arctic char). Yes, a substantial population of “Arctic”/alpine char (or in French “omble”) exists in Lake Zug, in central Switzerland between Lucerne and Zurich, probably stranded there by the Ice Age. During spawning in mid-November, the stomach of the male char turns a deep fluorescent red. Accepted as a form of currency until the late Middle Ages, char remains an exotic specialty today.

Without a doubt, the Swiss take great pride in their chocolate. Chocolate had already become a fashionable drink in the late 17th Century, but it wasn't until 1819 that Switzerland opened its first chocolate factory. It has enjoyed a reputation for top-quality chocolate products ever since. The Swiss adore chocolate, with the French speakers preferring dark chocolate, while the German speakers favour milk chocolate. The world-famous Swiss Matterhorn Mountain-shaped triangular bar,

Toblerone, was created in 1908. Tobler was the chocolate-maker and “torrone” is Spanish for nougat, which is dispersed throughout the bar.

Of course, the Swiss are renowned for their wonderful pastries, desserts and meringues. Highly revered are their nut cakes, the Aargau carrot cake, a broad selection of Christmas cookies (from cinnamon to anise) and so much more. For my take on their cuisine, try my “Raspberry Toblerone Cheesecake.” Bon appétit, Guten appetit, Buon appetito!

### Raspberry Toblerone Cheesecake

*Makes 8 small individual cheesecakes*

½ cup (125 mL) crushed dark chocolate wafer cookies  
 2 ⅔ tbsp (40 mL) unsalted butter, melted  
 1/3 cup (80 mL) icing sugar  
 3 tbsp (45 mL) heavy cream (35 percent fat)  
 ½ tsp (3 mL) vanilla extract (preferably clear)  
 1 bar (3 ½ oz or 100 g) Toblerone (milk or dark chocolate)  
 ½ oz (15 g) very dark chocolate, finely chopped

1 pkg (8 oz or 225 g) cream cheese (regular or low calorie), room temperature  
 1 tbsp (15 mL) seedless raspberry jam

### Garnish

24 small fresh raspberries  
 Stems of fresh lavender or mint (optional)  
 1 cup (250 mL) whipped cream

1. With plastic wrap, completely line (bottom and sides leaving an overhanging portion) 8 small ramekin dishes\* (size: 1/4 cup or 60 mL).
2. Crush (rather finely) chocolate wafers and place in a bowl. Drizzle with melted butter and combine thoroughly.
3. Divide wafer mixture among the ramekin dishes and press firmly into the base. (Tip: Use a shot glass with a flat bottom to assist in this task.)
4. Coarsely chop Toblerone bar, put into a microwave-proof bowl and place in a microwave oven at medium-low heat until very soft (about 1½ minutes). Remove from oven, stir until completely melted and smooth. Add the finely chopped dark chocolate; stir until completely melted, smooth and well blended.
5. With an electric mixer, beat cream cheese in a medium-sized bowl for 2 minutes until light and smooth. Add icing sugar and vanilla; beat for another minute.
6. Add melted chocolate and beat until very well blended.
7. Add 1½ tbsp (23mL) of chocolate mixture to each ramekin dish; insert 1/3 tsp (2 mL) of seedless raspberry jam into centre (of the mixture) of each and top equally with remaining chocolate mixture. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until set (at least 4 hours). Allow cheesecake to rest at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving.
8. To serve, remove the cheesecakes from ramekin dishes with the aid of the overhanging plastic wrap. Peel away plastic wrap. Garnish each mini cheesecake with 3 fresh raspberries and, if desired, fresh herbs. Pass whipped cream at the table.

\* Alternative: Use mini-cheesecake pans with removable bottoms. In this case, as an alternative to the plastic wrap lining, simply fit a plastic ribbon (available at cake decorating stores or bakeries that make mousse cakes) around the inside of each cup.

Margaret Dickenson wrote the award-winning cookbook, *Margaret's Table — Easy Cooking & Inspiring Entertaining* ([www.margaretstable.ca](http://www.margaretstable.ca)).

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# New Zealand's official home away from home

By Margo Roston  
Photos by Dyanne Wilson



The home of New Zealand High Commissioner Simon Tucker and his wife, Penny, is a showcase of New Zealand art and culture.

In winter, you might notice a snowman at the front door of a new, contemporary home on a modest street in Rockcliffe Park. Next to it is an official-looking flagpole, proudly bearing the flag of New Zealand. The message: a family lives here — and so does the country's head of mission.

The high commissioner, Simon Tucker, and his wife, Penny, admit they are the lucky residents of a wonderful home, specially designed and built by the New Zealand government. The aim of the new home's design is to reflect the cultural and family life of their country, down to the smallest detail. The design works for for-

mal and family living, as do the colours, furniture, carpets and art.

For 40 years, between 1959 and 1999, New Zealand owned a more typical diplomatic residence, a large Rockcliffe mansion on Crescent Road, that it sold to the Turkish embassy as part of the government's divestment program.



The contemporary furniture comes from a New Zealand-based company, including the wood dining room tables and chairs.





Simon and Penny Tucker



The dining room has windows on two sides, looking out onto the pretty lot.



The home's receiving rooms are bright, simple and elegant, with light streaming from full-length windows and reflecting off white walls that show off great splashes of colour.



The reception rooms boast modern, comfortable furnishings.



A fireplace is built into the wall of the main receiving room.



Photographs of New Zealand are hung throughout the home.

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"It made sense to build our own [residences] in countries where we have long-standing, stable relationships," says High Commissioner Tucker.

With the purchase of a rundown property on Placel Road in 2011, and a policy that focuses on making an official residence a diplomatic tool, New Zealand architects, who worked with a Canadian architectural firm, envisioned an environment that, along with timeless design, highlights the country's place in the Pacific, its bicultural and multicultural society and its artists and craftspeople.

The plan also included a provision that the new house would not only reflect New Zealand as a contemporary and progressive country, but would look different from the Canadian houses on the street.

