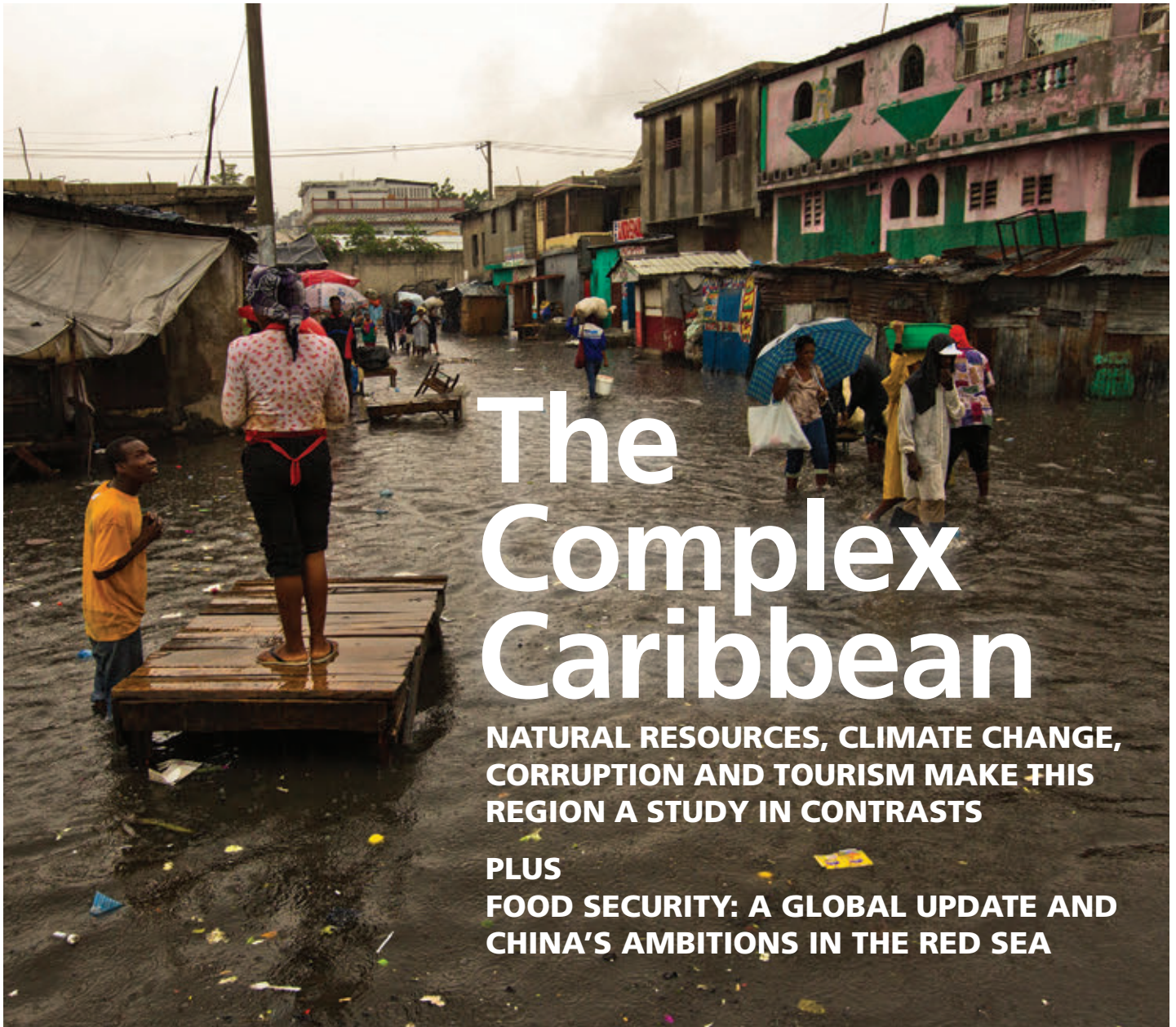


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**ADVERTISING INQUIRIES**  
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**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** *Diplomat & International Canada* is published four times a year. Rates: one year \$39.80. For Cdn. orders, add 13% HST. U.S. orders, add \$15 for postage. All others, add \$25.  
**PRINTER:** The Lowe-Martin Group

**DIPLOMAT & INTERNATIONAL CANADA**  
**SUBMISSIONS:** *Diplomat & International Canada* welcomes submissions. Contact Jennifer Campbell [editor@diplomatonline.com](mailto:editor@diplomatonline.com) or (613) 231-8476.  
**ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 1173, Station B  
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Volume 29, Number 4

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## Caribbean: It's time for the world to pay attention

**T**he Caribbean: In Canada, we certainly pay attention to it in February when we're up to our necks in snow — assuming our necks aren't too numb to feel, thanks to the sub-zero temperatures.

But the Caribbean deserves more of our attention. A complex region, it is home to heartbreak in such places as Haiti, which is repeatedly hit by natural disasters, and also an area with economic opportunity in places such as Trinidad and Tobago, with its oil riches. It is home to Barbados, which has one of the highest per capita gross domestic products in the world (at 25th) and places such as Dominican Republic, which, despite its tourism industry, finds itself at 135th place on the same list.

Countries such as China, which appears to be carving up the Caribbean for its own uses, are paying attention and it's time the region's hemispheric neighbours do the same. To that end, writer Wolfgang Depner offers the region's top 10 drivers and deficits.

Also in our cover package, Richard Bernal, who was Jamaica's ambassador to the U.S., weighs in on what the Caribbean needs from countries such as Canada.

When it comes to Latin America, trade columnist Perrin Beatty explores why Canada should diversify and suggests Latin America is a place to start looking. This is Beatty's last column in our magazine and we thank him for his many contributions.

Our Dispatches section also includes two features on food security. Although the world has enough food to feed its human population, 815 million people still

go hungry around the globe. That's down from 900 million in 2000, but it's up from 777 million in 2015. What's causing the upswing? Global conflict, mostly in places such as Syria, Yemen and across Africa. Speaking of Africa, columnist Robert Rotberg continues with this subject by breaking down the food security situation on that continent.

Meanwhile, Robert Henderson looks at the precarious situation in the Red Sea that divides African countries such as Djibouti from Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It's a thoroughfare that is responsible for much trade between Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe. In 2016, for example, upwards of 4.8 million barrels of crude oil passed through the Red Sea every day.

We also have my feature on Gülen followers who've fled their homeland of Turkey after being jailed or threatened with jail. I travelled to Greece, where, in the past six years, 3,955 of them have started their refugee journey, and interviewed several families who see little hope of ever returning to their beloved country.

Up front, Fen Hampson gives his views on how the West should deal with Russia.

In the Delights section, we introduce our new books columnist. Christina Spencer is an award-winning writer and the editorial pages editor at the *Ottawa Citizen*. Each quarter, the veteran journalist will bring you her take on the latest reads.

Food columnist, Margaret Dickenson, offers recipes for a four-course meal that's perfect for autumn entertaining. On the residences beat, Margo Roston and Ashley Fraser visited Cuban Ambassador Josefina de la Caridad Vidal Ferreiro, who showed them her comfortable Rockcliffe residence.

Meanwhile, wine columnist Alex McMahon writes about biodynamic wines, while Patrick Langston brings us a list of inexpensive and off-the-beaten-path things to do in the Ottawa area between October and January. Finally, Latvian Ambassador Kārlis Eihensbaums shares his travel secrets about the country he represents on its 100th birthday.

*Jennifer Campbell is editor of Diplomat.*

### Christina Spencer



Christina Spencer is the editorial pages editor of the *Ottawa Citizen*. She is the 2017 winner of the National Newspaper Award for editorial writing and a past winner of the National Newspaper Award for international reporting.

Spencer is former managing editor of the *Postmedia News Service*, a former national politics editor for *Postmedia*, and former editor-in-chief of the *Kingston Whig-Standard*. She holds a master's degree from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton, a master's in journalism from Western University and a bachelor's degree in languages from the University of Toronto.

### Laura Neilson Bonikowsky



Laura Neilson Bonikowsky is an Alberta writer and researcher. She was the associate editor of *The Canadian Encyclopedia* for 12 years and has been happy to contribute to *Diplomat* since 2005.

She has lived in most of Canada's provinces and lived in or travelled throughout several countries. Traveling has given her a keen interest in the historical context within which people live and how global issues and broad social and political concerns shape environments.

## UP FRONT

Our cover image shows the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, which devastated Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Haiti, and many other Caribbean countries, are often hit by tropical storms, made worse by climate change. But there are blessings in the Caribbean, too, such as good weather that attracts tourists, and natural resources. Read our cover package starting on page 43.





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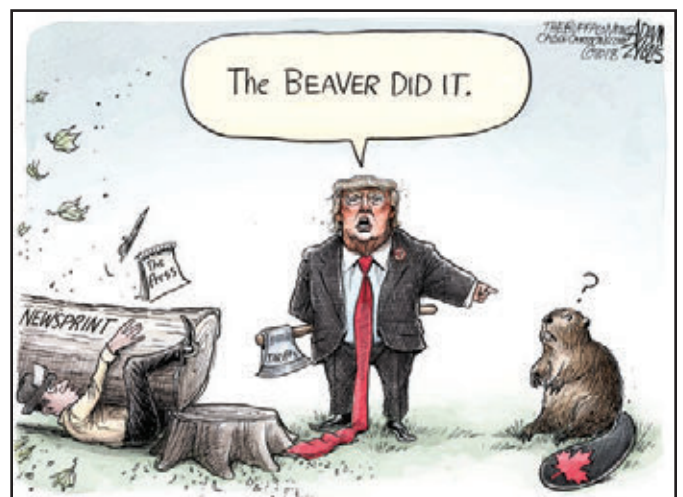
## Political commentary from around the world



Iran Summit by Schot, *De Volkskrant*, Netherlands



Saudi Arabia 'Arrests Women's Rights Activists' by Osama Hajjaj, Jordan



Newsprint Tariffs by Adam Zyglis, *The Buffalo News*, U.S.





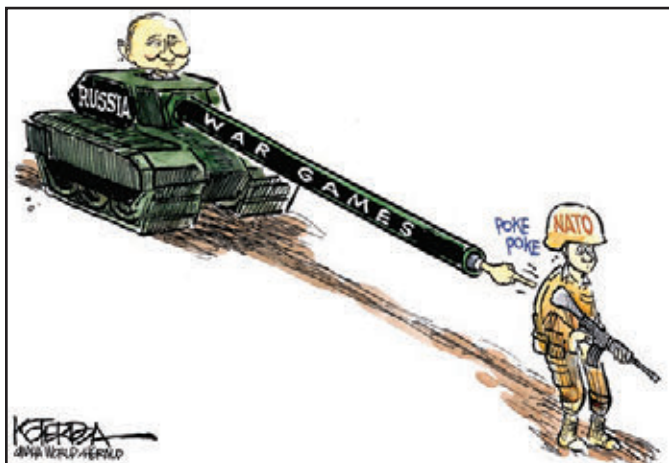
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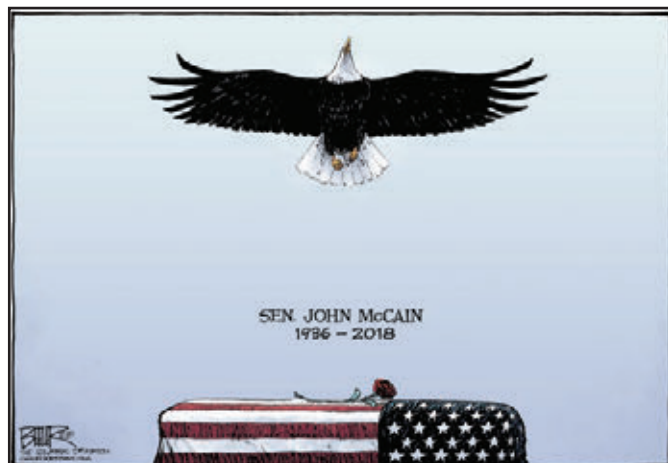
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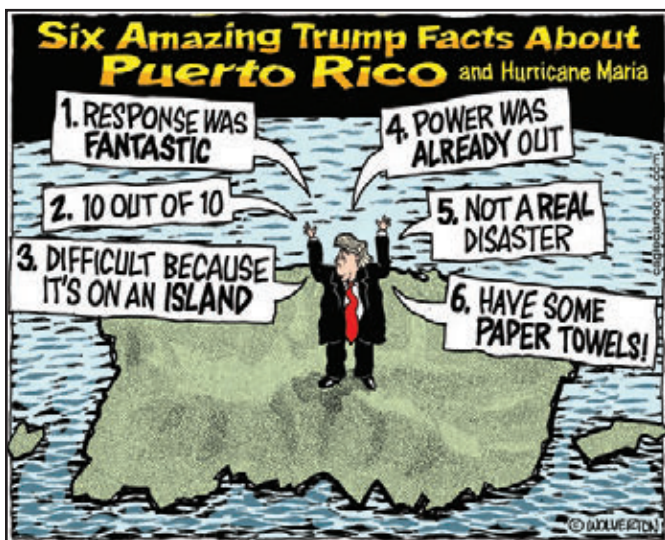
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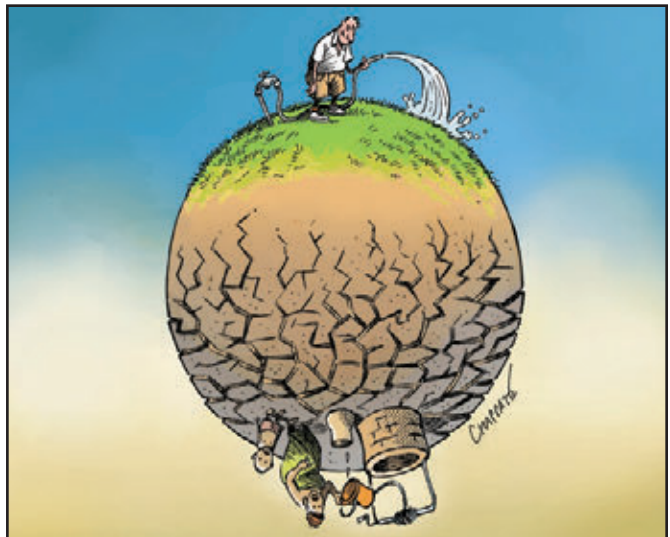
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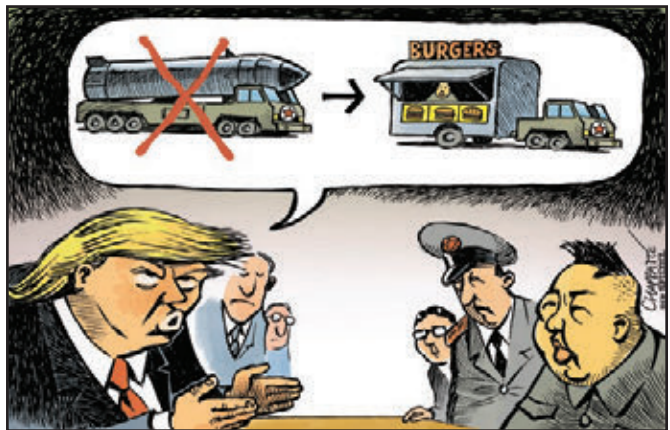
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# Dealing with Russia: To confront or co-operate?



U.S. President Donald Trump talks about welcoming Russian President Vladimir Putin back into the G8 fold while slapping tariffs on some of the U.S.'s key allies and trading partners.



Fen  
Hampson

**R**ussian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump have a lot in common. Trump wants to “make America great again.” Putin wants to do the same for Russia. Each leader sees himself as a strong man who can deal with the other.

Trump obviously doesn't think Russia is as much of a threat to American interests as China and some of the U.S.'s key trading partners. While he talks openly about lifting sanctions on Russia and

welcoming Putin back into the G8 fold, he has been slapping the U.S.'s European and North American trading partners with steel and aluminum tariffs and launching a trade war with China. Trump's constant berating of U.S. allies for taking a ride on American coattails not just economically, but also militarily, has driven a deep wedge into the transatlantic alliance. The political damage may well be lasting, although many of the U.S.'s allies now say they will spend more on defence.

Some commentators believe Trump is simply being naïve when it comes to Russia. Others believe he is beholden to Putin because he has the goods on Trump's former business dealings in Russia or they think the Russians colluded with Trump's team to help him win the presidency, which is the subject of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive propo-

sitions, but the real questions are: If we can momentarily put the relentless din of hyper-partisan American politics on mute, how serious is the threat from Russia? And, second, how should the West handle Putin?

There are three differing views about the severity of the threat that Russia poses.

## Russia in decline

Some believe that Russia is a declining power and that the health of its economy and demographic trends underscore its core weaknesses. “Russia is an economic pipsqueak,” a recent headline in Washington's *The Hill* paper opined. The article went on to point out that there has been a lot of head-scratching on Capitol Hill about Trump's infatuation with Putin because of Russia's weak economic situation.

Despite having the largest land mass in the world (and 11 time zones), Russia's



population of 144 million (down from its all-time end of Cold War high of 148 million) is shrinking at roughly 0.4 per cent per annum. Low levels of life expectancy and the poor health of its population (especially males) are behind this trend. Comparatively speaking, Russia's population is only about the size of Germany and Italy's population combined, or slightly less than half that of the U.S.

With a GDP of \$1.55 trillion US in 2017, Russia's economy is a minuscule eight per cent of the U.S. GDP. Compare this figure with Canada's GDP in the same year, which stood at \$1.65 trillion, and you get the picture. It goes without saying that with a per capita GDP of less than \$11,000, which is roughly the same as Turkey and Romania, most Russians are poor. The country also has one of the worst income distributions in the world. According to some estimates, 10 per cent of Russia's population controls nearly 50 per cent of the country's wealth. Karl Marx would surely turn in his grave. By comparison, during the Communist era, the top tenth of Russia's income earners only took home a quarter of the country's income.

Nonetheless, Russian income distribution figures are not all that different from the United States or France, which have some of the highest levels of income inequality in the world. Bear in mind, though, that both countries are much richer than Russia as measured by their GDP, which, comparatively speaking, means that those who are on the lower rungs of the income ladder are still generally better off than their Russian counterparts.

#### Russia resurgent

Not so fast, others say. Despite the paltry size of its economy, Russia is still the world's second biggest military power after the United States. It has slightly

more than 750,000 active frontline military personnel, 15,398 tanks, nearly 3,429 aircraft and 55 submarines. Compare that with the United States — 1.4 million active personnel, 8,484 tanks, 13,892 aircraft, and 72 submarines. With a defence budget of \$84.5 billion versus the U.S. defence budget of \$601 billion (2015 figures), you could say that Russia is squeezing a lot more out of its defence dollars than the U.S. even if the bulk of its military is comprised of conscripts, compared to the U.S.'s voluntary army.

Russia and the U.S. are also more or less evenly matched in terms of their nuclear arsenals, as measured by the number of warheads they have in their strategic arsenals — 6,850 for Russia versus 6,550 for the U.S. Some say this is why Russia still poses an existential threat to the U.S. even though the Cold War is supposed to have ended nearly 30 years ago.

Thanks to a recent spike in the growth of the Russian economy because of increases in the price of oil and natural gas — key staples of the Russian economy — and Russia's growing grain exports to China, Putin is now able to modernize Russia's military capabilities, including the three legs of its strategic nuclear triad — intercontinental missiles, bombers and submarines. Russia is also expanding its low-yield nuclear tactical weapon capabilities. In its nuclear posture review, the Trump administration announced that it, too, will embark on a strategic nuclear modernization program to keep the U.S. safe from its enemies, including Russia.

But it is not just Russia's growing military capabilities that pose a threat to the West, according to those who believe that Russia is on the rise. It is Putin's muscle-flexing and aggressive behaviour. The list is long: Russian incursions into Eastern Ukraine, its seizure of Crimea, its continuous probes along the northern frontiers of

NATO neighbours and in the Arctic, its meddling in elections and sophisticated propaganda and disinformation campaigns, its poisoning of foreign spies and dissidents and its growing influence in the Middle East, where it has backed President Bashar al-Assad's brutal and murderous regime in Syria with its air power and other forms of support. All of these actions point to a Russia that is asserting its power and influence beyond its borders. What is also worrying to some was Putin's recent reference to Russia's "invincible" nuclear arsenal in his March state-of-the-nation address to the Federal Assembly, where he also showed a video animation of Russian missile attacks against the state of Florida, where Trump has his Mar-a-Lago resort.

#### Russia the aggrieved

A third school of thought believes Russia is on a "quest for status." In the words of Russian scholar Mikhail Troitskiy, this quest is not based on Russia's nuclear capabilities or its seat on the UN Security Council, but rather a Russia that views itself as a "retired superpower" that pulled out of the Cold War "voluntarily," as opposed to being "defeated." However, instead of being "rewarded" for its co-operative stance on arms control after the Cold War, its support for the Western intervention in Libya and co-operation in intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism, Russia has repeatedly been snubbed as NATO has expanded its membership to Russia's borders while the European Union reached out to countries such as Ukraine and Georgia, which Russia views as being historically within its own sphere of influence.

According to this view, Russia also believes that the West has not lived up to its own commitments in the 1997 "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Co-operation and Security Between NATO and Rus-

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sia" and the subsequent declaration on "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality" in 2002. It also thinks it should have the right "to have a say about the membership of its post-Soviet neighbours in alliances" in which it is not itself a member.

Putin believes that the United States actively tried to undermine his regime when there were major public demonstrations in Russia's larger cities after the December 2011 parliamentary elections. After his re-election to the presidency in March 2012, Putin quashed the protests and arrested opposition leaders, alleging that they were supported by the United States. As former U.S. ambassador Michael McFaul, who is no fan of Putin, concedes in the July / August 2018 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, "Putin's anti-American campaign was not just political theatre intended for a domestic audience: Putin genuinely believed the United States represented a threat to his regime."

Furthermore, he "was never inclined to believe in Washington's good faith. His training as a KGB agent had led him to distrust the United States along with all democratic movements" even though in the early years of his presidency, "he had held open the possibility of close co-operation with the West...[and] even suggested that Russia might someday join NATO." It's a suggestion a number of Western analysts also put forth in the past.

#### Somewhere in between

Like most debates, there is some truth to each set of assertions. There is no question that the Russian economy is weak, though slowly recovering from its most recent financial crisis (2014-17), which saw the collapse of the ruble and affected consumers and its struggling business sector alike. But notwithstanding its economic woes, Russia is still a formidable military foe and it remains a nuclear superpower,

whether we like it or not. Putin's stance towards the West has also hardened — notwithstanding Trump's recent overtures. The complete lack of trust between Russia and the West has prompted some commentators, such as McFaul, to refer to the current situation as not a new Cold War, but as a "hot peace" because of Russia's incursions into its "near abroad."

Despite disagreeing about Russia's capabilities and Putin's ultimate intentions, most commentators agree that the West — and the United States, in particular — lacks a coherent strategy to deal with Russia. Trump's hastily conceived and disastrous Helsinki Summit with Putin in July 2018 is a case in point. The summit sowed "new disorientation and discord in American politics," according to CNN's Stephen Collinson, while handing Putin "another win."

There is no shortage of ideas about what that strategy should be [see, for example, McFaul's aforementioned article titled "Russia as It Is: A Grand Strategy for Confronting Putin," in the July / August issue of *Foreign Affairs* or the CIGI-Atlantic Council joint task force report titled Strategy of "Constraint: Countering Russia's Challenge to the Democratic Order, of which, full disclosure, I am a co-author.] But all ideas converge on a number of common elements.