The finished product achieves all these things, with a design that consists of a series of interconnecting and interlocking boxes. With a nod to its host, the house is clad in Canadian cedar, but stained black, a New Zealand national colour. (Recall the All Blacks, the famous New Zealand Rugby team.)

Inside, the house displays its real strengths. Its square rooms are bright, simple and elegant, with light streaming from full-length windows and reflecting off white walls that show off great splashes of colour. The reception rooms are on the street side of the house, while the family section is at the back, facing the patio and the garden.

The main reception rooms feature grey New Zealand timber panelling with brown trim and splashes of red to reflect the pohutukawa, a coastal evergreen that produces bright red flowers. The effect recalls the sea and the sandy beaches of New Zealand.

A dramatic, contemporary rug by well-known New Zealand fashion designer Kate Sylvester again picks up the blacks, greys, sand and reds of the country, while a dramatic black metallic chandelier is the work of New Zealand furniture designer David Trubridge. Even the contemporary furniture comes from a New Zealand-based company, including the wood dining room tables and chairs. Several sofas and easy chairs are Canadian-made and meld well with their New Zealand counterparts.

The formal living room leads into another living room, a second official space that can be open or closed via a series of sliding doors. The dining room, with its sizable windows, will seat 16 for dinner and can be closed off or opened up to the large



In the spring, trees shade the leafy property.

family room and open-concept kitchen. A delicate group of hand-blown "bubbles," or pendants, by New Zealand glass-blower Katie Brown light the dining table.

"It is like a house at home," Mrs. Tucker says of New Zealand, where the idea of indoor-outdoor living is carried through the home, with glass doors leading onto the patio, garden and barbecue. When every wall is open, the house can accommodate more than 120 people for a stand-up reception. But the high commissioner notes that he sat 60 people in the family room recently for a wine-tasting.

With two young daughters, the casual family aspect of the house works perfectly. There is a large finished basement for the children to play in and a discreet staircase that leads from there to the four-bedroom second floor. Mr. Tucker notes that the basement also includes a good office and a wine cellar.

An eclectic art collection scattered throughout the main floor, including some aboriginal work, photography, sculpture and contemporary pieces, gives a vivid snapshot of New Zealand's culture.

In the front hall, a painting features a Maori pattern often seen in aboriginal weaving, while the formal living room

boasts a framed *kete* (basket) made of New Zealand flax in the traditional Maori weaving technique.

One of the Tuckers' favourite pieces hangs in the dining room; a work called *Maui Snares the Sun*, based on a famous Maori legend.

Mrs. Tucker is especially fond of New Zealand sculptor Neil Dawson's aluminum and stainless steel wall-hanging in the formal reception room. The well-known sculptor's *Well Dome* explores positive and negative space.

The high commissioner has been in Ottawa for just more than a year. His career has featured life in diplomacy and outside it. Most recently, he spent eight years working in the private sector in Washington while his wife, a lawyer, worked as a lobbyist.

"I loved it," she says. But with two small children, the couple decided they should be brought up as New Zealanders and they returned home.

Both show great enthusiasm for the job and their official home-away-from-home.

"It's just like a normal house," they say. Well, almost.

Margo Roston is *Diplomat's* culture editor.

## New arrivals

**Pedro Fernando Bretas Bastos**  
Ambassador of Brazil



Mr. Brêtas completed a law and social sciences degree at the Federal University of Brazil and practised law, working for Exxon Mobil Corporation and COSIGUA, before go-

ing into diplomacy.

After completing his diplomatic studies, he became a desk officer for Canada, something that perhaps foreshadowed his current appointment. He was posted to Washington as second secretary (1981-84); Lisbon as second and then first secretary (1984-87); Lagos as counsellor (1987-1990); Lisbon again, this time as counsellor (1992-96); Asunción as counsellor (1996-1999); and Dublin as ambassador (2008-2013).

While in Brazilia, he was an executive co-ordinator at the office of the minister of external relations and later, head of the South America division. He also served as a special adviser to the transport minister and, later, as director of the secretariat for international relations within the Presidency of the Brazilian Federal Senate.

**Virgilio Alcántara**  
Ambassador of Dominican Republic



Mr. Alcántara joined the foreign service after beginning his career in the world of communication. He studied communications at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo,

and, for 18 years, was editor of two national newspapers (1970-1988). He joined the foreign service in 1988, as consul general in New York City. He has been permanent representative to the UN twice (1990-1993; 2011-2013), and once to the Organization of American States (2008-2011). He was press secretary and official spokesperson to the president (1996-1998). He was also ambassador to Japan and Korea, and consul general in New Orleans, Tokyo and Seoul. At headquarters, he worked as senior adviser to the minister (2005-2008). In 1993, while serving as representative to the UN, he was appointed concurrent ambassador to Canada.

**Birtukan Ayano Dadi**  
Ambassador of Ethiopia



Ms Dadi has a law degree from the Ethiopian Civil Service University and has several other course certificates including one on female leadership and decision-

making, one on justice and another on principle-based leadership.

She began her career as an elementary and junior high school teacher before working as a high-court judge at the Oromia Regional High Court. Her first diplomatic appointment, by coincidence, was to Canada, as a counsellor at the Ethiopian general consulate in Toronto between 2006 and 2011. She then spent two years as senior counsellor at the ministry of foreign affairs, in the international treaties and legal affairs division. Her next appointment was as ambassador-designate to Canada.

Ms Dadi speaks Afan Oromo, Amharic and English. She is married.

**Rafael "Rafi" Barak**  
Ambassador of Israel



Born in Uruguay, Mr. Barak immigrated to Israel at 18, completed his military service and earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science at Tel Aviv University.

Ten years later, he completed a master's in political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

He began his diplomatic career in 1979 when he was posted to Peru. He returned to headquarters before a six-year term in Brussels, first as counsellor to the EU and then as deputy chief of mission to Belgium and Luxembourg.

From 1993 to 1996, he worked on the Oslo Peace Process as chief co-ordinator for negotiations. At headquarters, after postings to Washington as deputy chief of mission and to Paris as chargé d'affaires, he served as assistant deputy minister and acting deputy minister [of foreign affairs]. In May 2011, he became deputy minister.

He is married to Miriam Barak; they have three children.

**Ala Beleavschi**  
Ambassador of Moldova



Mrs. Beleavschi is the first resident ambassador of Moldova to Canada. Prior to coming to Canada to establish the embassy, she was director-general of the bilateral co-operation department at the foreign ministry.

Mrs. Beleavschi joined the foreign service in 1993. Since then, she has served abroad in the U.S., Italy and twice in Britain (as political counsellor and chargé d'affaires). Her first mission to London was to open the Moldovan embassy. At the foreign ministry, she served as director for the Americas division (2005-07).

She specialized in international relations and diplomacy at the University of Leeds (UK) and later at The Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael." She also completed a degree in English philology and literature at the State University of Moldova.

She was born in Telenesti, Moldova. She is married and has one daughter.

**John Chrysostom Alintuma Nsambu**  
High Commissioner for Uganda



Mr. Nsambu studied at the United States International University in San Diego and at the Technical University of Braunschweig in Germany. He has a bachelor's of international

relations and a master's of political science.

From 1996 to 2000, Mr. Nsambu worked as the co-ordinator and officer-in-charge of the Exchange Students' Program of the European Union at the Technical University of Braunschweig in Germany. In 2006, he became a Member of Parliament for Uganda. Over the next five years, he served as minister of state for Information Communications and Technology and was a member of the presidential and foreign affairs committee of Parliament. In 2012, he was appointed ambassador to Eritrea, but he ended up not going. Instead, he came to Canada.

He speaks Luganda, English, German, Italian and Spanish.



**Fahad bin Mohamed Y. Kafoud**  
Ambassador of Qatar



Mr. Kafoud finished his bachelor's degree in accounting and economics in 1993, the same year he began his career at the ministry of foreign affairs.

From 1993 until 2002, he worked at the administrative and finance directorate at the foreign ministry.

In 2008, he worked at the embassy of Qatar in Washington, D.C., and one year later, he returned to headquarters in Doha to work in the office of the prime minister.

In 2009, he was appointed the general co-ordinator in the office of the minister of foreign affairs, where he spent the following four years, before being sent to Canada.

Mr. Kafoud is married and has two sons and two daughters.

**Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy**  
Ambassador of Saudi Arabia



Mr. Alsudairy has a master's degree in political science. He began his career in the public service in 1990, but decided to become a diplomat and joined the ministry of foreign

affairs in 1996. Just one year later, he was sent to the United Nations in New York as a member of Saudi Arabia's permanent mission there. In 1999, while still in New York, he became a member of the third committee of the Asian Group on Human Rights.

In 2010, he was director-general of the department of specialized organizations at the foreign ministry and two years later, was elected leader of the first working group on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

He speaks Arabic and English and is married with three sons and one daughter.

## Non-heads of mission

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Sebastian David Molteni  
Counsellor

Australia  
Adrian Hugh Morrison  
Deputy High Commissioner

David John Sharpe  
Minister-Counsellor

Belgium  
Johan Maria J. Andries  
Defence Attaché

Bolivia  
Stael Angelica Rodriguez  
Romero  
First Secretary

Burundi  
Emmanuel Niyonzima,  
Second Counsellor

Chile  
Jorge Balaresque  
Defence Attaché

China  
Hui Huang  
Attaché

Nan Li  
Attaché

Zhongying Mao  
Counsellor

Zhisong Yin  
Second Secretary

Haitao Zhu,  
Military, naval and air  
attaché

Colombia  
Juan Carlos Rojas Arango  
First secretary

Costa Rica  
Jorge Eduardo Umana  
Vargas  
Counsellor and consul

Côte d'Ivoire  
Aminata Kone  
First secretary

Cuba  
Carlos Frank Marin Maning  
Attaché

Ethiopia  
Michael Tobias Babisso  
Minister-counsellor

Bogale Kussia Bodda  
Second counsellor

Estifanos Tesfay Hailu  
Minister-counsellor

Almaw Atnafu Muluneh  
Second counsellor

Genet Amare Tefera  
Second secretary

Ghana  
Norman Johnson  
First secretary

Haiti  
Ann-Kathryne Lassegue  
Minister-counsellor

Libya  
Abdalla .S.A. Bgar  
Counsellor

Khaled M.O. Elbasir  
Attaché

Abdolfattah .A.M. Elbishty  
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Macedonia  
Jovica Palashevski  
Minister-counsellor

Mexico  
Rolando Paniagua Taboada  
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Mongolia  
Ulziibayar Gonchig  
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Myanmar  
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Khine Nyein Su  
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New Zealand  
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Russia  
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Attaché

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Alamoudi  
Attaché

Khalid Abdullah E. Alaqil,  
Attaché

Hussein Alhomaid  
Attaché

Ali Saleh Ali Alkaladi  
Attaché

Bassam Alkhrashi  
Attaché

Ibrahim Almogbel  
Attaché

Yousef Alyousef  
Attaché

Senegal  
Zaccaria Coulibaly  
Minister-counsellor

South Africa  
Floyd Thamela Jele  
First secretary

Nonceba Carol Mogwera  
Counsellor

Sri Lanka  
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Minister

Dilan Perera  
Attaché

Tunisia  
Mohamed Nejib Djelassi  
Military attaché

Ukraine  
Zoriana Stsiban  
Second secretary

United States of America  
Raymond Thomas Goergen  
Assistant attaché

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1. Lebanese Ambassador Micheline Abi Samra hosted a national day event at the St. Elias Centre. She's shown with Cheikh Said Youssef Fawaz, imam of the Mosque Al-Ommah Al-Islamiah in Montreal, and Sami Haddad, first secretary at the embassy. (Ulle Baum photo) 2. The EU held its sixth annual Christmas concert at Notre Dame Cathedral. The event featured music from Chorale De La Salle, Ottawa Children's Choir and Calixa Lavallée Choir. (Photo: Bill Shugar) 3. Algerian Ambassador Smail Benamara and his wife, Hasna, hosted a national day reception at the Château Laurier. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 4. To celebrate the independence of Finland, Ambassador Charles Murto and his wife, Ritva, hosted a reception at their residence. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 5. Moldovan Ambassador Ala Beleavski hosted a vin d'honneur to mark the official visit of her country's deputy prime minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Natalia Gherman. (Photo: Sam Garcia). 6. Ottawa artist Fortune Shugar presented an exhibition of paintings and wearable art at a diplomatic hospitality luncheon at Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club. (Photo: Ulle Baum)