First, the strategy should be bipartisan and based on genuine dialogue and consultation between the United States and its allies. Second, Western countries need to reaffirm their commitment to defending democracy and human rights, and take effective measures to ensure that their own democratic institutions and electoral processes are not subverted, by developing better resilience against cyber-attacks and media manipulation by external actors. Third, the United States should recommit itself to defending its key allies

in the Pacific and Europe while recognizing that stronger economic ties and security partnerships are but two sides of the same coin. And finally, the United States (and NATO) can pursue a policy of containment and engagement with Russia simultaneously, but can only do so from a position of strength and stability, not chaos or disarray.

Avenues of co-operation with Russia include, among other things, a renewed commitment to promoting nuclear non-proliferation and major reductions in strategic arsenals through arms control, intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism co-operation, and developing new "rules of the road" to curb cyber-attacks.

The West must also recognize that Russia seeks respect and a place in the global security order. The Russian bear can't be put into a cage. It's just too big. But it has to be tamed. Russia also has to understand that its quest for respect and status will only be successful if it, in turn, respects the sovereignty and the right of self-determination of other nations, including its closest neighbours. It must also understand that there will be penalties if it doesn't.

In 1953, the distinguished American nuclear physicist Robert J. Oppenheimer wrote, "We may be likened to two scorpions in a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life." What was true then about the world's two greatest nuclear powers is still true now. The continued risk of nuclear war should temper all great power ambitions and provide genuine incentives to reduce that risk.

Fen Osler Hampson is the director of the World Refugee Council. He is also chancellor's professor at Carleton University and distinguished fellow and director of global security & politics at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.



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Publication Date: May 16, 2018



Jamal Abdullah Al-Sallal: Yemen's ambassador to Ottawa

# Yemen's war: 'The human rights situation is really critical.'

Photos by Dyanne Wilson



Jamal Abdullah al-Sallal has been Yemen's man in Ottawa since November 2016, and before that, for four months in 2014, he was his country's minister of foreign affairs. He also served as ambassador to the United Nations for three years and ambassador to Iran for five years, postings that inform his work to this day. From 1986 to 1991, when he was posted to Washington, he was responsible for Canadian affairs.

Al-Sallal is clearly a professional in his own right, but he's also the son of a former Yemeni president. His father, Abdullah al-Sallal was the leader of the North Yemeni Revolution of 1962, which deposed King Muhammad al-Badr and ended the reign of the Mutawakkalite Kingdom. Al-Sallal Sr. served as the first president of Yemen from 1962 to 1967. Asked about his "revolutionary" father, his son says "he was a revolutionary for good — for the good of the country."

*Diplomat's* editor Jennifer Campbell sat down with the ambassador.

***Diplomat* magazine:** A recent United Nations report accuses all three sides in the Yemeni conflict of war crimes — the Houthis, the Saudi-led coalition and your government. Is your government responsible for war crimes?

**Jamal Abdullah Al-Sallal:** We mentioned many times, on many occasions, that the Yemeni government and the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia is respecting international law and human rights, as well as the laws of war. We do all we can to not target any civilians. Lately, there was the incident that was reported in the media that accused the government and the Arab coalition of hitting the hospital in Hodeida, as well as the fish market. They accused us of targeting civilians with terrorist acts. This accusation came from the so-called ministry of health under [Houthi] control and was leaked to some organizations, such as the EU, and then the militia [the Houthi rebels] started to make statements accusing the Arab coalition of this. But a few days later, the Arab coalition gave evidence that the militia fired missiles from their [own] controlled area to the hospital and fish market. The

Arab coalition had nothing to do with it. Unfortunately, this coincided with [UN] special envoy to Yemen, Martin Griffiths, giving his remarks and updates to the Security Council. That inflamed the situation. So sometimes incidents like this repeatedly happen [and] this militia accuses the government and Arab coalition. At the same time, we regret and are sorry for any incidents that involve civilians. In war, you can't guarantee no casualties 100 per cent, but at least you're doing what you can to protect your people.

Whenever such incidents happen — once we reach a conclusion — we go to the public. The [Houthi] militia is using civilians as human shields, firing missiles in heavily populated areas. Once there's a missile fired, they retaliate. They do it sometimes intentionally within the populated areas. This has happened many times, actually.

**DM:** How much territory do the Houthis currently occupy in Yemen?

**JAAS:** We have liberated between 83 and 85 per cent of the land. The rest is still under control by them. However, unfortunately, [they occupy] the most populated area and that includes [the capital] of Sana'a.

**DM:** How much hope is there for the government to get Sana'a back?

**JAAS:** We consider ourselves lucky because we have agreed-upon references from the vast majority of the Yemeni people. We have the GCC initiative [an agreement for the transition process in Yemen by the Gulf Cooperation Council whose members are The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait and Yemen] as well as the National Dialogue Conference and its outcomes and Security Council Resolution 2216, which came up with a broad map for peace solutions in April 2015.

With these advances, we've had previous consultations — from Geneva to Kuwait. We were very close to signing this peace agreement, then Iran and its proxies interfered, advising the al-Houthis not to sign or to withdraw. This is proof of Iran





"[Government and Arab coalition forces] have liberated between 83 and 85 per cent of the land."



"Nobody wants the war. We need to stop it, but we need to work together."



"Iran is providing [among other things] high-tech weapons, missiles, drones, landmines, night-vision equipment."

meddling in our affairs. Once we fulfil these references, and Security Council Resolution 2216, peace [can be achieved] because [it says they must cease occupying all the government buildings and let the government re-occupy them.] [They must also] hand over all heavy weapons that [they] have looted from the military bases to the legitimate government. [They are supposed] to become a political party and to join the government in that position, to prepare and be part of the transition to reach the democratic federal state of Yemen.

They were part of this equation in the National Dialogue Conference, which was sponsored by the United Nations and the 18 countries sponsoring the peace process. But once we reached the conclusion, they started to go against the government and everything we'd agreed upon. We feel fortunate that we have it all in writing.

If you go back to the history, you find out that during the Arab Spring, ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh handed over the power and authority to current president [Abdrabbuh Mansur] Hadi and this was under the GCC initiative. From that point, we started the National Dialogue Conference that included all the political parties, including women, youth, academic partners. From Day 1, [the Houthis] were there. They can't claim they weren't part of it. So after that, they came from Sa'dah to Sana'a, detained the president and vice-president, put them under house arrest, attacked the presidential palace, killing the president's security detail. The president was able to escape to Aden and they followed him there and raided that compound. Then the president went to Riyadh.

**DM:** What are the Houthis' demands or goals?

**JAAS:** Usually, when they talk to the special envoy, they say they're willing to have peace and stop the war. Nobody wants the war. We need to stop it, but we need to work together. They don't want to fulfil the security demands from their side. You cannot just implement the political side.

When they forced the government to sign, the first special envoy was there, but [the Houthis] wouldn't implement the security side, which [called for them to] pull out from the ministries and cities. They don't want to do that.

We are hoping with the new special UN envoy, Martin Griffiths [things change]. We will do whatever we can to make his mission successful. And we are hoping the al-Houthis will, too.

**DM:** To what degree is this a civil war and to what degree is it a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran?

**JAAS:** It is not a civil war. The legitimate government is trying to preserve our identity as Arabs and protect our country from the meddling of Iran. Iran is trying to create another Hezbollah in Yemen. Iran has an expansion agenda in the region — but not only the region. What are they doing in Latin America and Africa? They're very ambitious and it's in their constitution that they should export the revolution. This goes back decades. You're talking about this group [backed by Iran] against the rest of the country.

**DM:** Do you have any idea how much support Iran is providing to the Houthis?

In what form?

**JAAS:** Iran is providing high-tech weapons, missiles, drones, landmines, night vision equipment and other weapons, in addition to financial and military support through advisers, experts and fighters, in co-operation with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The UN-sanctioned committee confirmed, in December 2017 and July 2018, reports to the UN Security Council, that the al-Houthi rebels continue to receive financial and military support from Iran, including short- and long-range missiles, drones and high-tech anti-tank missiles. And there's a high possibility of [their] attaining ground-to-air missiles.

Other friendly countries in the region documented many attempts by Iran to try to smuggle in equipment. In addition to that, we caught many attempts through ships, vessels, etc., that contained a lot of weapons. We just had, on Aug. 23, a missile that came from Somalia, with 270 high-explosive barrels travelling by boat toward our border. In addition to that, we caught some shipments of drones and other military weapons.

If you go to the statements, that after the al-Houthis entered Sana'a, Ali Akbar Velayati [Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's adviser on international affairs] said Sana'a was the fourth capital to fall into the hands of Iran. [The others, according to media reports, are Beirut, Bagdad and Damascus.]

Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC [Iran's revolutionary guards], recently said that the Red Sea is no longer safe.

[There was another] incident in June 2018 in which the secretary-general of





Months after airstrikes on this Northern Yemen neighbourhood, buildings remained reduced to a state of rubble.

Hezbollah called for, and encouraged openly, the support of al-Houthi rebels, both militarily and otherwise.

**DM:** How concerned are you about the Houthis' presence in Hodeida?

**JAAS:** It's a serious threat to international maritime traffic and international trade in the southern part of the Red Sea, especially the city of Hodeida and its port, in addition to the port of Salif, which are all under the control of al-Houthi militia.

Iran is behind the threats to maritime traffic in that region by providing naval mines, speed boats that are used in suicide missions and the development of a missile base that is used to target passing ships in the southern part of the Red Sea and Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. The more sanctions imposed on Iran, the bigger their threat to international maritime traffic and navigation. This is all part of Iran's agenda to expand its influence in the region. In addition, the militia targeted Saudi oil tankers, which almost caused an environmental crisis and threatened to cause a closedown in maritime traffic in the region. This is not the first time. Under its sovereign right, the Yemeni government is keen to remove the naval mines left by al-Houthi rebels to ensure the regular flow of humanitarian aid and access to those in need, and to prevent the smuggling of Iranian weapons through the ports of the governate in

Hodeida. Yemen wants to restore the west coast in order that international trade operates normally through the Red Sea. It is also the responsibility of the international community to protect this vital strait.

Special envoy Griffiths tried his best [to liberate] Hodeida. Unfortunately, he failed and this didn't just start now. In July 2017, [the al-Houthi rebels] promised they would leave. For one year, we [have been] waiting. In our plan to liberate Hodeida, we took all the precautions not to harm civilians. We fulfilled the request from Griffiths. We ceased our fire to give him time, while they continued to get more support, digging ditches and starting to cut services to civilians. They also punished civilians for welcoming the legitimate government to liberate the region.

**DM:** What conditions would it take for the Houthis to accept a ceasefire?

**JAAS:** If we knew, we'd discuss it with them. They don't want the removal of their weapons, for example. The conditions were all there and then they started fighting again. We talk about [them] handing over the ministries, public institutions and weapons. They're basically saying 'We will rule you or kill you.'

**DM:** Have there been any efforts on either side to pause this conflict, if for nothing else than to provide a safe passage for aid and aid workers to arrive?

**JAAS:** The human rights situation is really critical. Almost 22.2 million Yemeni people are in need of some form of assistance — 11.3 million are in acute need of humanitarian assistance; 16 million don't have access to safe drinking water or sanitation. Almost half of the health facilities have been destroyed. More than 60 per cent of educational facilities have been damaged and 3.4 million children are not in school. Also, 3.3 million suffer from acute malnutrition, which is 54 per cent more than 2015; 2.2 million of them are children. There is a fear that we're losing a child every 10 minutes.

Another 4.5 million urgently need shelter and basic domestic requirements; 14 million can't get basic medical care; 14.1 million suffer from lack of basic food needs, which is 200 per cent more than were suffering in 2015. There are 4.5 million displaced persons internally; 1.7 million suffer from moderate malnutrition; and 15 million lack medical services.

We have the high relief committee, headed by Minister [Abdel Raqib] Fatah. This committee co-ordinates with other friendly countries and NGOs to facilitate aid coming into the country.

I'd like to thank the Canadian government and the Canadian people for their generosity of supporting the people of Yemen. They have granted \$65 million since March 2017 through the UN and special agencies for humanitarian assistance. We appeal to the Canadian government to do more. We also have other friendly and brotherly countries who are helping, including the U.S., EU, U.K., Germany, Japan. I don't want to miss anyone. The Saudis have been very generous as well as UAE, Kuwait and Qatar.

**DM:** But can the aid workers get in?

**JAAS:** We've liberated 80 per cent of the territory, so you have many ports and airports, including the port of Aden. We have also opened an airport in Hodeida. Just recently, [the UN] issued thousands of permits and many visitors are entering. The procedure for aid entering is through the Arab coalition and the United Nations' OCHA [Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs.]

The reason the Saudis said it was dangerous to bring in aid is because sometimes the militia is attempting to smuggle in weapons under the auspices of workers. For aid, there's a procedure, a protocol between the Arab coalition and the UN. They have regulations they follow to allow these ships to come to our ports and deliver the goods. In our experience



in the past, the militia are looting the international assistance to fund their war machine — that's why we should liberate Hodeida. We want to make sure the humanitarian assistance goes to the needy ones, but in general, the ports are open.

**DM:** What would be your solution to end this conflict? Or at least gain a ceasefire?

**JAAS:** If we think about our own people, if we think about our country sincerely, and we put this as a first agenda, and we work very hard and give concessions to reach an agreement, we can reach a very safe [outcome] for our future. Each time we speak, the government gives huge concessions. President Hadi says he represents all Yemenis, including al-Houthis. We have nothing against them. If they are ready to fulfil the peace agreement, we can have peace.

**DM:** As you mentioned in the comments from Khomeini's adviser, Iran now claims to control four Arab capitals: Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut and Sana'a. Is this true in your view and, if so, what is the projected future of this Iranian ascent in the Middle East?

**JAAS:** It's not true. Even if you have one side of the equation in the country, work-



Yemeni President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi speaks at the United Nations.

ing as a proxy for you, we've learned from history, no one can continue by some kind of dictatorship, forcing people to act in a certain way. Eventually, people will want to be free.

No one can impose anything from abroad. We see it all over the world. The people will prevail; democracy will pre-

vail; human rights and [rule of] law will prevail. We cannot live in a jungle.

**DM:** What were the problems with the previous attempts at peace?

**JAAS:** The "peace and partnership agreement" was forced on us by the al-Houthis in 2014. They forced the government to sign the agreement. [And then, they] only wanted to fulfil the political side of the agreement, not the security side. Even [though it's their own agreement], they don't want to implement it.

**DM:** Are the Houthis using child soldiers?

**JAAS:** According to the ministry of human rights, the al-Houthis are committing a lot of violations and crimes against women and children. They use collective punishment such as seizing whole provinces with the threat of landmines and destroying the homes of their opponents.

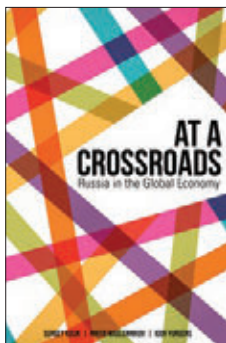
In addition, the final report from [the government] in June 2018 shows they're recruiting children as soldiers. Yemen has signed the Paris Accord, so they're committing a violation by recruiting those youngsters instead of letting them go to school — taking advantage of their poverty. The numbers are up to almost 15,000 active child soldiers. They found that this



# AT A CROSSROADS

## Russia in the Global Economy

An examination of the challenges Russia faces in the global economy given its current foreign policies and globalization's impact on its decision-making process.



*At a Crossroads: Russia in the Global Economy*  
By Sergey Kulik, Nikita Maslennikov and Igor Yurgens

Globalization proceeds apace, taking on new forms that affect global economic, financial and social processes. Interdependence is not simply strengthening the range of possibilities for national economies to participate in these developments, but expanding the opportunities that are available to them. The question is: how do states take advantage of these global developments?

Although Russia actively participates in the globalization process, it is confronting greater economic, technological, structural and institutional problems than other countries. These problems exist alongside the risk that the gap between Russia and other economies in terms of economic performance and technological development and growth will continue to widen.

The old model of Russian development has been exhausted and a new one must be chosen. Russia's choice at this juncture will determine the future of its economic development for many years to come.



This map shows the Red Sea to Yemen's west, as well as Yemen's proximity to Iran and Saudi Arabia.

has increased since 2016. The ministry has documented 3,422 cases of child recruitment with 70 per cent of these children still taking part in battles now. The ministry maintains a complete database on this. The number of child [deaths] from battle is 418 on battlefields; 264 are disabled; 254 were captured in war zones. Treatment, food and rehabilitation services are being provided to them.

**DM:** What is your predecessor, Khaled Bahah, doing now? Is he the potential saviour some say he is?

**JAAS:** I don't want to comment on former colleagues.

**DM:** What does Yemen want from Canada? What is your chief mission here?

**JAAS:** If we start with the history, our relations date back to the '60s when Canada sent wheat to Yemen. After that, Yemen established an honorary consulate in Ottawa. Then, in 1990, after reunification, we opened an embassy in Ottawa.

We've had many high-level visits over the years. Former prime minister Pierre Trudeau visited Yemen privately. Ex-president Saleh came to Canada in 2000. Over the years, we have enjoyed good relations,



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especially in trade of oil, but also medical implements, electronic devices, vegetables and grain. Canada imports oil, coffee and vegetables from Yemen.

Yemen is a very historical place. We believe there's a lot we can do together as people and in business. I encourage my colleagues to take advantage of the investment law and to participate actively in the reconstruction program. There are huge opportunities there for Canada in infrastructure programs. Still, the travel ban is a barrier for our friends to go to Yemen. We invite them to go to the liberated area.

**DM:** Is getting a Canadian embassy in Yemen a goal of yours?

**JAAS:** We are hoping, of course, and encouraging. We also hope to see more business presence in Yemen from Canada. The government is operating from the temporary capital of Aden. [Canada] could establish an embassy in Aden, then eventually in Sana'a, our capital [which is currently under siege by the Houthis.]

For me, I don't want Yemen to be forgotten in this dilemma. I want Canadian friends to know there is a country called Yemen. It is one of the oldest civilizations.



A Saudi soldier and a soldier from UAE on the front lines of the Yemeni war.

People are very friendly and kind and eager to rebuild. They believe in democracy. We share a lot of values with Canada. We can benefit from Canada's experience in the federal system. We have many models we can study. Besides that, I'd like to promote our relations in all fields, not just politically. I met some high officials and

ministers who are welcoming that, but the current situation isn't helping. By the same token, they expressed their willingness to engage as soon as things get better. I invite all parties in parliament, and especially the foreign committee, to visit Yemen.

I would like to thank Canadians for all their support and their wishes to restore our country. We look to Canada as an honest broker. It has no history of colonization. Your wisdom and honesty will be valuable in restoring our country and returning to normal soon. Yemenis are [suspicious] of some countries, but they're not suspicious of Canada.

**DM:** With the government in disarray, to whom do you report on a daily basis? Do most Yemenis still consider allegedly deposed president Hadi their leader?

**JAAS:** I report to President Hadi's government. It's based in Aden as a temporary capital. We shouldn't forget that President Hadi is a legitimate president, elected a vast majority of Yemenis. He received his authority from ex-president Saleh. Regionally and internationally, he's been recognized as the president of Yemen and legitimate government head. ▣

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## Helping indigenous women while having fun

**M**any urban indigenous women don't receive adequate prenatal education or care, but an organization in Thunder Bay is doing its best to change that. Called Beendigen Inc., it is an Anishinabe women's crises home and "family healing agency" and it was the recipient of the money raised at the annual fundraiser put on by the Head of Mission Spouses' Association (HOMSA) and organized by spouses from Europe. (Beendigen means "come in" in Ojibway.)

Inara Eihenbauma, wife of Latvian Ambassador Kārlis Eihenbaums, served as emcee for the event, which included speakers, a silent auction and a lunch. She said they chose this charity because they could all relate to it.

"All donations have the potential to positively impact those they serve," Eihenbauma said. "The prenatal program touched our hearts — we are all mothers."

Debra Vermette, executive director of Beendigen, said the members of her organization were thrilled.

"That the impact of Beendigen's work and the women we serve reached such a prominent group of women was truly amazing," Vermette said. "Women honouring women builds strength. Having the diplomatic spouses select Beendigen and recognize our efforts was a tremendous honour."

She said the funds will go to the prenatal program and will be used to buy vitamins and milk and to meet the other nutritional needs of pregnant women.

"Nutrition during and after pregnancy is



The organizers of the luncheon event included, Irene Knopf Nobs (Switzerland), president of the heads of mission spouses association; event hostess Agata Kurnicka (Poland); Lerzan Kayikan (Turkey); keynote speaker Valerie Bellegarde; Aynur Huseynli (Azerbaijan); and Inara Eihenbauma (Latvia.)

key to healthy babies," Vermette said. "These dollars will help continue that message."

Eihenbauma said the charity came on to the spouses' radar thanks to Valerie Galley Bellegarde, wife of Perry Bellegarde, the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations. Bellegarde also served as the keynote speaker at the fundraiser.

Eihenbauma said there were several notable donations for the event, including the use of the Polish embassy as a venue. In addition, the embassy of Estonia donated a silk painting by Estonian artist Ilme Rätsep for the silent auction; the embassies of Macedonia, Croatia, Romania and Armenia donated country baskets. The embassy of Kazakhstan donated two unique works of art and *Diplomat* food col-

umnist Margaret Dickenson donated two of her award-winning cookbooks while Penny Burke donated pearl jewelry.

In addition to those donations, and others, there was a lunch with food and wine donated by the ambassadors' spouses.

At the end of the day, the group raised \$6,075 in support of Beendigen's prenatal program. Each guest paid \$35 for a ticket, which included a raffle ticket and a sumptuous lunch of European delicacies. Participating embassies were those from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. ■



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# The Aninga Project: Sending Ugandan girls to school

By Jenny Benson

Ruth talks about her gratitude for the Aninga Project which, she says, has brought profound change into her life: “It has been a wonderful achievement and success since you started paying my school fees, which gave me a clear vision of becoming an accountant and successful financial manager. You gave me hope.”

The Aninga Project is a tiny non-profit initiative working to educate and empower young women in Uganda and change the way East Africa views the education of females. These are challenging objectives indeed. However, in the past 11 years, we have managed to help get 22 girls into school, two of whom have completed university degrees and have become change-makers in their communities. Little by little, we are helping to change the narrative about the education of females in northern Uganda.

The Aninga Project is a Canadian charity and Ugandan NGO based in Timberlea, N.S., and Kampala, Uganda. We are 100 per cent volunteer-based. Our Canadian team of volunteers raises the funds needed for our Ugandan volunteers to ensure our girls are fully supported. When we commit to a girl, we support her fully by paying her school fees, boarding fees, transportation costs, food, water, medicine and much more. We also commit to supporting her entire education, including through the post-secondary level.

The Aninga Project is proof that a few people with a great idea can create positive change. Our organization was born of a friendship between my family — the Bensons — and a young Zimbabwean woman we met through her participation in the 2006 International AIDS Conference in Toronto. When our friend, Constance Shumba, settled in Uganda with her Ugandan husband, Gershim Asiki, they asked if we could work together at a grassroots level to create educational opportunities for a young woman.

Shumba and Asiki identified a girl named Aninga who could benefit from the money my family sent from Canada. It was to be disbursed by them for her school fees and other necessities. Aninga’s northern Ugandan village is close to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan — a dangerous area with little infrastruc-



From left, Aninga Project students Aninga, Adania, Aninga Project founder Jenny Benson, and students Scovia and Viola. Since completing her studies, Aninga is now working as a community development officer and Viola is working as a secondary school teacher.

ture. Educational opportunities are scarce and, for females, they’re virtually non-existent. This opportunity was life-changing for Aninga.

After I met with Aninga in Uganda and learned about the positive impact our sponsorship had had, my family and I knew our little initiative required expansion. In 2009, The Aninga Project was born and took steps to become incorporated and gain charitable status in Canada and Uganda. It grew from supporting Aninga, who is now a community development officer working in northern Uganda, to supporting five girls in the first year. It currently supports 22.

The Aninga Project showcases every day what a true grassroots international partnership can accomplish. Our Ugandan volunteers monitor the young women we support, providing our Canadian volunteers with information and Ugandan context. Together, we make decisions that are the best, healthiest and most relevant for the young women we support and fundraise accordingly in Canada.

The first time I met Aninga, I learned that she had been using her allowance money to send her sister to school. While many of the girls we support are the first girls in their families to attend school

beyond Grade 4, we are learning that their siblings (male and female) are following in their footsteps. In many parts of East Africa, young women are viewed as commodities; they can be used for labour or married in exchange for money or livestock. The young women we are supporting are changing that narrative as they gain education and skills to support themselves and their families.

Educators and community leaders in Northern Uganda were initially wary of what we were up to, but, having seen some success, they are now encouraging us to support more girls. There seems to be growing recognition of the value of educating girls, though it remains a fact that once a girl cannot go to school, she will be married off. We hope for a world where marriage is a choice at an appropriate age, not an obligatory commodity exchange.

Working in an under-resourced area surrounded by conflict involves anxiety, frustration and sometimes even danger; however, the young women we support and the opportunities we provide to them are more than a worthy counter-balance to the challenge.

Jenny Benson is president of The Aninga Project.



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# Diplomats explore Canada's North



**FIRST NAME:** Alison

**LAST NAME:** LeClaire

**CITIZENSHIP:** Canadian

**STARTED CURRENT POSITION:**  
September 2016

**PREVIOUS JOBS:** Director-general and corporate secretary at Global Affairs Canada; deputy permanent representative to the UN in Geneva

Every two years, Global Affairs Canada organizes a tour of the North, including the Arctic, for interested ambassadors and high commissioners posted to Canada. For Canada, it is an opportunity to introduce international guests to a storied, but less known, part of our country. This year, I was part of this interesting initiative that many have previously described to me as life-changing.

Roy Norton, chief of protocol, whose office leads in arranging the tour's logistics, told me how this program links the international community with Canada's North: "The hope is to help our diplomatic partners achieve a greater understanding of the realities in the North and to create opportunities for ongoing dialogue and co-operation directly with the various communities there."

This year's tour began with a First Air commercial flight from Ottawa to Iqaluit. It continued by charter, with stops in Cape Dorset, Hall Beach, Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay, Cambridge Bay, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Dawson City, Whitehorse and Yellowknife. Each stop included program elements reflecting the specific characteristics of the community we were visiting. Our goal was to create platforms for formal and informal learning. They ranged from presentations by representatives of governments to meetings with community, indigenous and business leaders.

The globe's diversity was well represented by the diplomats on this year's tour, with ambassadors and high commissioners from 24 countries participating. They posted on Twitter using #NorthernTour2018 so users could follow their journey.

Indian High Commissioner Vikas Swarup spoke about the educational opportunities for Indian students: "[The] last stop in Whitehorse is Yukon College, which received a record 130 Indian students last year."

Australian High Commissioner Natasha Smith sent a message of thanks to Northern communities: "An incredible few days learning about the Arctic. Can't thank the communities in Nunavut and Northwest Territories enough for their hospitality and willingness to share views and experiences."

I was with the group on the tour as

the opportunity to visit some parts of the Arctic, so the landscape was not entirely unfamiliar, nor were the perspectives of some of the communities we visited. The main difference was crossing the whole of the Arctic — a vast expanse of territory — in a relatively short period. It was remarkable to see my own first experience of the Arctic reflected in the reactions of the participants, at least to some extent.

The varying regional, professional and individual backgrounds, experiences, interests and aims of those on the tour contributed to a rich tapestry of response to what individuals experienced and encountered. As breathtaking as the beauty and diversity of the landscape were, the most compelling element was to see connections being formed by members of the group and those they met. The international community had the opportunity to engage with northerners, including Inuit and First Nations communities, who pro-



The Northern Tour takes place every two years and brings together ambassadors and high commissioners to tour a part of Canada that many Canadians never see.

I had heard so much about it from colleagues who had participated in 2016. It was clear it had created a very special bond among the participants and had influenced how they approached the remainder of their assignment in Canada.

As Canada's senior Arctic official, my role on the tour was to serve as a resource for the participants by providing context around Canada's international Arctic work and partnerships. I had already had

vided a deeper understanding of Canada's North and the diverse people who live there. It was an extraordinary trip and one that will lead to partnerships of benefit to northerners in areas such as tourism, science and education, health, culture and commerce.

**Alison LeClaire is Canada's senior Arctic official and director general of Arctic, Eurasian and European Affairs.**



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# UAE: One of Canada's largest investors



By *Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani*

**W**hen speaking about the United Arab Emirates, Canadians often mention Dubai, our most populous city, known for its opulent shopping and the Burj Khalifa (the world's largest skyscraper), but what is not commonly noted are the many shared values between our two countries, and the strength of our dynamic bilateral relationship.

Among our many shared values, we are extremely proud of our commitment to women's empowerment. Current statistics paint a clear picture of the success of Emirati women.

More than 70 per cent of our university graduates are women, approximately 62 per cent of Emirati doctors are women, our speaker of parliament is female, we have nine female cabinet ministers and UAE female business owners lead projects worth more than \$14 billion.

In the Middle East region, more than 60 per cent of the population is under 30 years old, and it is our responsibility to also make sure their voices are heard. To that end, my government has created a portfolio to represent youth, and appointed Shamma Al Mazrui, the world's youngest minister, to serve as minister of state youth affairs.

She recently visited Canada, and we look forward to bringing UAE and Canadian youth council members together in a joint youth dialogue.

In this same spirit of mobilizing the power of youth, the UAE is also actively embracing artificial intelligence (AI) and is quickly becoming a world leader.

Not only has the UAE government dedicated an entire strategy to AI, but it has also appointed Omar bin Sultan Al Olama as the world's first minister of state



The UAE, whose Dubai skyline is shown, is more than tall buildings and opulent shopping malls.

for artificial intelligence.

Also, directly connected to innovation and our vision for the future is our commitment to host EXPO 2020 Dubai, from October 2020 to April 2021. This will be the first time a world's fair is held in the Middle East and will bring together hundreds of countries, companies, universities and international organizations, to mention just a few sectors. EXPO 2020 will highlight human ingenuity, collaboration and partnership. We sincerely hope the dynamic Canadian brand will be there to showcase its expertise.

Another future initiative we look forward to is our Emirates Mars Mission, which will see the launch of a probe into space in 2020, followed by the development of a sustainable city on the planet and sending the first Emirati into space.

This past summer, a bilateral MOU on space co-operation was signed between the UAE and the Canadian Space Agency, which includes collaboration on space research and innovation.

We are proud of our dynamic bilateral relations with Canada, and the fact that the UAE stands as Canada's top trading partner in the Middle East and North Africa region.

According to Statistics Canada, two-way trade between Canada and the UAE exceeded \$1.6 billion in 2017 and reached almost \$1.7 billion in 2016.

UAE investment in Canada is approximately \$30 billion, making the UAE one of Canada's most significant global investors.

Aside from the more than \$16 billion of UAE investment in the Canadian oil and gas sector, there has also been significant investment from DP World (Dubai Ports), which manages ports in more than 40 countries, including the Port of Vancouver and the Port of Saint John, N.B.

The CEO of Port Saint John, John Quinn, has commented that it's thanks to DP World that business in the region has reached its highest levels — from increased potash exports to more cruise ships making stops.

In regards to the Canadian presence in the UAE, while there are more than 150 Canadian companies, including Tim Hortons, Lululemon, Cirque du Soleil, SNC Lavalin, and Brookfield, to name just a few, and more than 40,000 Canadians who call UAE home, many more business and investment opportunities are available.

In addition to more than 45 free trade zones in the UAE, the recently concluded negotiations on a foreign investment promotion and protection agreement between our two countries also allows for more protection for Canadian investors doing business in the UAE.

However, perhaps one of the most appealing reasons for doing business in the UAE is its strategic location. With two-thirds of the world's population living within an eight-hour flight from the UAE, and one third living within a four-hour flight, we are ideally positioned as a regional hub to millions of consumers in the Middle Eastern, African, Asian and Indian markets.

It is with enthusiasm that my government and myself look forward to working in collaboration with the various levels of government in Canada, the business community and broader civil society — whether through youth, women or even culturally based organizations and initiatives — and exploring future collaboration for the greater benefit of our two countries.

*Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani is the ambassador of United Arab Emirates. Reach him at [ottawa.emb@mofaic.gov.ae](mailto:ottawa.emb@mofaic.gov.ae) or 613-565-7272.*



# El Salvador seeks energy and aerospace investors



By *Tania Molina Avalos*

**E**l Salvador is a destination for investment in the region. Located in the heart of the western hemisphere, it not only has a strategic geographical position, but it also offers an attractive investment climate, including a productive workforce and fiscal flexibility. These assets are a result of national efforts in legal, administrative and fiscal matters.

Those efforts include solid protection frameworks for those who decide to bet on our country. They cover issues such as investments, international services, free-trade zones, incentives for renewable energies, public-private partnerships and legal stability, through which the same treatment is granted to foreign and national investments. They include regulatory reforms that simplify paperwork. The changes have received broad international support from strategic allies with which we have co-operation agreements or support systems in infrastructure, human capital and regulatory improvement and business climate, among others. These have eased the completion of important projects aimed at strengthening the country's ability to attract investment.

All this has been recognized internationally. El Salvador is ranked among the 10 economies in the world that show the most notable improvement in "doing business" indicators, according to the World Bank. The World Bank has also named El Salvador the second best country in Central America with which to do business in 2017-2018.

Canada is currently an important partner for El Salvador, and there is no doubt we have enormous potential for our friendship of almost six decades to translate into a more dynamic economic and commercial relationship.



El Salvador is ranked by the World Bank as the second-best country in Central America in which to do business. Coffee is one of its main exports to Canada — a green bean processing plant is shown here.

There are signs that this is already happening. For example, thanks to an agreement on the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments, signed in June 2000, the investment from Canada in the first quarter of 2018 amounted to \$326 million, including projects by internationally recognized companies such as machinery parts maker Spintex Canada Inc., Bell Canada and Telus. These confirm the confidence and stability offered by the country's business climate.

In the commercial sphere, both countries have also had substantial exchanges, which have been growing. According to the Central Reserve Bank, the total value of exports from El Salvador to Canada between 2013 and 2017 was \$333 million and imports from El Salvador for the same period totalled \$523 million. The main products we export to Canada are non-refined sugar, coffee beans, cotton shirts and clothing made with synthetic or artificial fibres. Imports from Canada include polymers such as ethylene, motor vehicles, animal or vegetable fats and oils, potassium chloride and wheat, among others.

Without a doubt, our trade and investment activity has increased the opportunities for other products that have not yet been explored. El Salvador is interested

in high-quality organic products derived from coffee as well as fruits and corn derivatives. Canada's interest may extend to industrial products, such as textured polyester yarns; polyester fibre yarns mixed with cotton; cotton; simple yarns; ethylene polymers and technological products.

The progress the government of El Salvador has achieved in terms of attracting investments and developing commercial mergers, especially in recent years, is substantial and can continue to deepen. Canadians should be looking at the fields of energy, aerospace and banking. In addition, we continue to hope for a free-trade agreement — a pending issue in our bilateral file.

At press time, El Salvador and Canada were about to sign an air transport agreement that will bring further opportunities for investment in aerospace.

El Salvador is a country open to trade and investment, and with that vision, we invite our Canadian friends to explore the opportunities we offer. Together, we can continue to build the best conditions to strengthen the bonds that unite us.

*Tania Molina Avalos is the ambassador of El Salvador. Reach her at [molinat@rree.gob.sv](mailto:molinat@rree.gob.sv) or (613) 238-2939.*

# Kenyan natural resources ripe for investment



By John Lanyasunya

**K**enya's long-term development plan aims to transform the country into an industrialized, middle-income country offering all of its citizens a high quality of life by the year 2030. The 2014 GDP of \$58.1 billion US meant that Kenya became one of the largest economies in sub-Saharan Africa and one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

Kenya's economy is built around agriculture, manufacturing, real estate and services. Agriculture, which contributes about 27 per cent of the GDP, remains the mainstay of the economy with major cash crops being tea, coffee and horticulture. Manufacturing contributes 10 per cent to the economy and real estate contributes 5 per cent.

The government has created an environment that enables investment by ensuring political and economic stability, which are key pillars for the long-term prosperity of any country.

To support investments, the government has developed world-class infrastructure projects to support transportation and power-generation that will ultimately make the country more globally competitive.

The newly built standard gauge railway from Mombasa to Nairobi is one of Kenya's success stories. It has reduced travel times between the two cities from more than 10 hours to five hours. The train is now the preferred mode of travel for citizens and tourists. The railway has an axle load of 25 tonnes and expects to move up to 22 million tonnes of cargo per year at a speed of 80 to 100 kilometres per hour. Passenger trains operate at a speed of 120 kilometres per hour.

Kenya is currently east and central Africa's largest economy, making it a favour-



Gold deposits were found in western Kenya last year.

able destination for investment. Kenya has a population of 43 million people and is growing at 2.7 per cent per annum. The country's large middle class in the urban areas is contributing to increased consumer demand for high-value goods.

Kenya has a low-risk investment environment and is becoming a favoured business hub, not only for oil and gas exploration in the region, but also for industrial production. Many multinational companies are headquartered in Kenya and apart from the country's strategic geographical location, investors also enjoy wide market access through Kenya. The proposed tripartite free-trade agreement between the East African Community, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Southern Africa Development Committee creates a potential market of more than 600 million.

Improved infrastructure, reduced cost of energy and improved energy availability are other factors that are attractive to potential investors. The country's favourable investment policy encourages the private sector to become central partners in the development and growth of Kenya's economy. Foreign investments are guaranteed by transparency and corporate governance systems provided by the constitution and other legislative frameworks.

For interested investors, opportunities exist in sectors such as transport, especially on the Lamu Port, Southern Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor, Nairobi Commuter Rail and Thika toll road, as well as more general opportunities in airport, road and container terminal construction. There's also much potential in the energy sector with prospects in hydro-power, geothermal, wind and solar energy

generation throughout the country.

After President Uhuru Kenyatta took the oath of office for his second five-year term in 2017, he has this year focused on the "big four" agenda for the next five years. The four areas of focus are housing, manufacturing, universal healthcare and food security.

To carry out these priorities will require Kenya to reach out to its key trading partners to achieve win-win outcomes and enable the country to get the most out of its products. It will also involve negotiations to open new international markets.

On affordable housing, the government wants to allow every Kenyan to own property. Investors will find opportunity in financing housing projects, consulting and supplying inputs.

On manufacturing, the government aims to increase manufacturing capacity from 9 per cent to 20 per cent of GDP by 2022. That means creating 400,000 more jobs and adding \$2 billion to \$3 billion US to the GDP. Areas of focus include fish processing, leather, textile, apparel and cotton, agro-processing, construction materials, oil, mining and gas, iron and steel and ICT.

Canada has a well-established trade relationship with Kenya. In 2017, two-way merchandise trade reached \$176.2 million, consisting of \$141.7 million in exports to Kenya and \$34.5 million in imports from Kenya. Exports to Kenya are predominantly vehicles, aircraft and associated equipment and textile products. Kenya's main exports to Canada are primarily vegetables and textiles.

Canadian investments in Kenya totalled \$30 million last year, most notably in the natural resources sector, where exploration companies are actively seeking mineral and oil deposits. Oil discoveries have recently been made in Turkana, while large deposits of gold were discovered in western Kenya last year.

Other major Canadian investments include aircraft service centres. Opportunities exist for Canadian companies in extractives, clean technology, transportation infrastructure and education sectors.

**John Lanyasunya is Kenya's high commissioner. Reach him at (613) 563-1773 or [balozi@kenyahighcommission.ca](mailto:balozi@kenyahighcommission.ca).**





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This gentleman is sitting amongst the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. Heavy rains and winds caused significant damage in the country's western cities of Les Cayes and Jeremie. The Caribbean is particularly susceptible to escalating weather turmoil caused by climate change.



# Drivers and deficits in the Caribbean

This often-ignored region of the world has a lot to offer and a lot at stake. In this 10-part list, Wolfgang Depner looks at the good and the bad — and why the world should pay more attention to the region.

These are, to say the least, interesting times for the Caribbean. The recent discovery of oil off Guyana has revived dreams of regional prosperity, as the region continues to recover from the devastating hurricanes that ravaged parts of it in 2017. Haiti remains a source of political instability and migratory streams, while Cuba finds itself in the middle of a domestic transition that includes a tentative, tenuous rapprochement with the United States, at the very moment that China continues to strengthen its influence in the region by inviting Caribbean nations to participate in its ambitious, globe-spanning One Belt, One Road project of trading routes and networks.

Notably, China's interest in the region has intensified as the United States has pivoted towards the South China Sea — known as the “Caribbean” of China — bearing out the trope that if you want to play in my backyard, I can play in yours, too.

This emerging dynamic of a global Sino-American rivalry has provided Canada with a distinct local edge, given its relative proximity and its deepening ties to the Caribbean.

It is against this background that we have chosen to take a look at the region and its issues. Yet this choice confronted us with an immediate conundrum: What exactly counts as the Caribbean? All countries with a Caribbean shoreline? All island nations in the Caribbean? Or is it a socio-cultural space, with a unique history of European colonization and distinct economic conditions?

One obvious starting point is the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), with 15 full members (Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti,

Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago) and five associate members (Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos). But this list is incomplete insofar as it neither includes Cuba nor the unincorporated American territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, clearly part of the Caribbean by geography and history. It is also important to note that the Dominican Republic, Haiti's neighbour on the island of Hispaniola, only holds observer status in CARICOM. In short, the Caribbean starts, but does not end, with the CARICOM countries.

Indeed, it is difficult to disentangle the Caribbean from the North, Central and South American mainland that rims it. The region hardly appears insular, for it is a major hub in every imaginable way. It's a place that draws people from afar in the form of tourists, and generates diasporas around the world, including Canada.

Illegal migrants, drugs and funds continuously pass through it, yet it is also an attractive destination for legitimate economic investments and well-heeled immigrants from Europe and North America who are looking for a different lifestyle. It is a place where relatively well-functioning British parliamentary-style governments co-exist with authoritarian presidential systems that govern only for themselves. It is a place where human violence co-exists with natural beauty.

Without being too profane, it is where the best and worst of all worlds collide, and it deserves more of our attention. What follows is our set of the Caribbean's top 10 drivers and deficits.



One of the Caribbean's major appeals — especially for tourists who live in cold climates such as Canada — is its weather.

## 1. Share of global economy

It does not take much effort to see the economic potential of the Caribbean.

The region has a young, multilingual population and it lies to the south of a major developed market (the United States) and to the north of several emerging markets of South America (including BRIC member Brazil). Geography has also blessed the Caribbean nations with some of the most popular and iconic tourism destinations.

While the region is home to one of the poorest countries in the world (Haiti), most Caribbean nations have fared relatively well since the 1960s and 1970s, when the region largely decolonized.

Measured against emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs), most Caribbean countries now rank among the top 25 per cent globally.

Yet these findings — which appear in an IMF report titled *Unleashing Growth and Strengthening Resilience in the Caribbean* and published in 2017 — need to be held against the larger point that the region is still trying to fulfil its potential.

As the report notes, the region has not reached the living standards of advanced economies. “No single reason can explain the Caribbean growth slowdown,” it states. “Drivers include both large adverse external developments and, more important, persistent domestic macroeconomic imbalances and structural impediments.”

External events include, among others, the region's susceptibility to natural disasters. Persistent macroeconomic imbalances include what the report calls a vicious cycle of high government debt levels and low growth hampered by several structural deficits.

Three stand out. First, the high cost of energy undermines regional competitiveness by raising the cost of doing business, especially in the important, but energy-intensive, tourism sector. (When measured on a per capita basis, according to the report, Caribbean economies that depend on tourism appear to be more energy intensive than Caribbean economies that export commodities such as Belize, Guyana and Suriname.)

While electrification rates in the Caribbean hover around 90 per cent, according to the World Bank, electricity costs have increased by almost 80 per cent between 2002 and 2012.

The region's reliance on expensive imported oil primarily accounts for this price problem. Except for Trinidad and Tobago — the only net exporter of oil and natural gas — all Caribbean countries are net oil importers. This reliance accordingly exposes the region to unexpected price shocks that compound existing fiscal and trade imbalances. Worse, local energy systems often struggle to deliver this expensive energy to their consumers on a reliable basis because they are outdated

and have capacity problems compounded by a lack of technical expertise.

Second, the Caribbean continues to lose some of its best. If Caribbean emigrants still lived in the region, they would account for about 22 per cent of the population, and many of them are among the best educated.

Nearly half of Caribbean emigrants to the United States have at least a college education and generally tend to be employed in the health-care sector and various white-collar occupations, where their hourly wages average about 60 per cent more than those of immigrants from Mexico and Central America.

While their remittances are important, they do not outweigh the harmful effects of this Caribbean brain drain, such as lost productivity and innovation. It is doubly worse when we consider that the face of Caribbean emigration is female. Among Jamaican-born women living in the United States (who emigrated after age 22), 50 per cent have at least a college education — double the attainment rate in the home country, where one-quarter of women have a college education, according to the report.

Third, the region has a violent crime problem (see more under governance) because of its status as a transit zone for illegal drugs flowing from Central and South America into the United States, illegal human trafficking and general corruption.

Globally, the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region has the highest homicide rate, according to the IMF, with Caribbean homicide rates below those in Central America, but above those in the southern cone of Latin America.

“More worryingly, the IMF report notes, the victims of violent crime are predominantly young, which can have a significant bearing on economic and social outcomes both in the near term and in the long term.”

The high violent crime rate in the Caribbean has not only a human cost. It also requires an expensive response.

The IMF: “Because the public and private sectors often have to spend large amounts of resources, both to prevent crime and deal with its negative consequences, it can have a significant impact on economic prospects, particularly in the Caribbean, where many economies are stuck in a low growth-high debt trap.”

## 2. Carving up the Caribbean

As the 19th Century turned into the 20th, it had become clear that the United States was emulating European imperialism.



While less formal, the emerging American overseas empire had its origins in the Caribbean, where the McKinley Administration used civil unrest in Cuba as a pretext to declare war on Spain.

Following the short but sharp Spanish-American War (1898), the United States controlled most of the Caribbean, along with new Pacific territories, through direct and indirect means.

Fast forward to the early 21st Century. The Caribbean has once again become a theatre of imperial ambitions, with the United States facing a challenge from China this time around. This challenge appears in various forms.

First, China has deepened official ties with the region through various multi-lateral institutions, including the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) — a regional bloc that includes neither Canada nor the United States and with which China has held forums — and the Organization of American States (OAS), whose most recent summit China attended as an observer.

One sign of this growing significance is the personal attention and presence of senior Chinese leaders. Chinese President Xi Jinping hosted Caribbean leaders in January 2015 as part of the China-CELAC summit and visited Cuba in 2014 and 2018. Overall, Xi has visited Latin America three times in the last four years.