1. French Ambassador Philippe Zeller, far left, awarded l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres to Jean Daniel Lafond, second from right. Also shown are former governor general Michaëlle Jean and Governor General David Johnston. (Photo: Lois Siegel) 2. Israeli Ambassador Rafael Raul Barak paid a courtesy call on Mayor Jim Watson. (Photo: City Hall) 3. Netherlands Ambassador Cornelis Johannes Kole paid a courtesy call on Mayor Jim Watson. (Photo: City Hall) 4. Albanian Ambassador Elida Petoshati and Trade Minister Ed Fast after signing a trade agreement at the Chateau Laurier. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 5. Haitian Ambassador Frantz Liautaud, centre, and his wife, Florence Saint Léger Liautaud, hosted a reception at the Château Laurier to mark Haiti's Independence Day. He's shown here with Richard Sanders, U.S. chargé d'affaires. (Photo: Sam Garcia) 6. The Diplomatic Hospitality Group organized the third annual Grand Winter Festival for diplomatic families at Smithvale Stables, Nepean. From left: Ilona Skardunskiene (Lithuania), Nevena Mandadjieva (Bulgaria) and MiYoung Jin (Korea). (Photo: Ulle Baum)



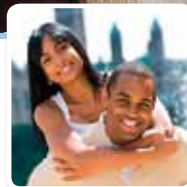
1. Swedish Ambassador Teppo Tauriainen hosted a traditional Lucia celebration at his residence. From left, MP Mauril Belanger, his wife Catherine, and Mr. Tauriainen. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 2. To mark Taiwan Night, Representative Chih-Kung Liu and his wife, Huey-Pyng Liu, hosted a reception at the Château Laurier. They are shown with Employment Minister Jason Kenney, right. (Photo: Sam Garcia) 3. Bulgarian Ambassador Nikolay Milkov and his wife, Nevena Mandadjieva, hosted a national day event at City Hall. (Photo: Lois Siegel) 4. Lithuanian Ambassador Vytautas Zalus, left, and his wife Jurate Zaliene hosted a reception to celebrate the 96th Anniversary of Lithuanian Independence Feb. 19 at the National Arts Centre. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 5. The Palestine Delegation in Canada hosted a Palestinian Day celebration at the Chateau Laurier. Representative Said Hamad toasts the crowd. (Photo: Sam Garcia) 6. To mark Kazakhstan's national day, Ambassador Konstantin Zhigalov and his wife Indira Zhigalova hosted a reception at the Chateau Laurier. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 7. War Museum director general James Whitham and Polish Ambassador Marcin Bosacki, pictured here, hosted a launch of The World Knew, Jan Karski's Mission for Humanity, created by the Polish History Museum in partnership with the Polish foreign ministry. It was presented as part of Holocaust Education Month. (Photo: Polish embassy)





1. From left, Latvian Ambassador Juris Audarins, first secretary Sanita Ulmane and MP Garry Breitkreuz at a reception to mark Latvia's national day. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 2. Honduran Ambassador Sofia Lastenia Cerrato Rodriguez, left, and Argentine artist Silvia Bompadre pose in front of Ms Bompadre's paintings. Artwork from 11 Latin American countries was presented at the St. Brigid's Centre for the Arts. (Photo: Ulle Baum) 3. The Embassy of Mongolia hosted a farewell reception for Ambassador Zalaa-Uul Tundevdorj at the Château Laurier. From left, Dashaa Lkhundev, Keiko Okuda, Japanese Ambassador Norihiro Okuda and Mr. Tundevdorj. (Photo: Sam Garcia) Note: In the January issue, we mistakenly credited a photo of a Taiwan event to Ulle Baum. It was Sam Garcia's. We also credited an image of a Saudi Arabian event to Sam Garcia. It was Ulle Baum's. We apologize for the errors.

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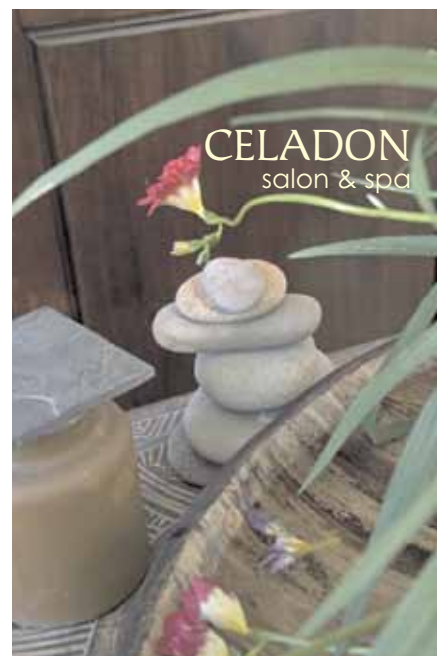
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# Celebration time