Compare this to U.S. President Donald Trump, who has yet to visit the Caribbean or Latin America. In fact, relations between the United States and the Caribbean region continue to sour after Trump's comments about Haiti as a "shit-hole" country, prompting some Caribbean organizations to declare him *persona non grata*.

Second, China has actively invested resources in the region under the 1+3+6 framework (one plan, three engines of growth — trade, investment, and financial co-operation — and six industries, namely energy and resources, infrastructure construction, agriculture, manufacturing, scientific and technological innovation and information technologies.)

It has lent money to struggling Caribbean countries, improved their infrastructure and invested in joint ventures while buying more of their products. Case in point: The growing Chinese presence in Guyana, where the recent discovery of oil has encouraged significant Chinese investments.

Third, both sides are investing in soft power tools such as cultural exchanges and language training.

This said, the Caribbean remains an American sea for now. As Evan Ellis of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) says, the United States will continue to play an important security role in the region, because of its geographic proximity and influence on the regional economy. The United States also plays a crucial role in responding to natural disasters, as well as disease outbreaks that strike the region, thanks to its tropical climate.

Finally, the region is a hub of criminal activities — shady financial dealings, drugs and human trafficking — that will continue to draw the attention of Washington, partly because Americans contribute to them.

"In this way, the United States is thus both a principal driver of the region's security challenges, as well as its principal source of trade, investment and other resources to fight those challenges," Ellis writes in a paper titled "Strategic Insights: Caribbean Security Issues."

He also draws attention to the region's larger deficits.

The region's small governments, limited resources and fragile institutions "make it susceptible to the corrupting influences of transnational criminal organizations and the initiatives of larger states with an interest in its affairs, including the United States, China and Russia, among others," he writes.

China appears eager to exploit these conditions.

### 3. Governance

Let us first acknowledge the following facts. If we take the full members of CAR-

COM as starting point, about 60 per cent according to the *CIA World Factbook*) live in one of the worst-run countries in the world — Haiti.

The regional picture does not get any better when we include Cuba (the largest Caribbean country by population, with 11 million) and the Dominican Republic (the second-largest Caribbean country by population with nearly 11 million). While Cuba has recently launched reforms to liberalize its society and economy following the Castro era, it remains a one-party Communist state that continues to repress political liberties, earning it the status of "not free" from Freedom House, an independent watchdog that advocates for freedom and democracy around the world.

The Dominican Republic, meanwhile, has a history of holding what Freedom House calls "regular elections that are relatively free," while suffering from other malaises. They include "pervasive" corruption and politically motivated violence, such as the recent murder of a prominent lawyer who was exposing a corruption scandal. Not surprisingly, Freedom House considers the Dominican Republic "partly free." It is also the case for its neighbour, Haiti, which has had a long, sad history of coups and political violence, most recently in early July 2018, when public anger over rising gas prices triggered deadly violence, deepening Haiti's political instability.

While Haiti might be an outlier, it draws attention to a pervasive problem in the region: violent crime.

Political theory insists that effective governance depends on a stable security environment, yet we know the region suffers from a high homicide rate. This



Leaders of CARICOM's 15 full member states and five associate member states meet regularly in different Caribbean countries to discuss mutual priorities and problems.

phenomenon affects not only places such as Haiti, which makes headlines for all the wrong reasons, but also vacation destinations in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Consider the following: The U.S. Virgin Islands and Jamaica respectively rank fourth and fifth among countries with the highest murder rates (52.6 and 43.2 murders a year per 100,000 population), as measured by the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Figures from Belize (7th, 34.4 murders), St. Kitts and Nevis (9th, 33.6), Trinidad and Tobago (11th, 30.9), Bahamas (12th, 29.8), Anguilla (13th, 27.7), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (16th, 25.6), St. Lucia (17th, 21.6), Montserrat (18th, 20.4), and Guyana (20th, 19.4) underscore this regional problem, which not only undermines its reputation, but also costs precious resources.

A 2007 UNODC report suggests that reducing the homicide rate in the Caribbean by one-third could double the rate of the region's per capita economic growth.

Local authorities know this and have gone through some effort to combat the primary source of this violence — the intra-regional illicit drug trade, with Jamaica being one of its epicentres.

According to the U.S. State Department, Jamaica remains the Caribbean's largest source of marijuana for the United States and other Caribbean nations, as well as a transit point for cocaine trafficked from South America, because of its location, but also because of its struggling economy and inefficient institutions.

As the State Department notes, organized crime structures have increasingly infiltrated legitimate political, economic and social institutions, thereby undermining their effectiveness and legitimacy.

Regional governance mirrors these internal weaknesses. As Wendy Grenada, an expert on Caribbean politics, wrote in a 2012 paper: "Despite the fact that most Caribbean countries are sovereign independent states, external forces heavily influence decision-making." Her recommendation? Pooling political power through regionalization, which she considers imperative.

Efforts to deepen and improve governance through CARICOM have yielded some results, but more needs to be done. She also highlights the negative effects of the region's adversarial political culture within member states.

Not only does it alienate citizens at home, it also does not lend itself to regional co-operation among political elites.

Narrow partisan interests, accordingly, undermine efforts at regional integration.

#### 4. Poverty and inequality and progress

By many social measures, some (but not all) parts of the Caribbean have done well for themselves since decolonization started in earnest during the 1960s and 1970s.

Per capita incomes have risen, with most Caribbean countries now in the top 25 per cent of all emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs).

Median life expectancy hovers around 73 years, compared with 70 years for other emerging market and developing

it reports.

Based on the existing data, Haiti is the poorest nation in the Caribbean with almost 60 per cent of the population considered poor, followed by Suriname (47.23 per cent), and Belize (41.3 per cent). Grenada (37.7 per cent) and Guyana (36.1 per cent) round out the Top 5. Notably, many of the smaller island nations have poverty rates in the high 20s, low 30s with the Cayman Islands (2 per cent) appearing as the major exception.

Larger Caribbean nations, by contrast, have lower rates and can actually boast of having reduced poverty in significant



Haiti is one of the most densely populated and poorest countries in the Americas. These Haitian children are standing outside the shack that serves as their home.

economies, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Infant mortality rates appear relatively low, with female labour force participation reaching relatively high rates. Poverty rates are comparable to other EMDEs.

Yet we must weigh these findings against larger trends and treat them with considerable conceptual care, as a 2016 report from the Caribbean Development Bank, titled *The Changing Nature of Poverty and Inequality in the Caribbean: New Issues, New Solutions*, finds.

"Despite significant progress in real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita since the 1980s, poverty and inequality remain pressing concerns in the [region],"

ways. Key examples include Jamaica and Guyana.

In Jamaica, for example, governments can look back on a history of concerted national efforts to reduce poverty through a series of dedicated programs, of which perhaps the most significant is the National Poverty Eradication Program. Jamaica has also been able to make gains in reducing corruption, an obstacle to economic development.

At this stage, it is important to note, though, that definitions of poverty vary and that benchmark standards of poverty say little about the social nature of poverty in the region.

But if we accept the theory that poverty



is a lack of capabilities, as Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Sen defines the concept, it is clear that the Caribbean has more work to do. While regional governments “have invested significantly in improving access to health care, education, water and sanitation” in showing progress, “significant gaps” remain, as the Caribbean Development Bank notes in its report.

Worse, the capabilities that exist are not equally accessible. This inequality of opportunity means that poor individuals can’t access the capabilities that could allow them to escape their poverty.

As the Caribbean Bank report notes, the terms poverty and inequality remain liable to be used interchangeably. “However, poverty and inequality are not the same, but rising levels of inequality are bad for poverty reduction and economic growth.”

In short, the Caribbean not only requires more investments in public goods, but a more equal distribution of the same.

## 5. Corruption

When it comes to corruption, the Caribbean appears on the map as a sea of red — the colour with which Transparency International, a non-governmental organization, identifies countries with high levels of perceived corruption in its annual *Corruption Perceptions Index* (CPI). But the region also features some bright spots.

The region’s least-corrupt country, according to Transparency International, is the former British colony of Barbados. With a population of slightly more than 290,000 people who enjoy one of the highest per capita gross domestic products in the region, Barbados ranks 25th in the 2017 edition of the CPI.

This ranking places this eastern Caribbean island just behind G7 member and European Union (EU) co-founder, France (tied for 23rd with Uruguay) and ahead of several other EU members, including another G7 member and EU co-founder, Italy (54th, tied with sub-Saharan Mauritius and post-communist Slovakia).

The Bahamas, which sits second among the Caribbean countries at 28th, St. Vincent and the Grenadines (40th), Dominica (42nd), St. Lucia (48th) and Grenada (52nd) also rank ahead of Italy.

Caribbean countries are also capable of making progress. Consider Jamaica. In 2009, it ranked 99th. In 2017, it had improved to 68th, although this improvement has seen some ups and downs.

But this positive picture requires

perspective. These case studies reflect relatively prosperous countries whose populations are as small as the islands they occupy. In some ways, they are the Switzerlands or Luxembourgs of the Caribbean.

The statistics are less encouraging when we look beyond them and consider the three most populous Caribbean countries: Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Cuba ranks 62nd, the Dominican Republic 135th and Haiti 157th (tied with Burundi, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe, each of them political basketcases in their own ways.)

These conditions, of course, did not appear overnight and their causes are manifold. Various scholars have argued that corrupt societies are also deeply unequal societies. Jong-Sung You and Sanjeev Khagram claim in their analysis that inequality normalizes abuse of public power for private gain. The more unequal a society, the more likely individuals are to game the system to sustain themselves and their clients. This behaviour, however, only worsens inequality by funnelling resources away from institutions (courts, police, administrative bureaucracies) designed to benefit the public.

Deprived of resources, they become increasingly ineffective, while appearing biased towards those who control them. Accordingly, they start to lose their legitimacy, thereby making it more likely for individuals to ignore them. In short, corruption and inequality reinforce each other, a vicious circle that generally knows only one category of winners: A small number of elites who manage to seize the wealth of any society to the detriment of the rest.

Not surprisingly, Haiti, one of the most corrupt countries in the world, is not just one of the poorest countries, it also ranks among the most unequal (fourth overall) as measured by the Gini Index (a statistical measure of economic equality developed by Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912.)

Other factors have also shaped corruption levels in the Caribbean. In their research, You and Khagram point towards the close relationship between colonial experiences and corruption. They note that former British colonies, with their imported common-law systems, tend to be “significantly less corrupt” than the colonies of other European powers. The Caribbean underscores this theory. All of the five least-corrupt Caribbean states were former British colonies.

## 6. Environment

The invaders that stormed Montesinos Beach in the Dominican Republic capital of Santo Domingo in July 2018 carried neither weapons nor the insignia of some foreign power from a distant shore.

They did not step out of a landing boat or drop out of the sky after a preparatory bombardment. They instead sloshed and swished their way on land — mountains upon mountains of water-soaked garbage, moving across previously pristine beaches.

No one knows exactly how many pieces of garbage crawled their way out of water, but footage shows men wading up to their knees through a frothy mixture of salt water, seaweed and every imaginable piece of flotsam and jetsam as they waged a desperate defensive battle to clean up their country’s most important economic asset — its environmental reputation as a paradise destination.

While authorities collected 60 tonnes of garbage, they are likely waging a losing war, for the figure represents only the share that workers could collect.

They could not clean up the toxins that seeped into the ground, nor they can



Activists collected 60 tonnes of waste that washed ashore at Montesinos Beach in the Dominican Republic’s capital of Santo Domingo.

prevent this pile-up from happening again — at least until authorities have brought about a radical change in environmental attitudes and actions.

“Everybody uses the rivers and the beaches as dump sites,” Cyrill Gutsch, founder of Parley for the Oceans, an environmental organization, told *The New York Times*.

While most of this garbage drifts into the open ocean, the share that bounces back is sufficient to cause damaging

headlines, not to mention harming entire ecosystems.

"It happens pretty much all the time if there is a strong rainfall or storm," said Gutsch. Unfortunately, available evidence predicts that the intensity, duration and frequency of such extreme weather events will only increase, thanks to a larger environmental threat darkening Caribbean skies: Climate change.

Like elsewhere, climate change will mean more tropical storms, such as Irma and Maria, that killed thousands across the region and caused hundreds of billions of dollars in economic losses by damaging local homes and infrastructure while discouraging foreign visitors. Like other parts of the developing world, the Caribbean can also take cold comfort in the fact that it has contributed little to the problem. This limited liability for climate change, of course, does not free the region of its effects, which will exceed those elsewhere, as the region ranks among the world's most vulnerable.

Haiti tops GermanWatch's 2016 Climate Risk Index, which also identifies the Dominican Republic as one of the most-at-risk countries.

Local, regional and international efforts to raise the Caribbean's resilience to climate change have been under way for some time. They include, among others, the 2002 creation of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre as the agency co-ordinating the region's response to climate change.

## 7. Tourism

It was about a year ago in September that the deadly duo of Category 5 hurricanes — Irma and Maria — cut across Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and other Caribbean nations such as Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda, leaving behind death and destruction.

The storms also underscored the dependence of the region on tourism — the most important driver of economic growth and the primary source of foreign currency.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Caribbean ranks as the most tourism-intensive region in the world.

While travel and tourism generate about 15 per cent of the Caribbean's economy, several countries have shares above 30 per cent, with more than 60 per cent in the case of Antigua and Barbuda, according to 2016 figures. More recent research from the WTTC shows that the Caribbean accounts for 11 out of the 20 countries that

rely the most on tourism.

This reality makes Caribbean economies especially "vulnerable to the vagaries" of the effects of weather, as a 2017 UNESCO report says. According to a 2013 study by the International Monetary Fund, most CARICOM members have at least a 10-per-cent chance of being struck by a hurricane and even a moderate storm can reduce gross domestic growth by 0.5 per cent.

It is against this backdrop that the 2017 hurricane season could well have been a defining moment for the tourism industry in the region — and not in a good way.

According to WTTC, just under a million fewer tourists visited the Caribbean

on tourism and travel.

Recovery from Hurricane Irma continues, with evidence of its destructiveness plainly visible to everybody. At the same time, tourists have already started to return, apparently undeterred. Reports from other affected islands offer comparable accounts.

The tourism industry on St. Martin — whose northern half belongs to France, its southern half to the Netherlands — remains in recovery mode, yet as *The New York Times* found out, "visitors seeking sun, sand, solitude will find all 37 of the island's stunning beaches open, the roads clear of wreckage and locals as welcoming as ever."



Tourism is the most important driver of economic growth and the primary source of foreign currency. Pictured here is a busy beach on Paradise Island in the Bahamas.

following hurricanes Irma and Maria, costing the region more than \$700 million US. Other sources peg the economic damage even higher.

According to the Caribbean Tourism Organization, the Caribbean lost more than \$1 billion in tourism revenues and recovery efforts could cost close to \$6 billion.

This wide range, however, also alerts to the uncertainty that remains, as the situation in the British Virgin Islands perhaps best illustrates.

It depends on tourism like no other Caribbean nation. According to WTTC, nearly 84 per cent of all jobs and 96 per cent of GDP depend directly or indirectly

In fact, operators, far from being financially shy, have started to offer new activities to draw tourists.

As hotelier Marc Petrelluzzi told the newspaper, hurricanes can only do so much damage. "There are just some things that the hurricane just couldn't take away," he said. "It's the view. It's the sea. It's the beaches. It's the vegetation. It's nature."

## 8. Migration

Migration — voluntary or otherwise — has and continues to shape the Caribbean basin, "home to some of the most complex interactions in recent history among previ-





Migration — voluntary or otherwise — has and continues to shape the Caribbean. Festivals such as this one celebrate the region's diversity.

ously diverged human populations,” according to a 2013 article in *PLoS Genetics*. This history appears in the diverse faces and genes of Caribbean populations, first and foremost a genetic composite of European, African and indigenous influences that reflect the region's history of European colonialism starting in the late 15th Century and its part in the transatlantic slave trade that did not end until the late 19th Century.

Others have only added to this diversity. Starting in the early 1800s, the first indentured workers from China arrived in Trinidad and other British possessions as substitutes for emancipated slaves. In the late 1830s, indentured workers from the British Raj in India also arrived in the region, with some bringing along their Muslim religion. Christians from the Middle East (modern-day Syria and Lebanon) deepened the region's diversity in the late 1800s.

Note that this is a general look as we cannot accurately capture the migratory streams that have contributed to the unique demographics of each Caribbean nation. Among Cubans, whom the authors of the *PLoS Genetics* piece studied, the share of West African ancestry ranged from 2 per cent to 78 per cent. Among Haitians, the average largest portion of West African ancestry was 84 per cent. Accordingly, Haiti's population is largely black,

while Cuba's population is more mixed. In Trinidad and Tobago, almost 36 per cent of the population qualifies as East Indian.

“Due to its enormous geographic and demographic diversity, the Caribbean is a challenging region to study when focusing on migration,” according to a 2017 working paper on the region from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

But despite this diversity, migration continues to link the region.

“The Caribbean is a region of origin, transit and destination of extra-regional and intra-regional migration flows, and experiences considerable return migration,” the 2017 IOM paper continues.

Thanks to its location between North and South America, the Caribbean serves as a transit point for irregular migrants from South America and elsewhere trying to reach the United States, which attracts large numbers of Caribbean migrants, legal and otherwise. Canada also has, and continues to attract, Caribbean migrants. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of Canadian residents who reported Caribbean origins rose 11 per cent, with the majority of Canada's Caribbean population being born outside the country.

According to the 2016 census, almost 750,000 people reported Caribbean origins — or 2.1 per cent of the population with sizable Jamaican and Haitian pockets in Toronto and Montreal respectively.

Migratory patterns reflect familiar push and pull factors. They include the search for economic opportunities in the developed world, often depriving Caribbean countries of their best and brightest, and natural disasters such as the 2010 earthquake that devastated Haiti.

The IMO also anticipates that climate change will be a factor.

“Caribbean islands are especially vulnerable to extreme weather events and global climate change — events and processes that can cause internal displacement and set in motion emigration processes,” it states.

Overall, the Caribbean remains a source of net migration, and the ongoing influx of refugee seekers from Haiti by way of the United States shows that these flows will continue to touch Canada.

## 9. Minorities

It is hard to overstate the diversity of the Caribbean. It consists of countries with fewer than 100,000 people and three countries with at least 10 million people (Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti). It consists of small and large islands, and inland territories. Some Caribbean countries are incredibly wealthy. Others rank among the poorest in the world. Such wide economic margins also exist among their respective populations. A range of ethnicities, languages, religious beliefs and government forms complete this Caribbean kaleidoscope.

This diversity also creates plenty of social frictions and political cleavages.

The state of relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is a case in point. Both countries, of course, share the island of Hispaniola, but they are not exactly best neighbours over the status of Haitian migrants living and working in the more prosperous Dominican Republic.

Haitians have historically supplied cheap labour in the Dominican Republic, first in its sugar cane industry, then in services. But this flow of labour from impoverished Haiti to the relatively prosperous Dominican Republic has been a source of tension after various agreements between the two countries lapsed in 1986 following the collapse of Haitian president Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier's dictatorship.

As Maria Cristina Fumagalli, author of *On Edge, Writing the Border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic* notes, the unauthorized status of Haitian immigrants has exposed them to human rights abuses, including discrimination in access to education and health services. Nationalist forces

in the Dominican Republic have also used Haitian migrants to stoke xenophobic sentiments to distract from domestic problems, according to Fumagalli.

Relations between the countries reached a low point in 2013 when the Dominican Republic revoked the citizenship of those born after 1929 for immigrants without proper documentation, even though the constitution at the time automatically granted citizenship to children born in the Dominican Republic.

This retroactive decision stripped 133,000 Dominicans of their citizenship, most of them people of Haitian descent, whose relatives had come to the Dominican Republic, as far back as the 1890s.

The Dominican Republic has since partially reversed course, but relations have remained cool and actually worsened in the spring of 2018 when the army sent soldiers and drones to the border, even after officials had found no significant influx of Haitians over the past five years, based on 2017 figures.

Elsewhere in the Caribbean, sexual minorities have found themselves the objects of discrimination.

While Trinidad and Tobago, in April 2018, joined the Bahamas and Belize as the third country in the English-speaking Caribbean to repeal laws that criminalized consensual sex between adults of the same gender, LGBTQ activists in the region note that much more work remains against the backdrop of discriminatory laws that often date back to the colonial period.

Of particular interest will be developments in Cuba, whose Communist government has had a long, brutal history of discriminating against sexual minorities following the revolution of 1959.

This said, Cuba has taken considerable steps to reform its laws and attitudes towards sexual minorities, with more legislative reforms likely on the way as the country revises its Soviet-era constitution.

This political change also has a personal dimension. Under Fidel Castro, the Cuban government maintained re-education camps. In 2010, Castro admitted personal responsibility for such policies. His niece, Mariela Castro, is now actively lobbying for gay rights.

## 10. Post-colonialism

Paulette Wilson arrived in Britain from Jamaica in 1968, when she was 10 years old, as a young member of the Windrush generation, the group of Caribbean immigrants, who reached Britain between 1948 and 1971 to help rebuild after the Second World War.

Wilson — like so many others — soon grew to know no other home. She worked steadily as an adult.

She raised a daughter, then helped to raise her granddaughter. Yet in 2015, she received a letter informing her that she was an illegal immigrant and in late November, Wilson escaped extradition to Jamaica at the last minute thanks to an intervention by her local MP.

Wilson's personal story soon exposed a larger political tale of administrative cruelty and deliberate negligence at the highest political echelons that some say sought to diminish the contributions of Caribbean immigrants to British society — a form of post-colonial arrogance.

When the first Caribbean migrants disembarked from the *MV Empire Windrush* in 1948, they were still colonial subjects,



The *MV Empire Windrush* took the first Caribbean migrants from the region to Britain in 1948.

but eagerly needed. When this program ended in 1971, against the backdrop of rising racism (see Enoch Powell's *Rivers of Blood* speech in 1968) and economic stagnation, the British government granted all Commonwealth citizens permanent residency.

But through a combination of administrative oversight and personal neglect, many Caribbean migrants never received proper documentation. These circumstances came back to haunt countless individuals, such as Wilson, in 2012 when Theresa May, then home office secretary, now prime minister, gave a speech in which she promised a "hostile environment for illegal migration."

Wilson and others like her soon found themselves denied health services, and subject to deportation, even though they had lived in Britain for decades. Worse, the British government continued to treat

Caribbean migrants in this manner, even as authorities became aware.

A government report known as *Chasing Status*, published in October 2014 when May served as home secretary, alerted government officials to the issue and urged action. Nothing happened.

The British diplomatic corps also became aware of the problem as early as 2013 and a Caribbean foreign minister raised the issue with then-foreign secretary Philip Hammond in 2014 and more formally in 2016, during the biannual U.K.-Caribbean forum — to little effect.

The issue broke in full public view when *The Guardian* newspaper used Wilson's story as the touch-off point for a larger investigation that exposed additional wrongdoing, forcing the resignation of Amber Rudd, May's successor as home office secretary and political ally.

Days before Rudd's resignation, May publicly apologized to 12 Caribbean heads of state, but the scandal continues to burden relations between Britain, the English-speaking Caribbean and British people of Caribbean descent.

Andrea Stuart, a prominent Barbadian-British historian, quotes her mother: "Another debacle. Do we really have to remind Britain again and again that the glorious buildings, the museums with the priceless artifacts, the cathedrals, the great wealth of the city, have been built on black backs? It is as if the generations after generations of slaves toiling in the cane fields of the Caribbean never happened."

David Olusoga, the author of *Black and British: A Forgotten History*, recently wrote that outrage over the Windrush scandal has created a convenient mythology with the plucky, industrious Caribbean immigrants on one side, a hostile bureaucracy on the other side.

In reality, he writes, British society has always struggled to reconcile its colonial legacy and bitter attitudes towards immigration.

The "hostile environment" that trapped the Windrush generation, with its "vindictiveness and indifference," will remain in place, he writes. "Other groups, for whom less sympathy exists, or is likely to develop, will remain its targets."

Wolfgang Depner holds a doctorate from the University of British Columbia, Okanagan Campus, where he previously taught political philosophy and international relations, among other subjects for several years. He currently lives and writes in Victoria, B.C., where he teaches at Royal Roads University.



# Canada-CARICOM: Comfortable if complacent partners

By Richard L. Bernal

In spite of many differences — notably in size and level of development — Canada and the Caribbean Community have had a long and comfortable friendship and an empathetic partnership. An example of the closeness: The Canadian-made soft drink, Canada Dry ginger ale, used to boast on its label that it was made “with Jamaican ginger.” It has been a relationship in which Canada has given support for the small island states of the English-speaking Caribbean dating back to the colonial era. The fraternity no doubt has origins in common institutions, cultural affinities and shared history.

## Trade

Canada-Caribbean trade had its genesis in the 18th Century with salt cod from the Maritime provinces exchanged for sugar and rum. Financing the trade led to the introduction of Canadian commercial banks, some of which, such as the Bank of Nova Scotia, have been operating in the Caribbean since the 19th Century. A tradition of preferential market access for sugar began with the 1925 Canada-West Indies agreement. Since 1986, trade has taken place within the framework of preferential trade arrangements in the form of the Caribbean-Canada Trade Agreement (CARIBCAN), which provides one-way duty-free access to the Canadian market. Trade with Canada accounts for five per cent of total CARICOM trade with a favourable trade balance for Canada of \$70 million US. (CARICOM, or the Caribbean Community, consists of Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.)

## Development assistance

Canada has supported the Caribbean with development assistance in various spheres. For example, in transportation, Canada gave two ships to assist in the transportation of goods and people during the short-lived West Indies Federation of



The CARICOM heads of government met with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel (front, centre in red tie) during their 39th regular meeting in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

the early 1960s; and Air Canada helped in the startup and early operations of Air Jamaica. In development banking, Canada was a founding member of the Caribbean Development Bank in 1970 and also cancelled the debt of several Caribbean

countries.

Haiti is one of the largest beneficiaries of Canadian development assistance in the Americas. The Canadian government has provided more than \$1.47 billion in aid to Haiti since the 2010 earthquake, including

approximately \$264 million in humanitarian assistance.

#### **International solidarity**

Using its international position, Canada has supported issues relating to the Caribbean, especially those from the smaller Caribbean countries. For example, Canada has co-operated with the Caribbean on small-state security in the Organization of American States (OAS), on climate change at the United Nations and it represents the Caribbean on the board of directors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

#### **People-to-people**

The people nexus has reinforced the fraternity. Approximately 338,000 people of Caribbean origin live in Canada, concentrated in and around Toronto, with Jamaicans accounting for approximately 40 per cent. People of Caribbean origin and descent have distinguished themselves in academia, politics, the judiciary, the church and in sports. Jamaican-born Donovan Bailey became the fastest man in the world, running for Canada in the 1996 Olympics. From 2005 to 2010, Haitian-born Canadian stateswoman Michaëlle Jean was the 27th governor general of Canada. More than 770,000 Canadians vacationed in the sun and sea of the anglophone Caribbean in 2016, mainly during the winter. Temporary workers from the Caribbean are engaged seasonally in agriculture and hospitality. They, along with Caribbean-Canadian citizens, send significant amounts of remittances back to the Caribbean region.

#### **Investment**

The stock of foreign direct investment is currently small, but in the past, it has played a part in economic development, notably in the commercial banking system. Indeed, before establishing central banks, some governments of the region banked with the Bank of Nova Scotia. Alcan, now known as Rio Tinto, has had a long history, building and operating two aluminum refineries there in the 1950s. Investment has been facilitated by bilateral treaties with Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Potential for trade and foreign direct investment is strong in tourism and energy. It is estimated that Guyana's coastal area holds recoverable oil reserves of about 13.6 billion barrels and gas reserves of 32 trillion cubic feet.

#### **Furthering the partnership**

Relations between Canada and CARI-

COM have been friendly and comfortable, but both sides exhibit a complacency towards deepening ties. This is a missed opportunity, and more so on the Caribbean side. As it is a preferential trade agreement, CARIBCAN requires periodic waivers at the World Trade Organization, which are increasingly difficult to nail down. There is a need to modernize and secure the formal trade arrangements. A plan for a Canada-CARICOM free-trade agreement was announced in July 2007, but after seven rounds of negotiations, Canada and CARICOM were not able to reach an agreement on scope, methodology and extent of liberalization. The negotiations have been adjourned with no agreed-upon date for resumption.

#### **Existential challenge**

The Caribbean is one of the regions of the world that is most vulnerable to the impact of the growing intensity of climate change. Its small island states suffer the ravages of frequent natural disasters. There have been 238 recorded disasters in the Caribbean caused by hurricanes between 1950 and 2014. The devastation of hurricanes Irma and Maria of 2017, which killed more than 1,400 people in Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda and Puerto Rico, is still fresh in our minds. The recovery will take years, is beyond the means of the local population and requires the assistance of the international community. Reconstruction is necessary, but it will have to be complemented by measures to build environmental and economic resilience.

#### **Innovation**

To the credit of the leaders of the devastated islands, they decided to make their countries "Climate Smart." The innovative vision for the world's first climate-smart zone garnered the support of Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group. The vision became the concrete proposal called the Caribbean Climate-Smart Accelerator, which was born at French President Emmanuel Macron's One Planet Summit. The objective of the accelerator is to help in the economic transformation of the region through a combination of public and private investment projects that support climate resilience and economic growth through sustainable development. Particular attention will be devoted to disaster preparedness, investment in low-carbon development and a more robust infrastructure and built-environment.

#### **Small state security**

In addition to its ongoing porous coasts

and airspace, transnational crime, narcotics trafficking and new security threats such as cyber-crime and manipulation of social media have proliferated in the Caribbean. Small states tend to be "soft" targets because they do not have the full panoply of counter-terrorism capability at the national level. Recalling Bali and other strikes against tourist resorts points to the need for more multilateral co-operation, especially in tourist-intensive countries and cruise ship destinations. Canada has been a consistent source of training, information-sharing and security co-operation.

#### **Resilience**

The small island developing states have been trying to adjust to twin challenges of sluggish global economic conditions and the recurrent incidence of natural disasters of ever-increasing severity. The endeavour has been to build resilience. According to the Inter-American Development Bank, the small developing economies of the Caribbean were the hardest hit by the global economic recession and continue to contend with such challenges as high levels of debt.

The current international political and economic environment is not one that will be helpful to small states in achieving sustainable development goals by 2030. Even in the small states, such as those in the Caribbean that have attained middle-income status (those with a per capita gross national income between \$1,005 and \$12,235, which means all but Haiti), there are challenges in some areas in particular, such as sustainable development goal No. 14, which aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.

#### **Canada's support**

Canada should continue to offer technical assistance to small states when it comes to internal managerial, administrative and policy issues. Some of the problems facing small states are self-inflicted, most notably the unsustainable external debt burden of governments in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Debt-to-GDP ratio in several countries is well above levels that would allow these economies to grow out of this macroeconomic chokehold. This makes fiscal consolidation a necessity at a time when prudently directed fiscal policy stimulus could stabilize and promote economic growth.

The total debt of the highly indebted small middle-income developing countries is small and is manageable enough for the international community to act through a specially designed multilateral



debt relief facility to provide substantial assistance.

Canada provides technical, financial and diplomatic support to developing island states in sustaining the work on climate change and building environmental (built and natural) and macroeconomic resilience to natural disasters. These states are on the front line and their plight is urgent, as the effects of climate change seem to be happening now and not in a distant dystopian future.

#### Synergistic possibilities

Small island states have small populations, limited amounts of and a narrow range of natural resources, minute land areas and national markets that do not yield economies of scale in most lines of production. However, they have highly educated human resources and large maritime resources, which, to date, have been largely unexploited. These include fishing and rich potential from seabed mining, oil and natural gas. The blue economy represents an enormous amount of resources that are either untapped, such as offshore oil in Guyana, or under-used, such as fish stocks in the Pacific. The exploitation of these resources has the potential to boost economic growth in several small econo-

mies. In this regard, the idea for a Blue Commonwealth Charter — a co-ordinated push on the part of Commonwealth countries to protect the ocean from the effects of climate change, pollution and overfishing — is an innovative and timely one.

#### From complacency to collaboration

In the current circumstances of global turbulence, relations between Canada and CARICOM remain healthy, but there is considerable potential to enhance and strengthen the partnership in a variety of areas. On the economic front, Canada has maintained steady growth while the Caribbean needs to complete a strategic global repositioning. Innovative technologies could be the catalyst for more stimulating economic co-operation. Improved connectivity, nano-technology, mini-components of globally dispersed value chains, the individualization of work, new corporate institutional forms and new research networks make the traditional lack of economies of scale in production of goods less of a constraint for the Caribbean.

The use of the internet for international sourcing and marketing, especially for high-end products and business services, which are being increasingly outsourced, are areas in which small developing

countries could penetrate the Canadian market. Beyond the declining importance of economies of scale, small states need to seize the possibilities of confluence of revolutionary new technological innovations, which are rich in implications for all aspects of human activity. Canadian foreign direct investment could facilitate entrepreneurial agility and capitalization on opportunities that can offset the disadvantages of Caribbean countries' small sizes, at least in the short run. Canadian co-operation with the Caribbean for strategic long-term "foresighting," involving public-private collaboration, would help identify new international corporate links that could continuously enhance the international competitiveness of nano-firms in small developing economies of the Caribbean. Specific trade growth areas include energy, tourism, export of health care, higher education and business outsourcing.

Richard Bernal is a diplomat and economist in Jamaica and pro-vice-chancellor for global affairs of the University of the West Indies. He was Jamaica's ambassador to the U.S. and permanent representative to the Organization of American States.



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# Fleeing oppression in Turkey

By Jennifer Campbell



A prominent Turkish scientist who fled his native country is leaving Athens with his seven-year-old daughter, in hopes of being allowed to fly to Milan from which he'll eventually catch up with his wife and their 14-year-old daughter. He's carrying all of his worldly possessions in two backpacks. On this, their fifth attempt, they got lucky and eventually joined his wife and older daughter in Munich.

ATHENS — A father runs across the park, his seven-year-old daughter in tow and all his worldly possessions crammed into two overloaded backpacks, one on each shoulder. In his pocket, he has tickets to Milan for which he paid 35 euros each. Why Milan? Because it was the cheapest European destination the day he bought the tickets. His goal? To leave Greece, which he entered illegally one month prior, and to join his wife and another daughter, this one 14 years old, who made it to Belgium last week.

The man, a well-known Turkish scientist who has a patented waste-management sorting system in which American

policy-makers have shown interest, has tried five times already to leave Greece with his youngest of four children. And five times, he's been refused. Today, he's hoping he'll be lucky. If not, he'll try again in a week. If and when he gets to Milan, he will then make arrangements to meet his wife and start working on a plan to get to the U.S., where the family will start a new life, perhaps to be joined by their eldest two children, who are studying in the U.S. and Poland. He has a U.S. visa and his youngest daughter was born while they were living and working in Los Angeles, so she has U.S. citizenship. His wife and 14-year-old daughter do not.

This scientist and assistant professor is one of many stateless souls making do in Athens, where they landed by inflatable raft after escaping persecution, incarceration and psychological, sometimes also physical, torture in their beloved homeland of Turkey. They all have different stories, but one important thing in common: They're members of Hizmet, an Islamic social movement inspired by the religious teachings of Sunni Muslim preacher Fethullah Gülen, who advocates universal access to education, civil society and peace. Gülen — a living prophet to his followers — is also considered stateless, but has lived in Pennsylvania since 1999.



The word Hizmet translates as “service,” which is what its proponents say they like about it. Critics have charged that the movement — which those interviewed insist revolves almost entirely around education — has “apocalyptic ambitions,” according to a *New York Times* article that quotes a disillusioned member of the group.

Turkish President Recep Erdogan, who was recently elected to a fourth term and will be in power until at least 2023, has deemed the organization a terrorist group and has ordered more than 100,000 of its members fired from their jobs. Police must hunt them down in their homes while prosecutors must impose terrorism charges. Erdogan has also shut down several newspapers and nationalized most of the media in the country, something Turkey now has in common with many of its neighbours in the Middle East. And Bank Asya, which has been closely tied to the Gülen movement and at which followers had bank accounts, lost its banking permissions as part of the 2016 purges that Erdogan performed under what officials have deemed a “state of emergency” in response to 2016’s coup attempt. Many say they lost their life savings.

When discovered as members of Hizmet, their passports and other forms of identification are usually confiscated or cancelled and they can’t apply for new ones, making leaving the country legally — on a plane, for example — impossible. Many of those who lost their jobs have subsequently been jailed, while others are on the run from the officials who would start the process of throwing them in jail. Those who’ve escaped with their families to Greece fear for their relatives back home, some of whom have nothing to do with the Hizmet movement but may be persecuted for their association alone or in lieu of their escaped family members. For that reason, most of those we interviewed asked that we not use their names or photograph their faces for this story. They are part of a mass exodus of intellectuals from Turkey.

One of the more famous cases that’s only tangentially related to Hizmet is that of detained American pastor Andrew Brunson, whom Erdogan accuses of being a spy and part of the plan to overthrow the government in the 2016 coup attempt. Brunson is an evangelical Presbyterian pastor, but has been accused of supporting the Kurdistan Worker’s Party and the Gülen movement — both outlawed groups. The White House has pushed for his release and the issue has strained rela-

tions between the U.S. and Turkey, which are NATO allies. U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly made Twitter demands for Brunson’s release.



In spite of a history of discord between Greece and Turkey — one that dates back centuries and certainly long before the current and long-simmering dispute over Cyprus — Turks, especially Gülen refugees, appear to be welcome here. The Greek Asylum Service is familiar with their story and it is in a difficult



The Greek Asylum Service, closed on this day, has received 3,955 applications for asylum from Turks since 2013, 687 of them in July 2018 alone.

position because the Gülen followers’ reason for fleeing becomes a political issue between states. Yet the Greeks do not turn them away from their adjacent shores on the Evros River (known as the Maritsa in Turkey). Indeed they take them in, dry them off and let them settle wherever their substantially depleted funds will allow. Many are desperately poor because they were unemployed in the months and years leading to their departure, and they’ve spent what was left of their life savings on the smugglers who helped them escape. Getting credit is a non-prospect given that they have little to no identification. Some get help from their families and others spend the last of their savings while hoping for a miracle, or a job in their adopted countries.

The numbers of Turks seeking asylum in Greece have swelled considerably — even in the past six years. In 2013, 17

Turks sought asylum here, in 2017, 1,827 did so, and so far in 2018, they’ve received 1,839 applications for asylum, 687 of them in July alone for a six-year total of 3,955.



In their rented home in central Athens, Bekir Bey and his wife, Beytül, are preparing breakfast while their children — boys aged 8 and 9 and a wide-eyed, expressive infant who’s 18 months old — sleep in. It’s an idyllic family scene, particularly after the harrowing journey they endured to get here.

“I am happy,” Bekir says, his eyes warm and his smile broad. “I don’t have any money, but I am free, I am healthy and my family is safe.” He has no idea where they’ll end up, or what kinds of jobs await them. Many of those who’ve ended up in Canada, some of whom have PhDs, are driving for Uber.

Bekir was a chemistry teacher at a college prep school and Beytül a homemaker who volunteered for Hizmet organizations. He was fired from his job in 2015 when the prep school was shut down for various reasons offered by Erdogan, including that they were only serving elites who could afford them. This was long before the attempted coup, which took place in July 2016 and resulted in 9,000 members of the Turkish armed forces, including a third of the military’s top commanders, being jailed. It’s thought that a faction of the armed forces, known as the Peace at Home Council, orchestrated the coup after Erdogan’s regime had been chipping away at the country’s secularism, as well as disregarding human rights. Erdogan himself, however, has said it was orchestrated by Gülen and his followers.

The members of the Gülen movement charge that Erdogan himself orchestrated it as an excuse to disempower their people — all well educated and therefore threatening to a would-be authoritarian — for good. The irony is that the Gülen movement — whose followers generally advocate a conservative ideology — was an ally of Erdogan in his early days of power, but the relationship soured in 2013 when Gülen followers criticized the government’s response to a sit-in in Taksim Square and protested its policy of closing private Gülen prep schools. Today, they are sworn enemies.

After Bekir’s dismissal, he and his family left their home because the government knew their address. They lived life on the run, fearing that if police found him, they’d throw him or his wife in jail, potentially leaving their children without par-

ents. It wasn't an irrational fear — they'd seen it happen many times before. Bekir sold cheeses and olive oils to earn a living and they stayed with family and moved often. After the coup attempt in July 2016, there was a warrant for his arrest because of his association with Gülen.

Then came news that Beytül was pregnant with their third child — the bright-eyed girl who now delights her family in Greece. But going to a hospital or seeing a doctor would put them on Erdogan's wide-ranging radar, and directly in danger's way. She endured the pregnancy for eight months without any doctor's appointments, but 10 days before she calculated she was due, she had to see a doctor because she was bleeding. It turned out that she would need a C-section, something that clearly had to be done in hospital. For their unborn daughter's safety, she had to check herself in. Sadly, it was too risky for her husband to join her for the birth so she went with his sister and her own mother. Before she went, she wrote a letter to her two sons, in case she was jailed after the birth.

"My kids were getting peer pressure because of our association with Gülen, so, in the letter, I told them that they had done nothing wrong. I told them not to be enemies with people, but rather to be enemies with the bad behaviour of others," Beytül explains. Asked to see the letter, she says she can't share it because they didn't have a chance to pack such precious belongings when they left Turkey.

After her C-Section, the mother faced a few medical complications. Worse than that, when she emerged from the fog of childbirth, she was greeted by four police officers. They were asking for her husband. She lied, telling them the two were separated, but they didn't accept that explanation and within hours of giving birth, she and her baby were taken to a police station for questioning, and later, on her insistence, taken to a prosecutor's office. To get there, her captors forced her to climb up into a van, though she told them she couldn't because of her stitches. They insisted and the strain caused her stitches to rip. Her doctor had signed a form saying she needed to stay in hospital for up to a week and couldn't go with the authorities, but eventually, the police convinced the doctor to reverse the order.

The police interrogation room was already cold when Beytül entered and officers added to the fridity by turning on the air conditioning full blast. She and the baby shivered for five hours as she tried to answer their questions without giving



New horizons: Bekir Bey was a chemistry teacher in Turkey. He and his family fled after authorities questioned his wife, Beytül, when she was in hospital delivering their youngest. As soon as she was able to travel, the family fled to avoid jail for both parents.

anything away. Add to that discomfort the fact that her milk hadn't come in so she couldn't feed her newborn.

After almost two full days of questioning, they released her. That's when the family finally decided to make the dangerous journey from Turkey to Greece. They took a chance most families don't — they decided they would go it alone, without the help of an expensive smuggler. Bekir's brother had fled a few months earlier and had shared his route with them. They would take their own inflatable dinghy and a pump, blow it up on the Evros River's edge and hope that the brother's path worked for them, too. Paying a smuggler anywhere from \$3,000 to \$4,500 per person wasn't in the cards for them. They simply didn't have that kind of money because Bekir hadn't worked for a couple of years.

As all those who'd gone before them had done, they left at night, carrying only what they could on their backs. In this case, that was one backpack with a few small toys for the children, because they knew they'd be detained for a couple of days upon reaching Greece. The dinghy — and the baby — added to their load. The journey always starts with a long walk. Most families describe it in terms of hours — and it's always somewhere between three and five hours. Most estimate 20 kilometres in total.

How do they get their small children to buy into the life-altering trek? This couple had been on the run and their boys were old enough to know what was going on so they were straight with them, but many —

the families with two- and four-year-olds, for example — tell their children they are going on a big adventure that will involve walking through the woods at night, then taking a boat ride across a river. Many died on that journey. A Greek journalist told the story of a Turkish man who fled in a dinghy with nine on board, eight of whom, including the man's entire family, died in the frigid waters of the Evros during their attempted winter escape. The man is now in Germany and trying to stitch together a new life for himself.



A journalist's younger children still think they're on that adventure. The former editor looks older than his 40 years. His wife has a constant worried look on her face. She smiles occasionally, usually when one of her three children does something cute. The family — a boy aged 4, another aged 10 and a girl, aged 12 — have a one-bedroom flat in a suburb of Athens. Four of them sleep in a double bed, the fifth, on the floor next to them. But it's better than the alternative in Turkey.

He worked for *Zaman*, the then-largest independent newspaper in the country and one that was deemed sympathetic to Gülen. At its peak, it had one million subscribers, but is now closed by decree. This gentleman was a foreign correspondent on the Syrian border during the ongoing conflict. He was also working on his PhD. His wife taught at a Hizmet school — the movement had private schools across the





A journalist, his wife, and his three children clasp hands. Now settled in a one-bedroom Air BnB in Athens, they are trying to put their lives back together while worrying about family members they had to leave behind in Turkey.

country. Again, like many journalists, he ended up in jail after losing his job during a government raid — there are YouTube videos of the raid — on the newspaper. He was jailed for 19 months without charges, during which he endured harsh conditions with 46 men to a 13-person cell. They sat around the cell's perimeter in the daytime and spread out like sardines across the floor to attempt to sleep at night.

His saving grace came a few months before the June 2018 election when many of those detained without charge were released as Erdogan courted a few extra votes. The father was released in March, but with a trial pending, he knew he'd be back in prison again soon, so they left in a hurry before he had to report for his hearing.

They paid a smuggler \$7,500 to take them across the Evros River, a journey on which they all got soaking wet when they had to walk several kilometres before reaching the river.

Today, the wife fears for her family back home as her father — a butcher by trade — is in jail for his association with Hizmet, leaving her mother at home alone. Her husband is not sure yet what he'll do for work or where they'll end up — he may try to finish his PhD, the research for which is on a USB among his few belongings.



It's morning in Athens and a five-year-old boy has just awakened. He's a stranger in his new land and his py-

jama top says it all: "Happy adventurer" with a plane on top and a scarf-clad teddy bear below.

During his family's escape across the Evros, the boy, who loves the TV series *Adventure Island*, told his parents he didn't like their idea of an adventure at all. They took very little from their home — a few little toys, mostly Lego, for their son, some electronics and some clothing — basically what they could carry on their backs. When they left their home, they just locked the door and took off, leaving al-

most all of their belongings. The walk was a long one, about 15 kilometres — quite a trek for a five-year-old, especially when his parents couldn't carry him. They paid smugglers \$8,400 to take them across the river in a dinghy.

After he was dismissed from his job for organizing a union that grew to 30,000 members, and also for his association with Hizmet, he had to go on the run to protect his family. He was hiding for a total of 22 months before they finally fled as a family. During that time, police searched their home repeatedly. Their daughter, 13, was in her bedroom at the start of one raid and tucked herself into her bed while officers looked under it for her father. "I was just pretending to sleep," she later told her parents, "so they wouldn't bother me."

After another such raid, the daughter printed a photo of Erdogan and pasted it to her dresser. "They won't suspect us if they see this," she told her mother.