A listing of the national and independence days marked by countries

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 of the Pope
26	Tanzania	Union Day
27	Sierra Leone	Republic Day
27	South Africa	Freedom Day
27	Togo	National Day
30	Netherlands	Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix
May		
1	Marshall Islands	National Day
3	Poland	National Day
6	Israel	National Day
9	European Union	Schuman Day
15	Paraguay	Independence Day
17	Norway	Constitution Day
20	Cameroon	National Day
22	Yemen	National Day
24	Eritrea	Independence Day
25	Argentina	May Revolution
25	Jordan	National Day
26	Georgia	Independence Day
28	Azerbaijan	Republic Day
28	Ethiopia	Downfall of the Dergue
June		
1	Samoa	Independence Day
2	Italy	Anniversary of the Foundation of the Republic
4	Tonga	Independence Day
6	Sweden	National Day
10	Portugal	National Day
12	Philippines	National Day
12	Russia	National Day
14	United Kingdom	Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday
17	Iceland	Proclamation of the Republic
18	O/of Eastern Caribbean States	OECS Day
18	Seychelles	Constitution Day
23	Luxembourg	Official Celebration of the Birthday of His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri
25	Croatia	National Day
25	Slovenia	National Day
25	Mozambique	Independence Day
26	Madagascar	Independence Day
27	Djibouti	National Day
29	Holy See	National Day
30	Congo, Democratic Republic	Independence Day



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# Argentina: A land of diversity and culture



Tolar Grande, in Salta province in northwestern Argentina, is a perfect place for hiking.



By Gerardo Ezequiel Bompadre

**A**rgentina is a country of many cultural, social and natural attractions, all of which will amaze visitors. Diversity is a characteristic that makes Argentina a unique choice. This includes its landscapes, climate and population. Argentina is usually described as a land of impressive contrasts, thanks to its varied geography. From the Andes to the west, to the Pampas and the Atlantic Coast to the east; from the Puna to the north to Patagonia to the south, many attractions are designated protected areas,

reserves or national parks. In addition, several natural and cultural landmarks have been declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.

Argentina also has a diverse population, a result of its Spanish heritage, immigrants from several other European and Mediterranean countries, its original inhabitants and people who have come from almost all corners of the globe to live in our country.

Tales of Argentina's uniqueness have travelled the world by word-of-mouth, thanks to visitors. Our people are friendly, fun and effusive; our cuisine includes lots of beef, especially barbecued, which is known as *asado*. *Mate* is a caffeine-rich infused beverage and we also offer several regional dishes and *dulce de leche* (a thick caramel dessert made from milk and sugar) treats. Traditional dances and music, such as the tango, which was born in Buenos Aires in the 19th Century and today has followers all around the world,

draw visitors as does our folkloric music, with different rhythms and dances unique to each region. Argentina is also known for its passion for football (soccer in North America), and fans show their love for the major players and teams in a noisy and musical way, filling up the stadiums and displaying their enthusiasm for every game. But above all, each particular Argentine region offers unique treasures that have been maintained and strengthened as time goes by.

## **Cuyo: Cuisine at the birthplace of Malbec**

Cuyo, which means "desert country" in aboriginal language, is a region of high peaks, snow-covered volcanoes and great wilderness, spreading from the Andes mountain range and foothills to the steppe.

Andean *vicuñas* and *guanacos* (both relatives of the llama), cohabit freely in parks and natural reserves, while condors fly over the area. The region displays





Iguazú Falls (one of the New Seven Wonders of Nature and also a Natural Heritage of Mankind) is made up of 275 waterfalls.

the full splendour of the Central Andean Range. The Aconcagua, at 22,837 feet high (6,962 m), is the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere, and its steep slopes are renowned and respected by mountain climbers from all over the world.

In the valleys of Mendoza and San Juan, among the farms and wineries, visitors can travel along the Wine Road, an attraction of international fame. With the Andean Range on the horizon, Cuyo's flavours are tasted at restaurants and *parillitas* (restaurants serving Argentine barbecue exclusively) in the downtown areas,



The Mendoza Wine Road is a favourite attraction for oenophiles.

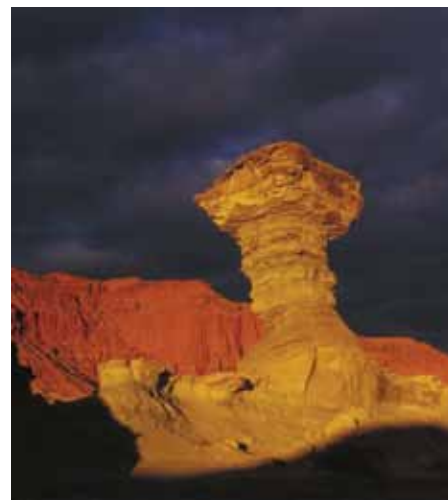
at *estancias* (ranches) near the mountains and at gourmet restaurants among lush vineyards. Authentic dishes are treated as art pieces and are always accompanied by excellent wines: young and mature red wines, fresh rosé wines, aromatic white wines and irresistible sparkling wines. Flavours and textures embrace the culinary legacy of Italian and Spanish immigrants.

A visit to Ischigualasto and Talampaya National Parks is a true journey into the dinosaur era. Ischigualasto, also known as "Valle de la Luna" (Moon Valley) because of the amazing diversity of forms and colours of a landscape that was shaped by erosion, is one of the world's most important paleontological sites. The Talampaya Canyon reveals curious shapes formed by erosion. On full moon nights, this canyon offers an amazing tour.

#### The North

Argentina's northern provinces feature traces of pre-Columbian cultures mixed with ruins of native villages, as well as forts and constructions dating back to the time of the conquest and colonization. Time seems to stand still in the high plateau of Puna, a land full of mountain ranges, steep mountain paths and gorges. Multicoloured and monochromatic hills are covered with huge cacti on the slopes that surround unique villages.

This region offers landscapes full of contrasts for tourists to enjoy, from the high peaks to the plains, the salt pans and



Ischigualasto, also known as "Valle de la Luna" (Moon Valley) because of the diversity of forms and colours of a landscape shaped by erosion, is one of the world's most important paleontological sites.

the subtropical rain forests — all display our Latin American roots and culture.

#### Iguazu Waterfalls: wonders of nature

Iguazú National Park is one of the most emblematic parks in the country. The park's roads are surrounded by jungle and lead to a unique site, where birds sing and nature vibrates with the thunder of running water. Iguazú Falls (one of the New Seven Wonders of Nature) consists of 275 waterfalls that create a white mist over

the area. The rivers that run through this region are an invitation to adventure and adrenaline-pumping activities. More than 450 bird species attract birdwatchers and nature lovers.

Not far away from Iguazú Falls, we find the San Ignacio Miní Guaraní Jesuit Missions — declared a Mankind Cultural Heritage site by UNESCO — as well as other Jesuit missions. In those places, culture and jungle merge with the stories of the Jesuit missions that were established in the region during the 17th Century.

### Patagonia

The Andean Mountain Range displays all its greatness on the Patagonian provinces. Thousand-year-old silent forests with native vegetation extend to the banks of the lagoons. On mountain tops, nature overflows with granite needles and icy fields brimming with glaciers over lakes.



The tango has enjoyed a resurgence in Buenos Aires.

Imposing mammals and sea birds are abundant on the Patagonian coasts, where they spend a good part of their life cycle. Colonies of sea lions play and rest on small islands and sandbars. Southern elephant seals have their greatest continental station in the world on the Valdés Peninsula. The Nuevo and San José gulfs bear witness to the arrival of the Southern Right Whale, which every year returns there for feeding and breeding. One of the largest colonies of Magellan penguins nests in Punta Tombo.



Along the Avenida de Mayo in Buenos Aires, one can enjoy the mix of art nouveau and neo-classical architecture.

Farther south, visitors will find Tierra del Fuego and Ushuaia, the latter being the southern-most city in the world. They are both an open door to the immense solitude of mysterious Antarctica.

### Province of Buenos Aires

In the largest province of Argentina, there is a horizon of striking, endless cultivated and cattle-raising lands. This is the land of the *gauchos*, the people of the *pampas* or greenlands. There are many “*estancias*” that offer accommodation, activities and great food. Along the Atlantic coast, beach towns come one after another, offering plenty of options to enjoy sand beaches, dunes, forests, fishing spots and nightlife.

### Buenos Aires City

Buenos Aires is one of the greatest cities in the world. It is a cultural city, devoted to art, music, theatre, design, architecture, fashion and great food. Eclectic, sexy and mysterious, Buenos Aires witnessed the birth of tango in its suburbs and now proudly features it at sophisticated *tanguerías* and popular *milongas* (both

dance bars where the tango is performed).

A city for fashion and shopping, it attracts visitors with its elegant commercial centres, prestigious designer stores and picturesque fairs offering fine second-hand products. The capital of Argentina features many beautiful buildings, reflecting different styles and influences, such as French, Italian and Spanish. Modern buildings, avant-garde towers, rationalist and contemporary architecture are all present in the Buenos Aires skyline.

This bohemian and fraternal city is full of remarkable cafés and bars, where chatting never ends around the tables. In gastronomic terms, gourmet and family restaurants co-exist with *parrillas*, pizzerias, international restaurants, tea houses, exquisite delicatessens and astonishing ice cream parlours. Considered a friendly metropolis, it is an international tourist destination that welcomes people from all over the world.

Gerardo Ezequiel Bompadre is the chargé d'affaires at the embassy of Argentina. Reach him at (613) 236-2351.



# Non-stop joys of Lima



Lacomar is an open-air shopping mall on the ocean, whose shops feature unique, high-end and expensive goods.



*Story and photos by Jessie Reynolds*

**P**eru, often seen as the swatch of land that surrounds Machu Picchu, has a cosmopolitan and fascinating capital city. Lima, for its diverse history, innovation, arts and lively culture, deserves a standalone visit. Or, at least, it calls for several dedicated days before you move on to the country's other national treasures.

Much in its favour, too, are the affordable flights available from Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax and

Montreal. The best flights are direct, overnight and don't cause jet lag.

Lima is divided into 30 districts or neighbourhoods. Each has its own mini-culture, look and demographic. For touring Lima, consider Miraflores, Barranco or San Isidro as a home base. Miraflores is touristy and convenient; Barranco is bohemian and gives a better sense of the local culture (and consequently has fewer hotel options); and San Isidro is in the business quarter with more "big box" hotels. All three are convenient hubs filled with restaurants and shops. My home base hotel was the Atton San Isidro — it's modern, offers delicious meals and maintains an incredible standard of service.

## Day 1

Fuelled with morning coffee and breakfast at the well-appointed hotel, I took a guided tour as a way to plan the remaining days' excursions. My tour was with

Limavision, which nicely balanced looking-out-the-window time with walking, seeing and experiencing. The highlight was the Monastery of San Francisco with its catacombs, in use until the early 19th Century.

We got off the bus in Plaza San Martin. This historic part of Lima, together with the monastery, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Plaza is a central square of the city, surrounded by gorgeous buildings, including the famous Gran Hotel Bolivar, former temporary home to several Hollywood stars, and the supposed birthplace of the famous pisco sour. The development of this frothy, sour alcoholic beverage is proudly and firmly claimed by both Peruvians and Chileans. Either way, make sure to have at least a few rounds while you're there.

Also facing the Plaza is the ornate and elegant Presidential Palace. From the Plaza, the group walked towards the



Morro Solar Hill, overlooking downtown Lima, has an observatory, monument to the Unknown Soldier and a statue of Jesus, partly personally paid for by then-Peruvian president Alan Garcia.

monastery. The guides, splitting between English- and Spanish-speaking tours, were well-educated on the history, use, architecture and art of San Francisco. Its catacombs are historically fascinating. The small cavern-like rooms — all connected by damp stone passageways — are filled with tidy stacks of skulls and femurs. It leaves you feeling the mystery of the past, the sadness of the anonymity, but also calm and peaceful.

One of the biggest adjustments to daily schedules for North Americans in Lima (and most of South America) is meal times. If you're used to sitting down before 7 p.m., eating between 8 and 10 p.m. is difficult. The solution is to eat just as restaurants open in late afternoon or early evening.