This couple also escaped by rubber dinghy and hopes to find a new life somewhere in Europe — even one hour of freedom in Athens would have been worth their escape, they say. They have two years' worth of time in Athens if they succeed in receiving asylum, but spending two years not working isn't feasible for them. He would, of course, like to teach again — he has a master's degree in his specialty — but he'll take what he can get. What's important is that his family is safe and the psychological torture is over.



This gentleman was a teacher and union organizer before he was dismissed from his job and forced to go on the run, hiding from authorities who would jail him. He and his wife, their 13-year-old daughter and five-year-old son are now living safely in Greece.

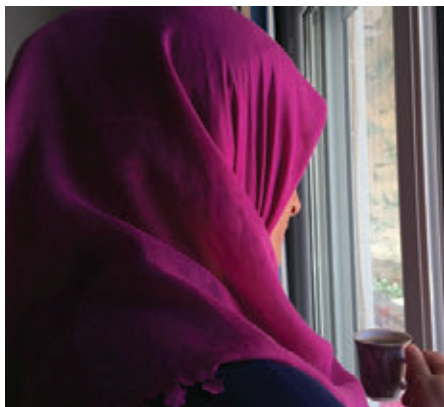
In another part of Athens, a handful of women gather. Their circumstances are now different, but they've wound up here for the same reason — they're escaping Erdogan's regime — and they are all separated by distance from their husbands.

A dark-skinned woman in a magenta head covering is overcome with emotion as she tells her story. She has five children, two of whom remain in Turkey. She breaks down as she explains that the eldest, a 19-year-old who was studying at university, was arrested and remains in jail "because they were looking for us, his parents, but when they couldn't find us, they took him instead. My son is a hostage." Their 18-year-old, who is also a university student, remains in Turkey and she fears for his safety, too.

Her husband and 16-year-old son have made it to Holland, and she and her two daughters, aged 9 and 14, await word in Greece that they can join them there. Meanwhile, she fears a recent suggested diagnosis of breast cancer. There's evidence of it, but she has avoided getting a final diagnosis because she doesn't want to start treatment in a country she could be leaving at any time. The stress of having a jailed son and what could be untreated cancer clearly weighs heavily on her mind.

Three of the other members of this informal support network have husbands who've made it to Canada, all using U.S. visas and then crossing the border to Canada and applying for asylum.

Former teacher Meral Budak has a fearlessness about her. She is married to a former journalist who is now driving for Uber in Kitchener, Ont. Her husband already has one of their two sons, a future Waterloo University student, living with him in Canada. She and her other son, 15,



This woman awaits word that she can join her husband, who's made it to the Netherlands.

await word that they, too, are welcome. The only woman we meet on this journey who doesn't cover her head, she also stands out because she allows us to use her name and her photograph.

Her friend, who sports a headcovering with a leopard-skin print, is also awaiting word from her husband, who's just started driving for Uber in his adopted city of Ottawa. He's already reached out to Hizmet followers in the capital and is building a new life for them. Their children — a three-year-old boy and a two-year-old girl — are with her in Greece and, when offered some sparkly Canada stickers, they cover themselves in them.

She, meanwhile, is finding being alone with two toddlers stressful — her boy still can't speak as he's been living in a country where no one speaks Turkish, and lacks the routine children crave — though she says the women help each other out. Still, to help her keep her spirits up, she admits to having consulted a psychiatrist.

Yet another former teacher holds her two-year-old as she speaks about how she's awaiting word from Vancouver that they can join her husband.

All three escaped Turkey the same way, and all three did it alone with their children — their husbands having left before them. The woman whose husband is in Ottawa smiled when she reported that the smugglers she used gave her a half-price discount for each child.



Constantly on his phone, a father of two is in Athens alone and has become a "connector" among the 800 or so Turkish families who live in the Greek capital. He facilitates interviews with Canadian journalists and informally helps new families settle when they arrive in Athens. He knows their stories, but he also has one of his own.

Once the director of adult learning at the ministry of education, he was dismissed from his job in 2016. At a meeting with the Greek Asylum Service, he asks the director how he can help hasten the registration process for new arrivals. The highly educated former teacher — he, too has a PhD — offers to learn Greek and become a translator for the service, even on a volunteer basis. In his rational mind, he, of course, knows the service can't use volunteers for those jobs, but he's desperate to help his countrymen in whatever way he can. After all, he's unemployed in Athens and his brain craves a challenge while he waits for his wife and daughters, aged 7 and 14, to raise the funds to hire

their own smuggler and make the trek and crossing to Athens. He was hoping that would happen this past summer, but his wife tried and was denied permission to leave Turkey by plane, while his daughters were allowed to leave. Given that, the girls boarded their flight alone and visited their father for a few days before returning to Turkey to await another reunion down the road.

Besides his own family, there are countless more to worry about back in Turkey. At last count, in July 2018, there were 170,372 dismissed from their jobs, many for their association with Hizmet and for their alleged involvement in the coup attempt. In addition, there have been 142,874 detained, 81,417 arrested. A total of 189 media outlets have been shut down and 319 journalists arrested. Dismissed academics number 6,021, while 4,463 judges and prosecutors have been fired. Turkish authorities dispute these numbers, which come from a journalists' group called Turkey Purge.

Those who've fled may seem like the lucky ones, although they have all left behind close family — children, spouses, siblings and parents — complete in the knowledge that they will only ever meet those who remain in Turkey if the family members visit them in their new country. Those who escape are immediately put on a no-fly list and even those who emigrated years ago, but who follow Hizmet in their new countries, end up on no-fly lists. There are Hizmet followers who've lived in Ottawa for decades who can't return to visit family in Turkey for that reason. And that, some, such as the journalist's wife's father, who is in jail for his association with Hizmet, won't be able to leave the country even if released, because their passports have been seized and they aren't allowed to apply for new ones. Their only hope is for the regime change some are fighting for in Turkey. But with the summer 2018 re-election of Erdogan, that's a dream that's at least five years off, and, as the connector points out: "Erdogan doesn't actually need re-election anymore because he's given himself the full powers of a dictator. Any pretense of democracy is now officially lost."



Back in Ottawa, Turkish Ambassador Selcuk Ünal defends his government's actions. The media outlets were shut down because they were spreading terrorist propaganda, he says, and adds that the courts act independently and decide who and what to





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"There were a number of institutions shut down, yes, but after investigations, many of them were re-opened," Ünal says.

In addition, he maintains that many, after investigations, have returned to their jobs.

Asked about the dismissal of teachers, he says the "Fethullahist" movement — which he refers to as a cult — uses education as its main method of indoctrination.

"This indoctrination necessitated the authorities to shut down these schools," he said. "But not every teacher was arrested. Yes, some of them are jobless."

Asked why the Gülen followers are considered terrorists, he says it's because they were caught infiltrating the government a month before the coup and he accuses them of cheating on tests to gain entrance into the military. In addition, he says, government-employed members had their own special, highly encrypted communications network.

He says "the cult" bills itself as peace-loving but the government began wondering about a hidden agenda five or six years ago.

Asked why their passports are taken, he says it's so they can't flee possible prosecution.



The connector — who works tirelessly in Athens to help fleeing Turkish families — is Skyping with his family in this photo.

For him, it's all a matter of the penal code of Turkey, which says all members of a terrorist organization can be arrested. "But governmental authorities are only searching or investigating the ones who were [involved] in the coup attempt," or those involved in the illegal activities of the group from "different walks of life." The latter could include journalists and teachers, some of whom were using the prep schools for money laundering, he alleges.

Asked how it feels to have Turkey's *World Press Freedom Index* ranking drop to 157th of 180 countries, he said it was unfair because the journalists are being jailed for propagating the views of a terrorist organization.



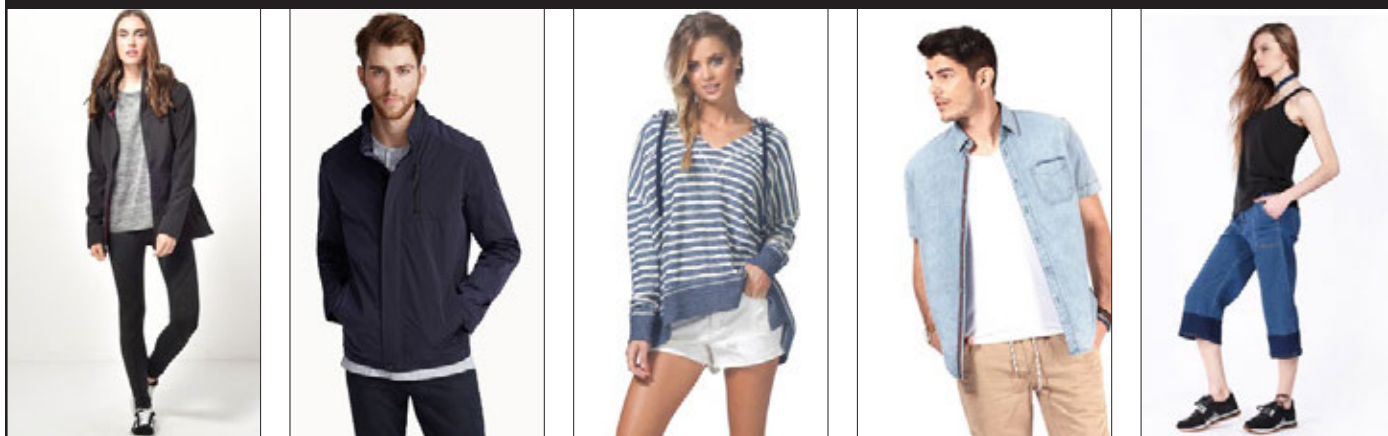
It's later in the day now and the connector checks his WhatsApp to see if the scientist and his daughter made it to Milan. As he scans his new messages, a smile broadens across his dimpled face. Asked if there's good news, he simply calls up a photo. It's the professor and his adorable charge sitting together on a plane, sporting their own smiles. They made it through the first hurdle and they're already writing a new chapter of their lives, one they hope will eventually take them to the U.S., where he hopes he can resume his career.

For the connector, it's a good day in Athens.

Jennifer Campbell is *Diplomat's* editor. Her visit to Athens was sponsored by a Gülen organization based in Canada. Organizers asked us not to name the organization because they fear for their own families who remain in Turkey.

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# Securing food in uncertain times

By Laura Neilson Bonikowsky

*Food security is the state when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.*

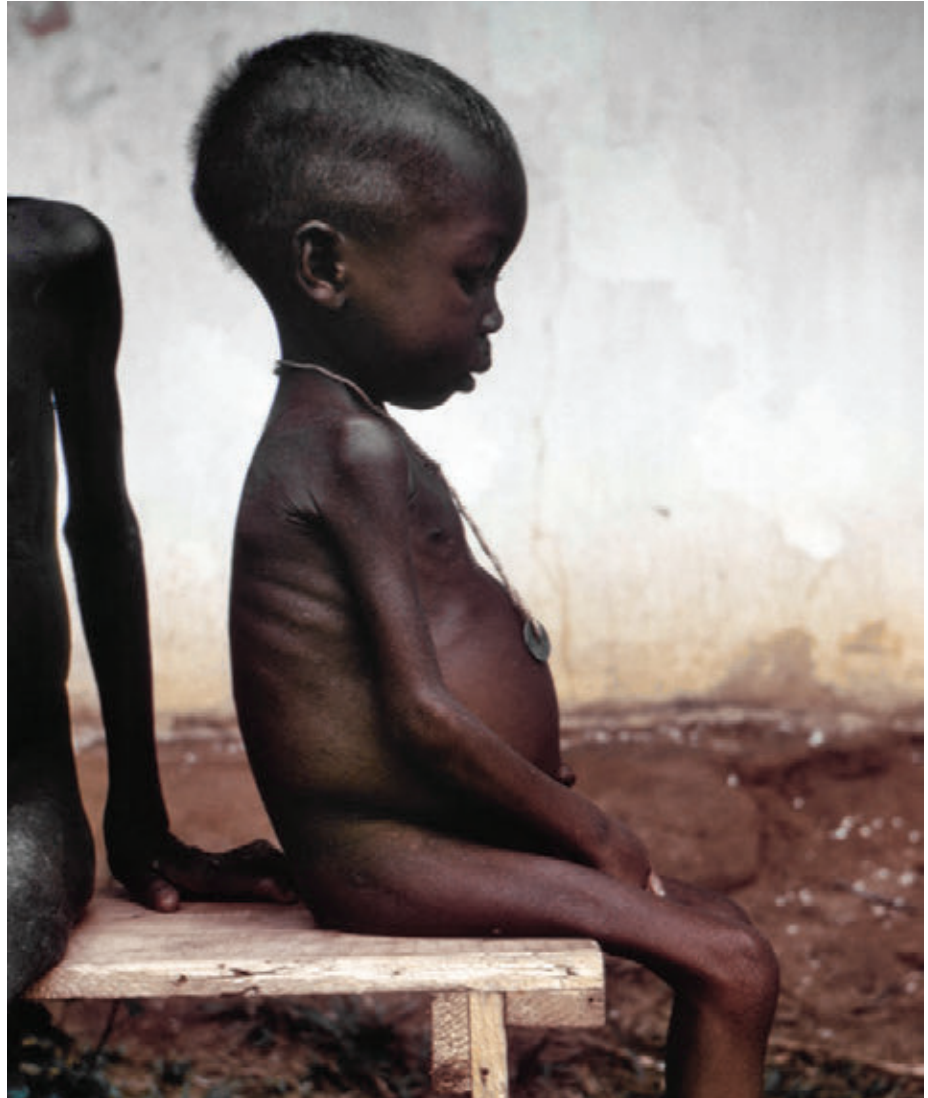
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations

**F**ood security is about more than subsistence, more than what people put in their mouths — it relates to the quality of food and its ability to nourish body and soul. Food insecurity — the lack of secure access to food — is caused by interrelated conditions, mainly conflict and poverty, which are exacerbated by politics and corruption, adverse weather, crop disease, land degradation, diversion of land from food production, unstable economies and population growth.

Delivering food to the hungry is not new; it has happened since at least 330 BC when Alexander the Great's armies gave food to conquered people. Modern resupply began around the Second World War, with airlifts to bring supplies to the Dutch (1945) and to Berlin (1948–49) when Russia blockaded the city. After the war, once the United Nations was established, international efforts delivered money for roads and railways to countries lagging technologically. Foreign aid did not address hunger.

The West was horrified in 1968 by images of starving Biafran children in the news. Biafra, a secessionist state in eastern Nigeria, existed from 1967 to 1970. Its attempts to secede led to a civil war that displaced millions and killed two million civilians. When the UN failed to provide aid, convinced by Nigeria that it would be illegal, an improvised coalition of church groups and non-governmental organizations planned the Biafran airlift. It was a pivotal event in the awareness of, and response to, hunger in that it imprinted famine onto the global consciousness.

In 1974, the FAO hosted the first Rome World Food Conference. Its biggest concerns were the International Fund for Agricultural Development, world food security and an international framework for implementing the conference's recommendations. The conference declared "the



The West was horrified in 1968 by images of starving Biafran children such as this one. Biafra's attempts to secede from Nigeria led to a civil war that displaced millions and killed two million more.

rights of every human being to be free from hunger and malnutrition." Henry Kissinger, U.S. secretary of state, opened the conference saying famine was once considered part of the normal cycle of existence, but with our new global consciousness, we "must proclaim a bold objective — that within a decade, no child will go to bed hungry."

Today, the international hopes to achieve global food security and improve nutrition by 2030. The FAO notes that reaching this target "will be challenging."

## **Causes: conflict and poverty**

Although enough food is produced to feed the world's population, 821 million people go hungry around the world, down from 900 million in 2000, but up from 777 million in 2015, putting the goal to eradicate hunger at risk. The increase is due to the greater number of conflicts in the world, compounded by increasing climate events. The majority of hungry people live in developing countries, where 14.3 per cent of the population is undernourished, mostly the result of poverty,



which is largely caused by conflict. The UN lists the least-developed countries as Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen — the countries also most affected by conflict. The countries the UN currently identifies as most at risk of food insecurity becoming famine are Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen.

Conflict creates poverty; its biggest victims are the smallest. The effects of poverty can devastate childhood development and the effects are permanent. Studies of children under five across four continents by the World Health Organization, Emory University and the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research have shown that insufficient nutrition causes stunted physical development and diarrheal diseases and contributes to intellectual deficits and mortality. The UN reports that more than 150 million children are stunted, with 39 per cent in Africa and 55 per cent in Asia.

In Yemen, approximately 17 million people — 60 per cent of the population — face severe food insecurity. Chronic undernutrition and chronic acute undernutrition in children are significant. The health-care system has collapsed; 60 per cent of medical facilities are not fully functional, unable to provide even basic services. Additionally, a cholera outbreak began in September 2016 and countries affected by food insecurity also face Ebola, influenza, meningitis, Rift Valley fever and yellow fever.

The effects of poverty and food insecurity do not stop at the individual. Increasing and volatile food prices have led to political instability and civil unrest from the Middle East to the Caribbean. From 2007 to 2011, unstable global food prices caused widespread food insecurity. In 2010-11, they played a role in the Arab Spring, with protests in countries around the Suez Canal and the Strait of Hormuz, through which passes more than 20 per cent of the world's crude and petroleum exports. Oppressive government responses turned peaceful protests violent, leading to volatility in energy markets. The resulting instability strained relations between Egypt and Israel and required NATO intervention in Libya.

In South America, Colombia's five decades of conflict left 6 million people — 14 per cent of the population — internally displaced by armed groups seizing rural territories and controlling natural resources and land. Much of this activity

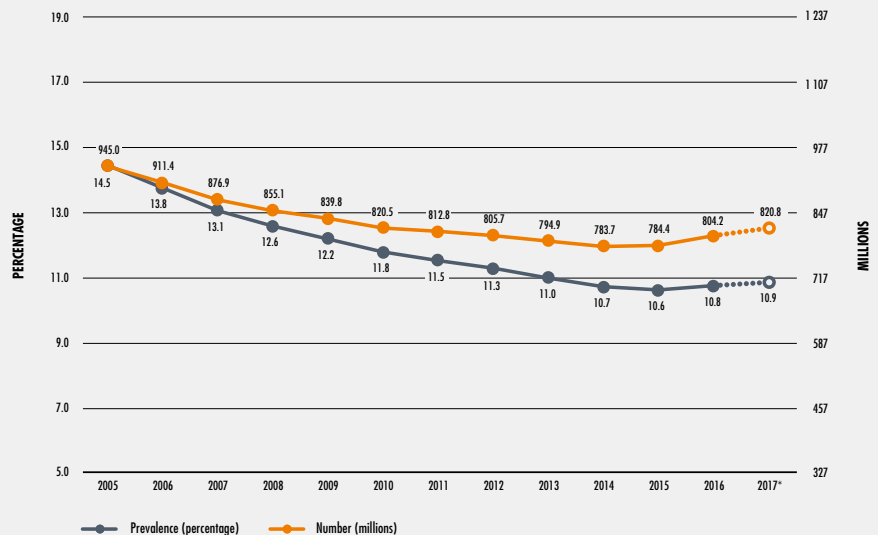
has been connected to drug trafficking, with land use diverted from staple food crops and with transport routes controlled by cartels.

Clearly, stability in agriculture sectors and food sources matters to national security. In developing countries, 50 to 90 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture as the main source of income and employment and up to 95 per cent of the farming population comprises small farmers. In conflict-affected countries, 56 per

century BC. Besides civil war, it has been the battleground for external powers and has warred with Britain, Russia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the U.S. and Canada, spawning the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The current conflict started in 1999.

Four of five Afghans rely on agriculture for food and income but, per capita, land ownership by farmers is inadequate to feed their families. Agriculture and food distribution have been impacted by opium cultivation, extortion, corruption, drought

FIGURE 1  
THE NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN ON THE RISE SINCE 2014, REACHING AN ESTIMATED 821 MILLION IN 2017



\* Projected values, illustrated by dotted lines and empty circles.  
SOURCE: FAO.

In 2000, there were 900 million undernourished people in the world. In 2015, that number was down to 777 million, but in 2017 (the most recent year for statistics), it was back up to 821 million.

cent of the population, on average, lives in rural areas with subsistence agriculture the main source of food.

Agriculture is at the heart of food security; conflict affects it profoundly in every aspect from field to consumer. In pre-conflict Iraq, roughly 30 per cent of the country's wheat and 40 per cent of its barley, crops now also affected by climate change, were produced in the districts of Salah al-Dinh and Ninewa. In February 2016, the FAO determined that conflict damaged or destroyed 70-80 per cent of wheat and barley crops in Salah al-Dinh. In Ninewa, 32-68 per cent of wheat fields and 43-57 per cent of barley fields were compromised or destroyed.

Afghanistan, with a fragmented and polarized population, has a long history of conflict reaching back to the 4th Cen-

and national and local power brokers manipulating operations. Drought affects two-thirds of the country, with the potential for extreme food shortages in 2018 to affect up to 2 million people, adding to the nearly 2 million who have already fled their homes because of decades of war.

#### Climate change and nature

Natural conditions compound the consequences of conflict on agriculture. While the UN urges co-ordinated global action to address climate change and thereby mitigate its effects on agricultural success, offsetting it is a long-term proposition that will only be hampered by conflict. Climate change compounds conflict when arable land is lost to drought or floods, resulting in fighting over land and water. The FAO reports that up to 40 per cent of civil wars

over the past 60 years have been associated with natural resources and 48 per cent since 2000 have been in Africa where rural land access is essential to livelihoods and where 27 of 30 conflicts have involved land issues.

#### Solutions: Give peace a chance

Ensuring food security is a moral imperative and humanitarian obligation. But delivering food will not achieve zero hunger; it is temporary support but, over decades, may create dependence on aid.

Because food insecurity is prevalent in developing countries, addressing it has followed the approaches of development projects. Many show lasting results that stimulate local economies and reduce aid dependency. Some projects fail because they are based on creating a version of a country with no relation to its actuality. Charged with spending their budgets, agencies create a picture of what they know how to solve. Ultimately, development expands state power, but not always access to food and resources.

For example, in Lesotho in the 1970s, attempts to mitigate poverty through employment in South African mines were largely unsuccessful because development agencies did not understand the male social system. Miners purchased cattle with their wages, boosting their prestige in their communities, instead of food and goods their families needed. The livestock could not be sold or slaughtered, but became a retirement fund, available for the future when the man could no longer work. While the men attained some wealth, their efforts did not immediately improve their families' food security. Attempts to modernize the "livestock sector" by monetizing grazing lands and improving livestock failed when the people resisted Western-style practices. In the end, when aid workers left, their budgets expended, the families continued marginal farming and waiting for mine wages. The only change was the expanded presence of the government that had used the project for political promotion.

A recommendation for increasing income to improve food security for smallholder farmers is cash cropping — producing specific crops for sale, not household consumption. A farm family that had once raised several food crops and livestock to feed its members and sell any surplus would switch its production to a single crop, such as coffee, with no food grown for consumption, but an income for purchasing commodities. However, if that income is insufficient to



Cash crops are said to be a solution to a lack of food security, but they're controversial because they come with their own set of problems.

feed the family, particularly in a volatile market, they must seek employment, sometimes at a distance or where they earn only a meagre living.

A study in rural Ghana found "limited evidence documenting relationships between [cash] crops and the food security of households cultivating them" (*Food Security*, August 2014). The study measured food availability (months when households reported adequate food), access to food, and food utilization (diversity of household diet and evidence of children's nutrition.) The study found the relationship between food security and a household's effort to produce the cash crop was significantly negative, suggesting we cannot assume positive relationships in cash cropping. The underlying causes of Ghana's cash crop failure included increases in food prices and competition for land use.

Alternatively, a 2014 study by Wageningen University in the Netherlands indicated cash crops are an important strategy for food security of farm households in developing countries because such households can sell their surplus to generate income to improve access to food. Cash crops, such as cocoa or coffee, provide income and employment within the rural economy and generate capital for innovation and improvements. However, as the study notes, mono-cropping requires managing soil degradation and price volatility, risks that may be addressed by farm-

ing co-operatives, commodity exchanges or crop rotation to cope with crop failure, price drops and lost market access.

On the plantation scale, well-managed cash cropping can be very successful, although it may not support as many individual farmers on the same amount of land. However, mono-cropping is associated with limited production of other crops, including food, and increased prevalence of harmful insects and pathogens. Irrigation and over-pumping water to support mono-cropping have resulted in falling water reserves in many countries, including China, the U.S. and India. Reliance on a single crop created Ireland's famine of 1845-1849 when successive crops were devastated by blight. The rural poor in particular depended on the potato and approximately 1 million people died of starvation or famine-related diseases and nearly 2 million emigrated.

Between 2014 and 2016, the failure of cash crops in Karnataka, an Indian state, was responsible for nearly 1,500 farmers committing suicide. They had been growing tobacco, cotton or sugarcane; the crops had a high return in successful years, but they required large investment. Crop failures can mean bankruptcy for farmers without other crops or occupations.

Although food scarcity is not due to overpopulation, reducing population growth will help, especially women and children in developing countries. Even though fertility rates have declined worldwide, at the current rate of growth, the world's population will be 9.7 billion by 2050 and 11.2 billion by 2100. Nigeria has the most rapidly growing population; it is projected to exceed the population of the U.S. by 2050. Some organizations suggest the solution is increasing global production of food crop calories by 60 per cent, but note that the lack of arable land means the increase will have to come from higher yields. This means using more water and fertilizer or developing innovative farming methods. But with so much conflict in areas where food is required, as well as extreme climate events in the same areas, it also raises questions of exactly where extra food can be grown and if grown afar, how to provide it without creating aid dependency.

With population growth concentrated in the poorest countries, combatting poverty, hunger and malnutrition and expanding education and health systems can begin by promoting family planning and birth control, but it requires changing the thinking in such countries.

In an agrarian society, children are



a source of labour; with the decline of householder farms, that situation has changed, at least in the interim. The hope that at least one child in the family will get an education and then a city job to support the family will hardly be realized if children starve or are undernourished. Having fewer children, besides fewer mouths to feed, means less maternal mortality and better health for all.

The UN has long noted that improving women's condition benefits socio-economic development. Providing education about sexual and reproductive health is crucial in developing countries, particularly given the statistic from the WHO that "214 million women of reproductive age in developing regions who want to avoid pregnancy are not using a modern contraceptive method." In Malawi, the government's 2009 commitment to stop population growth has led to greater use of modern contraceptives, fewer unsafe abortions and more health providers.

Overall, the biggest obstacle to food security is conflict. In May 2018, in a historic vote, the UN Security Council, for the first time, recognized that armed conflict and violence directly impact food security and condemned starving civilians as a method of warfare, calling on all engaged in armed

conflict to comply with international laws to protect civilians. The FAO went on to develop a new framework aimed at keeping farms out of conflict, noting that conflict-caused agricultural losses outstrip development assistance and roughly 87 per cent of "people living in extreme poverty also live in environmentally vulnerable and fragile countries." As the World Food Program says, "We can't end hunger if we don't end conflict."

War between nations has declined since the Second World War. Mainly it is internal conflict that's killing and starving people. Civil wars begin at the same rate today as they have for 60 years, starting each year in up to two per cent of countries. Involvement of outside countries is high, with four countries becoming most involved, supporting either government or rebel groups. Since 1989, Britain and France have sent troops to five conflicts, the U.S. to three and Russia to two.

Civil wars are messy and they end that way. In a civil war, each side feels it must continue fighting or be killed. In general, military victories provide more stable outcomes than settlements, but military victories destroy state institutions required for long-term stability. Negotiated compromises can seem unbearable to those

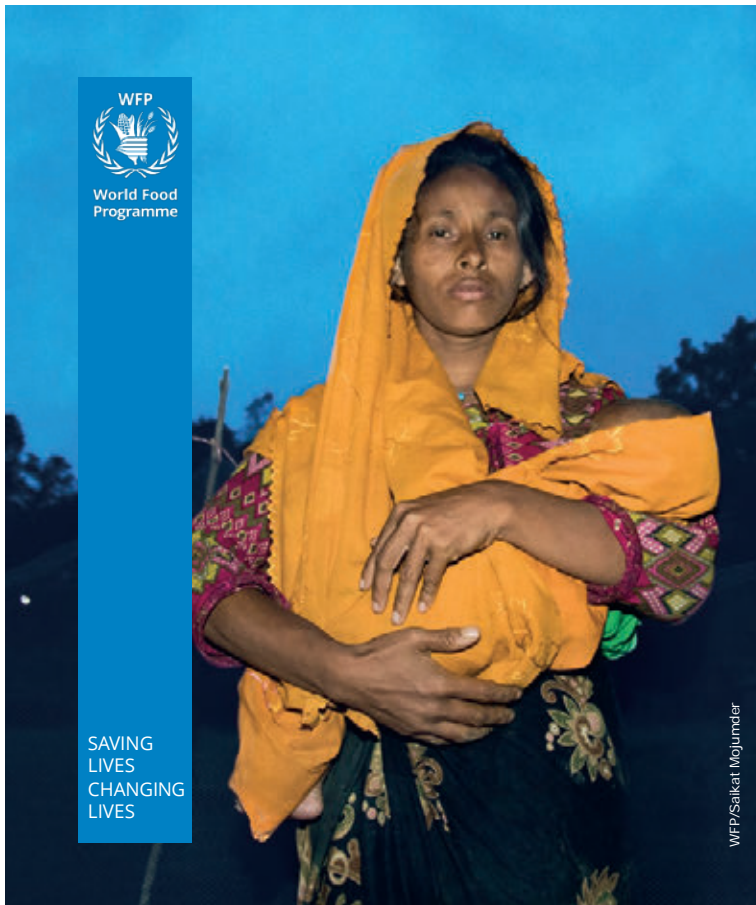
who want victory and sometimes the only solution is state break-up. Ultimately, ending civil war requires will and leadership.

Looking at the history of conflict in the world, one would think that fighting is part of the human condition, that governments engaged in long conflicts simply cannot reconcile themselves to peace. If that is the case, achieving zero hunger on a global scale is impossible.

In June 2018, Ethiopia announced its plans to implement a peace agreement with Eritrea that had lain dormant since 2000. Eritrea had gained independence from Ethiopia in 1991 after three decades of war, but a territorial dispute broke out in 1998. Acknowledging that both sides have suffered horribly, Ethiopia's reformist government announced that change must occur for the common good and handed disputed areas to Eritrea.

Whether this peace restores stability and brings people food security remains to be seen, and there is much to be worked out, but it is, even temporarily, a ray of hope for hungry people.

*Laura Neilson Bonikowsky is an Alberta writer and researcher and the former associate editor of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.*



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# Africa: Unable to feed itself



Robert I.  
Rotberg

**A**frica no longer feeds itself. Forty years ago, sub-Saharan Africa's then 500 million people could grow enough staples — maize, wheat, rice, yams, cassava, sorghum, millet and the ancient grain known as teff — to keep most inhabitants free from hunger. But now there are about 1 billion sub-Saharan Africans and soon there will be 2 billion and, by 2021, predictions suggest more than 3 billion.

This Malthusian moment is exacerbated by the intensification and unpredictability of climate change. As the world grows warmer, it becomes prone to extreme weather events and radical changes in what once were steady and recurrent seasonal rotations. The intertropical convergence system, which once reliably brought rain to inner Africa at predictable times, now no longer does so. Further, the annual monsoon rains arriving across the Indian Ocean may or may not recur as they once did.

Drought is an ever-present danger, as well. The Sahel and northeastern Africa has suffered from recurring shortages of rainfall, and consequent starvation, several times since the 1970s. Even southern Africa, the sometime breadbasket of the continent, now is prone to excessive periods of drought. Or sometimes there is too much rain at once, which the nutrient-poor soils of sub-Saharan Africa cannot absorb.

The African continent has 65 per cent of the globe's arable land that is available for cultivation, but currently lies fallow. If cultivated even marginally, that much land could help feed the millions of Africans who depend, as they must, on food imports, usually from the Americas or Asia. Overall, Africans spend at least \$35 billion US a year on imported food while exporting almost no agricultural produce. When



Africa can no longer feed itself. The continent has 65 per cent of the globe's arable land that is available for cultivation, but much of it currently lies fallow.

there are many more Africans, by 2025, the African food import bill is anticipated to rise to at least \$110 billion US.

Since traditional agricultural pursuits in sub-Saharan Africa are rain-fed, climate anomalies obviously make production much more difficult than in earlier decades. Very little — about 3.6 per cent — of African agriculture is irrigated with Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, boasting only 1 per cent irrigation cover for its array of vastly different soils and farming practices. Even in wealthy South

Africa, irrigated lands (usually controlled by conglomerates) account for only 1 per cent of all farmland.

Fertilizer use has greatly declined throughout sub-Saharan Africa since the 1970s, largely because of cost, but also because its distribution has depended on poorly managed state-controlled networks. As a result, African farmers use 9 kilograms of fertilizer per hectare compared to 100 per hectare globally. Just as an individual farmer trying to feed himself and his family, and sell a surplus



to supply national needs — all on an average 1.8 hectares — struggles to import his seeds and fertilizer, so he (most are men) also struggles to export his produce. The markets are distant and middlemen (sometimes state-controlled) who come to purchase his produce are unreliable and their prices erratic. Furthermore, fewer than 40 per cent of Africa's farmers live within 2 kilometres of an all-season road — the lowest accessibility percentage in the world.

Land tenure is an additional critical variable. As Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto long ago explained, one of the biggest obstacles to farming productivity everywhere is the absence of anything better than usufruct rights (agreement for use and enjoyment of property by a non-owner). Very few Africans own their farms. Allocated their land by traditional chiefs, but lacking legal tenure, they cannot borrow to invest in better seeds, tools, irrigation, and other modernizations. They are caught in a low-level cash trap that largely limits productivity increases.

The percentages of African adults who are primarily agricultural producers has, for many of the same reasons, markedly declined as sub-Saharan Africa has largely grown richer per capita. Farmers are older and less well educated than other citizens; younger Africans are rejecting farming as a viable pursuit. Additionally, many African state-managed economies, such as Zambia from 1972 to 1992, subsidized urban consumers as a conscious policy. They thus deflated the prices at which state marketing boards would purchase maize (in Zambia's case) or other commodities. So the farmers in Zambia fled to the cities, denuding the countryside of agricultural production. When the copper price on which Zambia depended for foreign exchange was high, and copper production increased, Zambia could purchase foreign-grown food and feed its citizens. But it, like Nigeria, because of oil, and other countries because of their own natural resource-dependent export regimes, lost the capacity to feed itself.

Without Chinese purchases of vast quantities of African petroleum, iron ore, chrome, cobalt, copper, coal and diamonds, many African countries would have been unable to find the foreign exchange with which to purchase food grown overseas. The actual recent costs of food imports are staggering: \$3 billion to \$5 billion annually for Nigeria (\$2 billion of which is for rice from the United States, the rest for wheat, fish and fruit), \$1.1 billion US for Kenya in 2016 to buy cook-

ing oil from the United States, plus some chicken, wheat and sugar. If China falters and world commodity prices again slump or collapse, one after another sub-Saharan nation will be unable to feed its now-burgeoning, even exploding, population.

The natural causes of this impending crisis are obvious, and hard to defend against. But mismanagement by many African governments has also contributed to the continent's current food crisis. The "resource curse" has led many governments to devalue agriculture and agriculturalists,



Drought is an ever-present danger. Here OXFAM workers deliver water to drought-stricken Ethiopia.

to fail to meet farming needs and to enact policies that have made it extremely difficult for farmers to use their hoes well. Tanzania, for example, has failed over many decades to invest in its farming sector, instead spending precious sparse funds on unsuccessful attempts to industrialize. Consequently, only 25 per cent of Tanzania's 44 million arable hectares is cultivated. Food crops produced on the cultivated land contribute 25 per cent of the nation's GDP. But less than 1 per cent of the government's budget is spent on farmers. Zimbabwe trashed its farming sector, dominated by white Zimbabweans, for political reasons. South Africa may do the same if the existing "willing seller, willing buyer" policy is removed and confiscation of white-owned farmland becomes the norm.

Fortunately, albeit belatedly, some

governments have begun to pay more attention to agriculture by increasing budgetary support, by setting aside new funds for irrigational expansion, and by investing in methods to add value to products from the soil by processing them for overseas markets. Ghana has a large new program to create jobs for young people on farms so there will be expert youthful producers to replace the generation that is now easing away from the land. They will educate young people and provide training for budding agriculturalists.

In Ghana and many other sub-Saharan African jurisdictions, various official and private schemes have brought the internet, with its pricing and forecasting capabilities, to farming pursuits. Market prices are now known and monitored, and available to farmers — no matter their remoteness. A few countries are also resuscitating extension services. Those services flourished in colonial times, helping farmers to adopt new techniques and tools, but fell into disuse during the years of independence when most independent nations ceased funding the building of capacity among agricultural producers.

Additionally, new roads are being constructed, usually by Chinese firms, to tie farmers more closely to centres of administration and to the cities. Solar power installations are becoming more common, to help rural householders and others modernize their working and living arrangements and to give farmers a greater sense of belonging to a nation rather than to an ethnicity.

As sub-Saharan Africa continues to become more urban, so farming will become a minority livelihood. That marginalized cadre must be assisted to realize its full potential if Africa is going to attempt, once again, to feed itself. But with most parliamentarians drawn from the ranks of educated and relatively prosperous urban dwellers, it is hard to envisage an African legislature that will invest sizable funds on farmers and farming. Only when leaders appear who fully appreciate sub-Saharan Africa's critical challenges — including overcoming obstacles to growing more of its own food — will appropriate attention be paid to food insufficiency issues and the necessary remedies introduced.

Robert I. Rotberg is the founding director of Harvard Kennedy School's program in intrastate conflict, president emeritus of the World Peace Foundation and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts And Sciences. His latest book is *The Corruption Cure*. (Princeton, 2017)

# Latin America: Seize the moment



Perrin  
Beatty

As the destination for three-quarters of Canadian merchandise exports, and a little more than half of our services exports, the United States of America will remain Canada's largest trading partner for the foreseeable future. However, events of the last several months emphasize the need for Canada to diversify its trade. The imperative to re-balance the composition of Canada's export basket has long been a creed in Canadian policy discussions — and getting there requires one small step at a time. Latin America has a role to play in that journey.

To date, Canada has a number of trade pacts in the region, including with Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama and Peru. And we mustn't forget that Mexico has a pact through the North American Free Trade Agreement. Nor should we forget that Canada's trade agreements have a respectable record when it comes to increasing Canadian trade. Since the entry into force of our trade agreements with Panama and Colombia, our exports have increased by 64 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively. For Peru, Canadian exports experienced an 86-per-cent increase since that trade agreement came into effect.

However, there is more room to grow our trade in the region and two particular initiatives will help Canadian businesses: the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur.

Canada's initial foray into the Pacific Alliance began in 2012 when it became the first non-Latin America observer country. The bloc is the destination for 68 per cent of Canadian investment in the region, and 79 per cent of our two-way trade in Latin America. It represents a group of like-minded countries that share the goal of



With NAFTA's future uncertain, Canada must diversify and our columnist suggests looking to Latin America. (Shown above is the Sao Paulo Stock Exchange in Brazil's vibrant financial centre.)

deeper economic integration and breaking down trade barriers. Along with Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, Canada was invited to become an associated state of the Pacific Alliance in 2017.

Although Canada already has trade agreements with all four members of the Pacific Alliance — Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru — moving the relationship to the next level is vital for us to maintain our first-mover advantage. The process to become an associate member is effectively a trade negotiation with all four countries, and will lead to a new Canada-Pacific Alliance trade deal.

So what, specifically, are the additional benefits from an overarching trade deal? Canada's trade deals with Pacific Alliance members have already eliminated most of the tariffs faced by Canadian companies. However, obstacles still exist. One potential benefit is accelerating tariff phase-out periods imposed in the existing bilateral trade deals, which have not reached the

end of their staging period.

Canada's negotiations with the Pacific Alliance also present an opportunity to build Canadian supply chains in the region with simplified rules of origin, instead of navigating the individual regimes that exist in order for companies to take advantage of preferential tariff rates. Given the Pacific Alliance is in the midst of an ambitious expansion phase, the Canadian government should include forward-looking provisions that could permit the addition, in the future, of other parties. These provisions could be particularly valuable given the overlap in membership with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Since Canada has signed its original trade agreements with the four Pacific Alliance countries, digital trade issues have taken on increased importance, and rightly so. The flow of digital information has proven itself to be a key driver of economic development and job creation.



Digitally enabled services, which rely on cross-border data flows, are vital for Canadian companies of all sizes. This negotiation presents an opportunity for both Canada and the Pacific Alliance to position themselves as leaders on digital trade issues by including provisions against forced data localization or the disclosure of source code.

Those are just a few of the areas where a Canada-Pacific Alliance free-trade agreement can advance Canadian commercial interests in the region. We are hoping to see negotiations conclude towards the end of this year.

And there are other opportunities in Latin America, too. Further south on the continent, Mercosur is not well-trodden ground. Mercosur's four members — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — have a combined GDP of \$3 trillion and are a market of 260 million people. Argentina and Brazil are also members of the G20.

Canada's negotiations there started with the first round in March of this year, shortly after our exploratory talks concluded. Although our negotiations with the bloc are likely to be slow-moving, it is important that we press ahead because securing this trade agreement would provide preferential access for 98 per cent of Canada's trade in the region.

The first area of potential benefit is substantial tariff liberalization. Mercosur currently applies tariffs of up to 35 per cent



Mercosur is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Argentine President Mauricio Macri is shown here.

would ensure that Canadian companies are able to move their intra-company transferees where they are needed most in the region. Additionally, to support Canadian companies in Mercosur, the inclusion of strong investment protection provisions would provide greater certainty.

Over the coming months, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce will be working

with our members to set out our priorities for the Mercosur negotiations. Canadian companies in the agri-food and mining sector are already well established in the region, and we see opportunities for those sectors to grow their business, as well as for others to enter the market.

With Argentina hosting the G20 this year, the Canadian Chamber will be on the ground in Buenos Aires in October for the Business-20 Summit. We will use the opportunity to make the case for the importance of this agreement, and advocate for Canadian business priorities. Maintaining momentum on this negotiation is key.

Although Latin America is not the only region where Canadian companies have potential to increase exports, it is one that receives less prominence than it should. As Canada looks to diversify its export markets, it needs to look broadly around the world to see where the opportunity is greatest. The Canadian Chamber looks forward to working with the federal government, Latin American governments and our business federation counterparts in the region to help exporters access these opportunities.

**Perrin Beatty is president and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.**

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ALREADY HAS TRADE  
AGREEMENTS WITH ALL  
FOUR MEMBERS OF THE  
PACIFIC ALLIANCE — CHILE,  
COLOMBIA, MEXICO,  
PERU — MOVING THE  
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# China's Red Sea ambitions

By Robert D'A. Henderson



The Red Sea — with the Suez Canal at the north end and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait at its southern mouth — is one of the most important trade routes from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf to Europe. This U.S. guided-missile destroyer is conducting surface exercises to enhance war-fighting readiness in the Red Sea.

**A**t the end of July, two very large crude oil tankers from Saudi Arabia were attacked with anti-ship missiles by Yemeni rebels from the eastern shore of the Red Sea, just north of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. One of the tankers was damaged slightly in the stern.

As a result, the Saudi government ordered a temporary halt to Saudi tankers travelling through the Red Sea from its Persian Gulf oil terminal to the SUMED (Suez-Mediterranean) pipeline terminal in Egypt. Reportedly, there are plans to have naval convoys join such tankers and other commercial vessels passing through the narrow southern portion of the Red Sea between the coast of Yemen and the port city of Djibouti. There had also been media reports of missile attacks against passing tankers in April and May — after Houthi militias threatened to attack oil tankers passing through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. The Houthis are an armed

Islamic political movement controlling the northern regions in the Yemeni war.

## Global trade through the Red Sea

The Red Sea — with the Suez Canal at the north end and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait at its southern mouth — is one of the most important trade routes from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf to Europe, particularly for oil tankers. Through this major global transit route, petroleum and refined oil products from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, as well as manufactured goods from South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia, transit to Europe and on to North America. At its southern end, between Djibouti and Yemen, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait is only about 30 kilometres wide.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, an estimated 4.8 million barrels of crude oil per day as well as refined petroleum products passed

through the Red Sea in 2016. But the Suez Canal is too shallow for a completely full supertanker carrying approximately two million barrels of oil.

Instead, the procedure is to offload half that amount via the SUMED pipeline in Egypt before travelling through the Suez Canal. Smaller oil tankers do take on crude oil at the Saudi East-West Pipeline terminal at the Saudi port of Yanbu al-Bahr on the eastern coast or from the Bashayer Marine Terminal on the western coast — located about 25 kilometres south of Port Sudan — where Sudan's two main export pipelines converge to reach the coast. The Suez Canal is being enlarged to permit larger vessels to transit between the Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea.

Currently, it is estimated that between 12.5 per cent and 20 per cent of total global trade and about 2.5 per cent of global oil cargo passes through the Red Sea area. And China alone sends up to \$1 trillion



US in goods through the Red Sea area annually. By comparison, the amount of goods moving through the South China Sea is estimated at about 30 per cent of global trade — about \$5 trillion US in value. While trade through the Red Sea is less significant than trade going through the South China Sea, it is still very substantial, impacting Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

#### China's interest in Djibouti

Since the 1990s, the Chinese government in Beijing has been pursuing a mixed “great power” strategy of economic engagement and military outreach to Africa.

Commercially, Beijing encouraged Chinese construction companies and financial lenders to go global as part of the country's efforts to acquire greater access to natural resources — minerals, oil and food supplies — by doing more business overseas. Similarly, Chinese port management companies have contracted to handle African ports with high-volume turnover.

China's growing economic power can be seen in its presence in the tiny but strategic port country of Djibouti. Here, on the tip of the Horn of Africa, China has demonstrated a vital portion of its strategically planned Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), foreign direct investment and overseas defence spending — all of which will increase its influence abroad, both in hard and soft power. Its BRI infrastructure projects seek to revive historical overland and maritime trade routes through a massive rail and maritime network that is made up of \$1 trillion US in investments across Asia and Europe. Djibouti has become the western point of President Xi Jinping's BRI and a key entry point for Chinese economic and commercial interests in Africa.

China has pursued a number of BRI projects in Djibouti. The largest is the \$590-million US Doraleh Multipurpose Port funded by a loan from the Export-Import Bank of China. This new port facility west of the Port of Djibouti has terminals for handling oil, bulk cargo and containers — all of which have direct access to the new Addis Ababa-Djibouti Electric Railway, which provides landlocked Ethiopia with railroad access to the Red Sea and which also secured its funding through a loan from the Export-Import Bank. And there are plans for a natural gas pipeline from the port up to the Ethiopian highlands, to be funded by a BRI loan.

Meanwhile, China's ambitious BRI mega-projects elsewhere in Southeast Asia have incurred high price tags, leading to heavy debt loads. Observers have warned

of “debt traps” and have called China a “predatory lender.”