The ceviche and crayfish soup at the Chabuca, the restaurant in the Hotel Atton, are delicious. Ceviche, much like the pisco sour, is a national dish. The mix of (uncooked) marinated cubed fish, spices, lemon, onions and corn is a winner. One of the major shocks of this local dish — and others that contain corn — is the sheer size of a single kernel. It's three-to-five times the size of the kernels in Canada. The crayfish soup, meanwhile, is served with a soft egg. The "egg on top" trend seems to be all over South America. In soup or on a steak, it's a pleasant and homey touch.

Wrap up the night with an evening pisco sour at the hotel bar and prepare for another day.

#### Day 2

The front desk staff will recommend tours, interesting sites and, in terms of practicalities, will call you an official cab. Take Taxi Metropolitano when you're there. It's a trusted company. Fares are pre-set (at the time of writing, one Nuevo Sol exchanged to approximately 0.35 US cents).

If you're looking for gifts, you can get high-end items from shopping centres or boutique shops. Local crafts and products are found at the artisan market. There is a huge variety of items: clothing, art, jewelry, silver, souvenirs, paper products and sports paraphernalia. When you're shopping, the standard tourist caution to bring small bills and don't wear or carry valuable items applies. The prices and finds are tremendous and you can have fun haggling, especially if you are buying several items from one shop or booth.

After treasure-hunting, head to JFK Park. There's a nearby grocery store, a Metro, and it has an impressive prepared food bar. If something appeals to you, buy it (no haggling this time) and enjoy it on a bench under the giant old trees in the park. From there, it's an interesting and pleasant walk to the ocean along Avenida



At 37 metres, Cristo del Pacifico, erected in 2011, is thought to be the world's tallest statue of Christ.

Jose Larco, or Avenida Larco. The best way to start any walk is with a churro, a Spanish fried pastry. Manolo Churreria, a churro chain, is incredibly popular in Lima. Also, they're easy to find. Looking for a churro store? Scan for signs that say *churreria*. A bookstore? *Libreria*. Hats? *Sombreria*. And, the most common example: *pizzeria*.

At the foot of Avenida Larco, you'll hit the ocean. The city has done a great job making the waterfront an accessible and enjoyable spot to spend an afternoon. A unique feature of this part of the city is Love Park, which features *El Beso*, a statue of a couple mid-kiss. Each year, a competition is held there for the longest kiss.

Beside Love Park is Larcomar, a high-end, open-air shopping centre fronting on the Pacific Ocean. The shops are unique, lovely and expensive. If you aren't here to shop, just grab a sandwich from La Lucia Sangucheria Criolla and find a seat overlooking the water.

The other shopping option is a cab ride away at Jockey Plaza. It's huge, with a maze of stores and better prices than Larcomar. The most unique items seem to come from South American designer boutiques in the local department store. A local, renowned chef opened Tanta restaurant here and it's a great spot for an introduction to the local cuisine. The sample



platter of traditional Peruvian fare is a great place to start, followed by *aguadito*, some of the best soup I've ever had. It's green, spicy and delicious.

### Day 3

Just outside downtown Lima, there are several things to see and do. Buy tickets to see a Peruvian Paso performance. The Paso is a unique breed of horse with a rare and smooth gait. It walks with both right legs back at the same time while both left legs are forward. Several of the horses I watched also showed a curving movement. Instead of moving the legs in a straight back and forth motion, they actually move outward, away from the horse's body on their way forward, creating a very unusual sight when they're trotting. The Lima area is a prime spot to view these graceful creatures as it hosts many Paso competitions, shows and exhibitions.

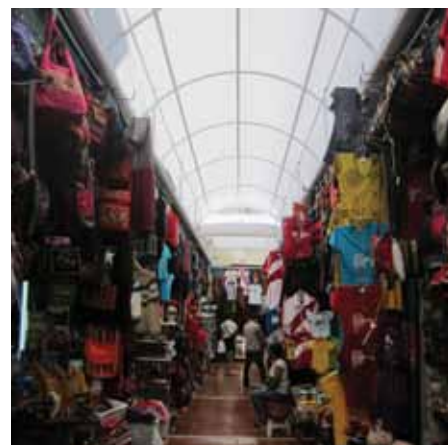
On your way back into the city, stop at Morro Solar Hill. Overlooking downtown Lima and the Pacific Ocean, it's home to an observatory, a wartime monument dedicated to the Unknown Soldier and a

they're shacks. These very modest, tin-sided, crammed together, untidy homes have doorways that are permanently open to this perfect view.

If you follow the road with your eyes, down towards the ocean, you'll eventually navigate to the hustle and bustle of people taking advantage of the waves. Despite being cold year-round, the Pacific is never empty of adventurous Peruvians. And that's where we'll head tomorrow. But first, dinner.

There are endless restaurants to experience in Lima, and the quality of food and service is of a metropolitan European standard. The city has recently gone through its own mini food, art and design renaissance. Lima hosts renowned fashion shows, draws international chefs and has built new architectural wonders (sometimes for the better, sometimes not).

With this in mind, I dined at a small, local — but very impressive — restaurant: Arúgula in Miraflores. It was comfortable and quiet, but served food that you'd expect to see (and taste) at a Four Seasons Hotel: modern, plated beautifully and unique. The curry scallop penne (*penne al*



The artisan market in Lima sells clothes, art, jewelry and souvenirs, some locally crafted and some mass-produced.

or lessons are available (either group or one-on-one). I suggest one-on-one lessons. Group lessons tend to consist of a 30-minute on-sand lesson, and then having the instructor holler inaudible tips to the group, across the waves while also chatting with a friend. A one-on-one lesson allows the instructor to watch what you're doing, correct it and continue to help you improve until you experience that one glorious moment when you actually ride a wave the full distance to shore.

After surfing, walk down the beach to one of the more appealing restaurants in Lima, La Rosa Náutica. It's fine dining, so you might want to shed the wetsuit for something more formal. Enjoy dining on a pier over the ocean and watching the surfers until dusk. Wherever you dine in Lima, make sure that you — at least once — indulge in *conchitas a la Parmesana* (Parmesan scallops). It is the first dish you'll try to replicate when you get home, reminiscing about Lima.

After you've said goodbye to culinary Lima, visit the Magic Water Tour at the Parque de la Reserva. It was a construction gamble taken by Lima around six years ago, and it has paid off. The park has 13 fountains, some interactive, that light up strikingly at night, perhaps the most unique among them being a tunnel of water through which visitors can walk.

It's just one of many more experiences that make Lima a unique, pleasure-filled and surprising city.

Jessie Reynolds lives in Toronto and works as a Sr. Analyst with Barrick Gold Corporation's Asset Protection and Crisis Management Group. She fits in travel whenever she can. Reach her at [jreynolds.diplomat@gmail.com](mailto:jreynolds.diplomat@gmail.com).



Love Park, with El Beso, a statue of a couple kissing, features a Valentine's Day longest-kiss competition.

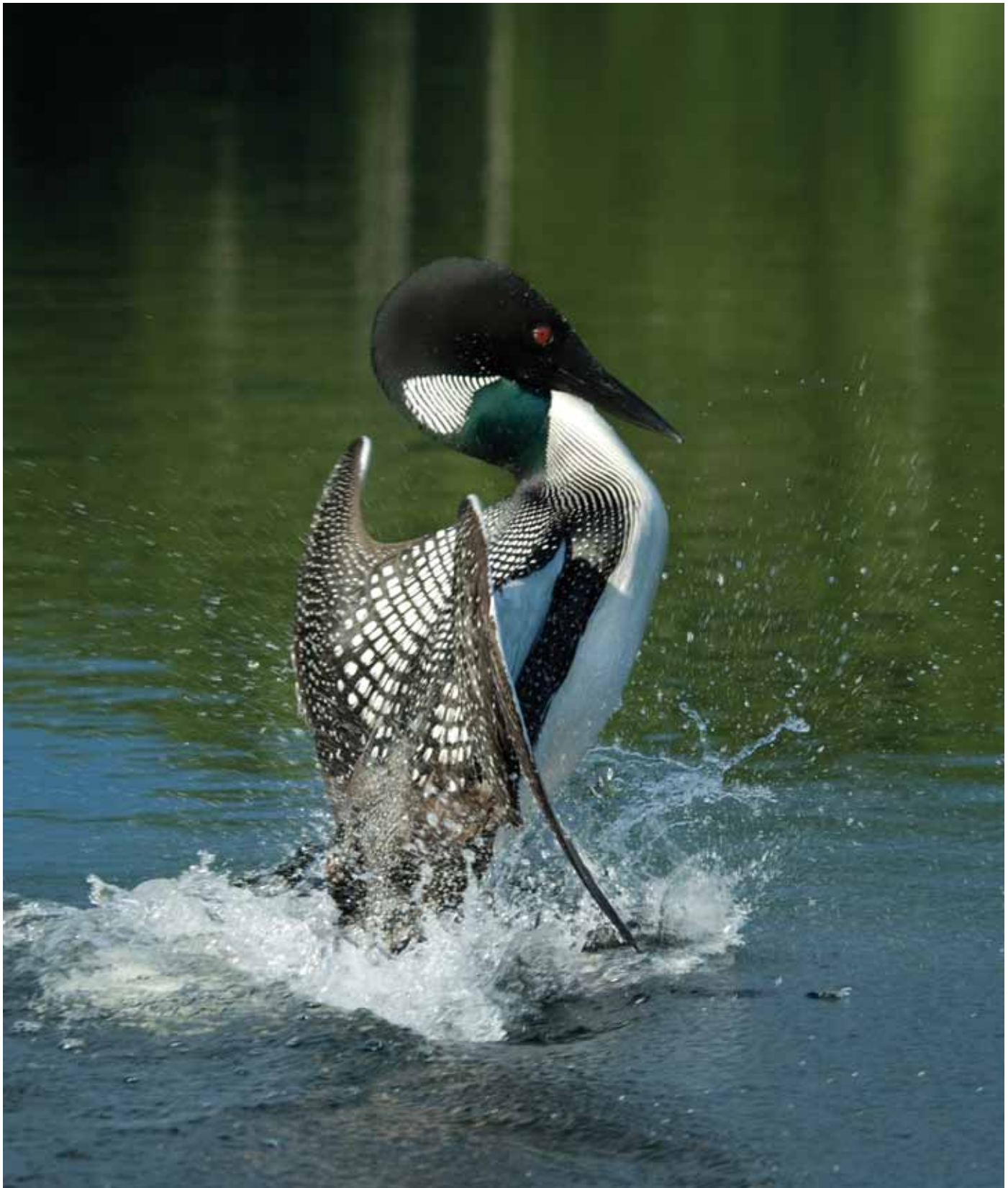
Brazil-esque massive statue of Jesus. If the attractions on the hill don't appeal to you, the view certainly will. Sitting on the wall surrounding the Unknown Soldier gives you an awesome view of the city, ocean and distant hills and villages.

What makes this view unique are your neighbours. The homes built up the side of Morro Solar are not what you'd expect to be occupying this kind of real estate;

*curry con conchas*) was excellent.

### Day 4

The last full day calls for a return to the ocean. Surfing in Lima is common. The fact that only a wetsuit separates the surfer from the cold waters is a testament to how popular it is. Playa Makaja in Miraflores is the place to go. As an experienced surfer, you can rent boards,



MIKE BEEDELL WWW.MIKEBEEDELLPHOTO.CA

Photographer Mike Beedell photographed this loon at a “secret lake” in the Gatineau Hills. Here, a male scares off other suitors and other birds. Loons are highly territorial. This region of Quebec has one of the world’s highest concentrations of loons whose haunting call offers a quintessential Canadian experience. Mr. Beedell’s recent adventures included a February project in Wapusk National Park, Man., documenting the season when polar bear cubs and their mothers emerge from their dens. After the cold, he headed to the Dominican Republic to observe and document the behaviour of 40-tonne humpback whales and their calves. Visit [www.mikebeedellphoto.ca](http://www.mikebeedellphoto.ca) to see more of Mr. Beedell’s work.



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