China's military presence in the region began with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) anti-piracy patrols off the Horn of Africa, in the Gulf of Aden and on the Somali coast in 2008. Participating in these United Nations counter-piracy activities has boosted PLAN's ability to

patrols in the Gulf of Aden and nearby PLA peacekeeping operations — as well as humanitarian activities.

Opened in August 2017, the PLAN Djibouti Support Base received a brigade of PLAN marines and six armoured personnel carriers, with the first live-fire exercises the following month. In May 2018, construction began on a large-scale pier



The Red Sea is a major global transit route for petroleum and refined oil products from the Middle East and Persian Gulf as well as manufactured goods from South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia coming to Europe and North America.

convoy Chinese oil tankers and commercial vessels through these far seas and to deploy and improve PLAN expeditionary naval forces along international routes deemed vital to China's economic and energy requirements.

In addition, China has deployed 2,000 People's Liberation Army peacekeepers to African operations in South Sudan and Darfur as well as Mali in West Africa and it currently contributes more than 10 per cent of the UN peacekeeping budget. These UN deployments improve its capacity to conduct “military operations other than war” and to train and test its military troops and equipment in Africa and elsewhere.

Beside the Doraleh Multipurpose Port, China and the Djibouti government have negotiated a “strategic support base” (a military base by another name) to stage, support and re-supply PLAN anti-piracy

— estimated at more than 330 metres in length — on the harbour side of the base. The Chinese military base is only a few kilometres from the American, French and Japanese bases in Djibouti. The U.S. base, Camp Lemonnier, is the only permanent American military facility on the African continent and acts as a hub for U.S. counter-terror operations.

This closeness has led to concerns about possible friction or even confrontations between the foreign military forces. In recent months, American military pilots flying near or to the U.S. base have complained that laser beams have been directed at their aircraft cockpits from the vicinity of the Chinese base — though Chinese authorities have denied such dangerous activities.

Interestingly, a Chinese action war film, *Operation Red Sea*, directed by Dante Lam, was released in January 2018 and



China has already refurbished a former Soviet-era aircraft carrier it purchased from Ukraine. This vessel, shown here, with two J-15 fighter jets sitting on its flight deck, is now known as the *Liaoning*.

is currently the second highest-grossing Chinese-produced movie. The nationalistic film is loosely based on the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy's evacuation of 225 foreign nationals and nearly 600 Chinese citizens from Yemen's southern port of Aden during late March in the 2015 period of the war in Yemen. At the time, Chinese naval frigates conducting anti-piracy patrols off the coast of Somalia were diverted to Aden to evacuate people trapped by the fighting. The evacuees were taken by the PLAN frigates across the Red Sea to Djibouti, where they were flown to their home countries. The Chinese ministry of defence has stated that this was the first time its PLAN had evacuated foreigners from a war zone.

Since March 2015, a war has raged in Yemen. A Saudi Arabian-led military coalition of nine African and Middle Eastern countries in support of the recognized Yemeni government has been bombing the Houthi rebels, reportedly supplied covertly by Iran, despite United Nations sanctions. In addition, the Saudi coalition has attempted to maintain a coastal blockade as well as launching ground assaults. Even so, the United Nations has attributed most of the estimated 9,500 civilian deaths to airstrikes as well as malnutrition and disease.

In June, the Saudi coalition, including United Arab Emirates, launched a ground assault to seize the rebel-held

Port of Hodeida on the Red Sea — and subsequently Hodeida city and airport. But the assault could prove catastrophic. An estimated 80 per cent of Yemen's food supplies and medicines for the 22 million Yemenis displaced by the fighting are arriving through this port, according to Jens Laerke of the UN Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. He also pointed out that fuel and other essential humanitarian relief also arrive via the port. UN officials have called for a ceasefire and are working for a negotiated truce to halt the humanitarian crisis.

Partly in response, Houthi forces have launched surface-to-surface missile strikes — or possibly heavy artillery rockets — into Saudi Arabia and against Saudi coastal targets along the Red Sea. In the coastal zone reside such necessities as the Saudi Petrolene oil terminal, desalination plants, cement plants and industrial infrastructure. There are also residential areas along this coast.

An additional nine desalination plants are to be constructed along the coastline and they could also be targeted in the future. The Saudi Arabian News Agency has reported that Saudi Patriot anti-missile systems have shot down a number of such missiles targeting the Saudi Red Sea coastline — with some reportedly supplied covertly by Iran.

Across the Red Sea, the Sudanese oil terminal at Bashayer Marine Terminal —

where its two north-south pipelines link up to meet oil tankers for seaborne transit — could also become a tempting missile target as Sudanese armed forces are fighting as part of the anti-Houthi coalition.

#### Towards stability and demilitarization

The Horn of Africa has a centuries-long history of interregional trade and conflict to ensure state survival among the countries and territories that extend along the Red Sea, including Egypt and Sudan to the north, Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula to the east and Somalia to the south.

After decades of foreign economic and military involvement in the Horn of Africa by a variety of state and commercial actors, China may have become the “new policeman on the block” to protect its own economic interests there in the years ahead. Despite the current trade war between China and the U.S., Chinese exports continue to surge worldwide, with growing commercial engagement in African countries as well as partnerships in infrastructure development. Whether the China-U.S. trade friction leads to a stalemate or a possible negotiated “truce,” President Xi BRI-generated projects will further China's engagement in Africa.

In a speech in April, at the PLAN naval review in the South China Sea, Xi announced plans to build a “world-class navy under the banner of the Chinese Communist Party.” Towards this goal, China has already refurbished a former Soviet-era aircraft carrier — acquired from Ukraine — that is now operational as the *CNS Liaoning*. In addition, its second, but first homegrown carrier, named *CNS Shandong*, according to the mainland Chinese media, completed its maiden sea trials in May with follow-up sea trials having begun in September. In addition, there are media reports that China may attempt to “quietly” build as many as seven carriers by 2025 — rather than the currently projected total of four.

With its PLAN base now operational in Djibouti, foreign observers repeatedly suggest that China will set up a similar overseas naval base near the Pakistani port of Gwadar — the Indian Ocean end of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

In addition to a decade of PLAN anti-piracy patrols around the Horn of Africa, a three-ship PLAN task force in 2015 completed an around-the-world circumnavigation. And in October 2017, another three-ship PLAN fleet unit joined Russian Federation warships in the Baltic Sea for joint naval exercises.

And, interestingly, the Royal Canadian





As more Chinese navy warships complete patrols in the far seas, it may not be long before one of the country's new aircraft carriers crosses the Indian Ocean (shown on the map above) and anchors in the harbour of Djibouti.

Navy frigate *HMCS Vancouver* made a six-day port call in Hong Kong in May — where it held joint interoperative exercises with Chinese PLAN naval ships. After the joint exercises, *HMCS Vancouver* left to join the annual United States Navy's multi-country RIMPAC exercises off Hawaii and shore activities in July. The Chinese navy had been invited to participate in RIMPAC, but the invitation was “withdrawn” after the extensive Chinese “island building” in the South China Sea, with placement of weapons systems, including missiles, on the new “islets,” though it is believed that a PLAN warship and/or submarine was assigned to stealthily observe the RIMPAC exercises in the mid-Pacific.

As more Chinese PLAN warships complete trans-oceanic patrols in the “far seas,” it may not be that long before one of China's new aircraft carriers will be crossing the Indian Ocean and anchoring in the harbour of Djibouti in eastern Africa.

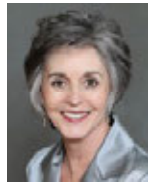
Robert D'A. Henderson currently does international assessments and international elections monitoring. Previously, he taught international relations at universities in Canada and overseas.

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# In defence of the liberal world order



Christina  
Spencer

Three books explore aspects of the liberal world order that today is being challenged — two in the context of Canadian diplomacy and defence, a third from the perspective of one of the U.S.'s most experienced and respected politicians.

When he won election in 2015, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau declared to the world that Canada was “back.” Back to what? The “golden age” of Canadian diplomacy that followed the Second World War? That period is often viewed as the apogee of this country’s foreign policy. But in *Master of Persuasion: Brian Mulroney’s Global Legacy* (Signal, McClelland & Stewart, \$35), Fen Osler Hampson makes the case that Canada’s global golden age actually occurred under Brian Mulroney.

To be sure, this doesn’t dovetail with the views many Canadians hold of Canada’s 18th prime minister. By the time he stepped down to make way for Kim Campbell, Mulroney was so reviled that his Progressive Conservative party was eviscerated in the election that followed.

But consider what Mulroney accomplished for Canada through diplomacy. The Acid Rain Treaty. The Free Trade Agreement with the United States. NAFTA. Leading the international effort to dismantle apartheid. Leading on the ozone crisis. Helping place the environment firmly on the world’s agenda.

Hampson isn’t content to simply recount Mulroney’s involvement in world affairs; he wants to ensure readers learn from the former prime minister’s successes (and some of his failures, such as his lack of systematic attention to the Asian giants). Each chapter ends with lessons, the overarching one of which is: Personal relationships matter. Canadians who glibly dismiss Mulroney as a snake-charmer and schmoozer, in the back



Author Fen Osler Hampson argues that Canada’s global golden age occurred not after the Second World War, as many commentators have suggested, but rather, under former prime minister Brian Mulroney between 1984 and 1993.

pocket of the Americans, misunderstand just how crucial his political skills and negotiating talent proved in influencing U.S. policy for the good. Even as critics cringed at the palsy-walsy “Shamrock Summit” between Mulroney and Ronald Reagan, the former was already chatting up free trade, a policy from which this country has benefited immeasurably and which, today, it strives to safeguard.

In fact, Mulroney was so respected by the Americans that president George H.W. Bush described him as a member of his inner cabinet. Bush sought Mulroney’s advice on a host of issues — from acid rain (it’s worth remembering that in the mid-1980s, about 10,000 of Eastern Canada’s lakes were deemed acid-damaged) to the

1991 military action that freed Kuwait from Saddam Hussein. At one point, when Margaret Thatcher — well-known for her clashes with Mulroney over South Africa — challenged Canada’s place in the G7, Ronald Reagan responded, “I don’t want to be part of any club that doesn’t include Canada.”

One may argue that Mulroney had an easier time of it with Reagan and Bush Sr. than our current government has with Donald Trump on free trade. But Hampson reminds us that protectionism was on the rise in the U.S. during the 1980s, too, with more than 300 protectionist trade bills before Congress at one point.

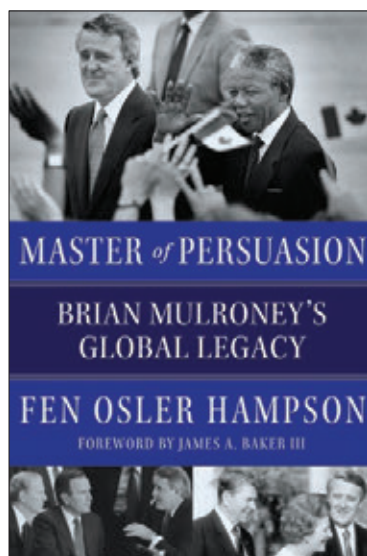
The trick for Mulroney was that he was an astute student of American politics



who also made it his business to develop and deepen his relationships with power-brokers. It's no mystery that he has been a trusted emissary for Justin Trudeau in Washington. He knows Trump personally; his sons are friendly with Ivanka Trump. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross is one of his neighbours in Palm Beach. The Rolodex goes on.

In chapter after chapter, Hampson lays out just how involved, and assertive, Mulroney and his team were — and not just with the Americans. For instance, moved by the heart-wrenching TV coverage by journalist Brian Stewart of the 1984 Ethiopian famine, Mulroney mustered his UN ambassador, Stephen Lewis, and his foreign minister, Joe Clark, to act and lobby the rest of the world to do the same. The UN and others came aboard. Stewart said later that he believed at least 700,000 lives were saved because of Canadian efforts.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Canada also found itself immersed in the breakdown of the Soviet empire, and answered the call for peacekeepers in places as diverse as Bosnia and Somalia. As we know from the Somalia torture scandal, these actions did not always end well. Yet, under Mulroney, Canada showed up. It



contributed more than 10 per cent of all troops to UN peacekeeping missions and was active in all 16 missions. These days, our record is somewhat different.

In another episode Hampson underlines, namely the historic reunification of Germany, then-chancellor Helmut Kohl noted that three foreign leaders were key to making it happen: George H.W. Bush, Mikhail Gorbachev and Mulroney, who unequivocally endorsed German unity

when other Western leaders were wary. With his influence, he was listened to.

Mulroney's foreign policy record speaks to tenacity, "laser-like" focus, non-partisanship, the power of relationships and an understanding that political capital is meant to be spent, not just inside our borders, but globally. Mulroney may not have been the most admired politician at home, but Hampson makes a strong case that he deserves much more credit than we give him for the leadership he showed abroad.

#### Afghanistan's Operation Medusa

At a time when NATO countries — including Canada — have been targeted by the United States for not pulling their weight, *OPERATION MEDUSA: The Furious Battle That Saved Afghanistan From the Taliban* (McClelland & Stewart, \$32), the story of a milestone battle in the Afghanistan campaign, seems particularly pertinent.

In September 2006, Canadian Maj.-Gen. David Fraser, who co-authored the book with Brian Hanington, commanded the coalition forces in the Panjwayi District of Kandahar province. Although the events he describes occurred 12 years ago, politicians should review them today.

Fraser's enlightening book shares a military man's wry wit and admiration for soldiers in combat. Although he invites any impatient reader to skip right to the main battle, don't. You'll miss his description of the hard-driving, foul-mouthed tactical commander known as "Mother" who nonetheless delicately sipped his tea using the proper pinky-finger etiquette. You'll also miss Fraser's affection for his leadership team, "the Posse," and his kind words for a Vancouver cop and army reservist named Harjit Sajjan, who laboured undercover in Kandahar. And you'll miss the first early lesson: How important it was that Fraser had already developed deep contacts within militaries all over the Western world — people whose support he would later draw on in theatre.

Operation Medusa was born as Fraser realized that the Taliban was growing confident of its ability to win in the south of the country. Taliban leaders knew of the Americans' plans to transfer leadership of the stabilization force, known as ISAF, to NATO, and were eager to challenge it. As commander of Regional Command South based in Kandahar, Fraser bore responsibility for planning and executing a major drive to halt enemy momentum.

The operation, he says, was not meant to be a glorious victory on the battlefield,



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Canadian Maj.-Gen. David Fraser, co-author of *OPERATION MEDUSA*, is full of the military man's wry wit and admiration for soldiers in combat.

but to send a signal of strength to the Taliban, and, more practically, to ensure Taliban fighters couldn't establish a safe base from which to attack Kandahar. His coalition forces succeeded in what was, to that point, the "largest battle fought by Canadian troops since the Korean War."

But it was not fought without problems. For instance, "our American allies harboured a deep concern that we Canadians were about to enter combat on their behalf without being at all combat ready," he notes. "I couldn't disagree. Two decades of peacekeeping cannot prepare an army for

classic combat."

Then there was the realization that NATO leaders in Brussels had assumed "this was going to be a peacekeeping operation."

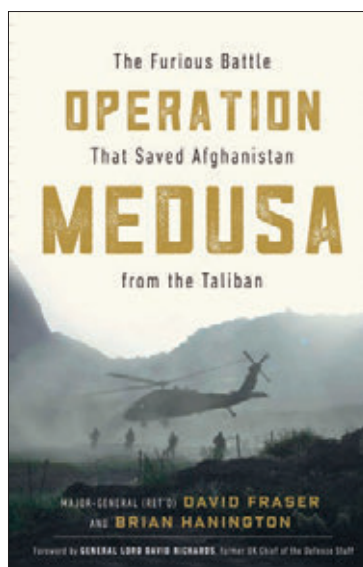
Worse problems would mar Medusa itself. To start, Fraser had trouble getting the troops he needed, even days before the battle. On asking what further support he might expect from NATO, he was told only: "Moral."

Fortunately, he could turn to the U.S. Green Berets at Kandahar Air Base and an experienced U.S. infantry company, which mustered air support: Harriers, fighters, bombers, Black Hawk and Apache helicopters. When the battle began on Sept. 2, 2006 — not quite five years to the anniversary of 9/11 that led to it in the first place — Fraser's force numbered 2,200.

Still, things started badly. On the first day, a Royal Air Force Nimrod surveillance aircraft crashed near the village of Chil Khlor, killing 14.

There were ambushes, long firefights and more dead. And, proving that even meticulous planning can go south quickly, Fraser discovered abruptly that the operation was running out of ammunition.

"So there we were, about to face a deeply dug-in enemy armed to the teeth in what was going to be the fight of our lives, with 20 minutes worth of ammunition left for the turret guns in our LAV III's, the vehicles that would be leading the charge.





[Expletive]" In the nick of time, new ammo arrived, from New Zealand.

Meanwhile, a pilot accidentally fired on Canadian soldiers, killing one and wounding 30. A disoriented Chinook pilot set down beside a Taliban position, but got out unscathed. Said one of Fraser's tactical commanders, "We just agreed it was going to be [expletive] Armageddon every day."

But this mixed bag of troops, including the Green Berets, slowly took and held ground, and the Taliban death toll ballooned. After two weeks, Fraser's forces had met Operation Medusa's goal.

What did he learn? That each allied country had a different idea of what its mission in Afghanistan was. That resources between them were uneven. That, during Operation Medusa at least, "many nations simply would not show up to fight at all.

"Planning was agony. Even when the operation was only days away, we weren't certain who would support us at H-hour... they were decisions of the moment, presumably made in national capitals by people with no idea of the stakes."

Warfare by committee, then. Still, the experience in Panjwayi District showed — contrary, perhaps, to the ill-informed impressions of today's U.S. president — that Canada was and is willing to do its part. Canadians work well with the American military. Thanks to Afghanistan, Canada now boasts a battle-hardened military. It needs no lectures from anyone.

#### John McCain's farewell in print

**T**old that brain cancer would soon claim his life, U.S. Republican Senator John McCain wrote a book completely bereft of self-pity. Instead, *The Restless Wave: Good Times, Just Causes, Great Fights, and Other Appreciations* (Simon & Schuster, \$40) focuses entirely on the legacy and future of the country he so cherished and fought for in wartime. Not all readers will share McCain's unwavering patriotism — but his rallying call is for a better United States, based on enduring values any decent person would endorse.

For McCain, who died in August, just three months after the book was released, was the kind of statesman the U.S. is also capable of producing. Example: Though he lost the 2008 presidential contest to Barack Obama, he nonetheless went out of his way to ensure race was not used as an election tool by the Republicans. "I recognized the social progress Obama's candidacy represented, and I didn't want to impede it by inciting, even with a wink and a nod here and there or with language

that had double meanings, the prejudices that have marred our history," he wrote. At one rally, "an otherwise polite supporter expressed her concern that Obama couldn't be trusted because he was an Arab. I took the microphone from her. 'No, ma'am,' I corrected her. 'He's a decent family man and citizen whom I happen to have disagreements with on fundamental issues. That's what elections are for.'"

One can't help but contrast that with the bias-baiting 2016 race, in which immigrants were denounced, walls were pledged and "Lock Her Up" became a rallying cry.

In contrast, McCain is generous about his political foes. Hillary Clinton, whom he knew well as a senator, is "very warm, engaging, and considerate in person, and fun." George W. Bush is "likable, and a good man." Obama, whose foreign policy



Senator John McCain died just three months after his book on the legacy and future of the U.S. was published.

McCain would frequently criticize, is nonetheless "an intelligent man, reasonable and cautious." And McCain often worked closely alongside Democratic senator Ted Kennedy on issues of mutual passion, such as immigration reform.

Obama doesn't get off scot-free, however. McCain believed he utterly mishandled U.S. foreign policy despite good intentions. Notably, McCain denounced the administration's lack of spine on Syria after Bashar Assad's 2013 chemical attack on his own people. McCain calls Obama's refusal to take strong action "the worst decision of his presidency ... It shook the confidence of our allies and emboldened



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our adversaries, no one more so than Vladimir Putin.”

But mostly, McCain warned readers about the current president’s worldview. Denouncing the U.S.’s use of torture techniques in Iraq and Afghanistan — McCain himself was tortured in Vietnam — he noted that during the 2016 presidential campaign, “the eventual Republican nominee and next president of the United States insisted torture ‘absolutely works’ and swore he would bring back waterboarding ‘and worse.’”

McCain strongly denounced dictatorship and repression (“Putin is an evil man” and “China is the challenge of the century”) but mostly he was concerned with U.S. retrenchment from world affairs. He described himself as “not a Tea Party Republican. Not a Breitbart Republican. Not a talk radio or Fox News Republican. Not an isolationist, protectionist, immigrant-bashing, scapegoating, get-nothing-useful-done Republican.”

And so he decried the U.S.’s tendency to isolationism, and particularly its newfound willingness to blame migrants for its problems. “The great majority of unauthorized immigrants came here to find work and raise their families like most immigrants have throughout our history. They are not the rapists, killers and drug dealers of fevered imaginations on the right,” he says, adding that a “wall along the southern border isn’t going to solve the problem. It might make it worse.”

Of Trump, he adds, “His lack of empathy for refugees, innocent, persecuted, desperate men, women and children, is disturbing. The way he speaks about them is appalling... He hardly ever talks about human rights as an object of his policies. He went on a two-week, five-country trip to Asia, and never raised the subject.”

By contrast, McCain’s worldview seems straightforward. “When people peacefully appeal for their rights, we should encourage them. When they are thrown in prison, we should work for their release. When they face intimidation and violence, we should condemn it.”

Just as Canadians sometimes refer to Robert Stanfield as the “best prime minister Canada never had,” it seems natural to view McCain as the best president the Americans never had.

#### Other books of interest:

*They Said No to Nixon: Republicans Who Stood Up to the President’s Abuses of Power*  
Michael Koncewicz  
University of California Press, 2018  
240 pages; \$37.95

Apparently it *can* be done: Political appointees can push back when their leader — in this case, the president of the United States — abuses his position. Richard Nixon’s twisted personal plan was to use his position to punish his political foes, but people of integrity, some of whom he had appointed to their jobs, thwarted him by remaining loyal to their duties as public servants over their loyalties to their leader. Using material from the Nixon tapes and other fresher sources, the author explores the efforts of some within the president’s circle to safeguard the integrity of the Justice department, the IRS and other essential institutions of government.

*Threshold: Emergency Responders on the U.S.-Mexico Border*

Ieva Jusionyte

University of California Press, 2018

296 pages; \$36.35

This book tells the story of the medics and other emergency workers who rush to take care of injured would-be migrants scrambling over the Arizona-Mexico border. These firefighters and paramedics operate at an intense human level while lawmakers clash over long-term politics and policies. Ieva Jusionyte, a trained emergency responder, puts real faces on issues ranging from migration and security to who gets public health care.

*Carving Up the Globe: An Atlas of Diplomacy*

Malise Ruthven, general editor

The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018

256 pages; \$52.74

Early diplomats (and modern ones, too) from powerful states like nothing better than to draw lines on maps and carve out nations and empires, it seems. This well-documented and lushly illustrated tome shows everything from the 1175 Treaty of Windsor to the 1713-14 Treaties of Utrecht to the Anzus Treaty of 1952. If diplomats have drawn it up, it’s in here, likely with a map and all the information you want to show you how things once looked — and to whose advantage borders were (and are) set.

Christina Spencer is the editorial pages editor of the *Ottawa Citizen* and the inaugural recipient of the Claude Ryan Award for Editorial Writing at the 2017 National Newspaper Awards. She holds a master’s in international affairs from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University.





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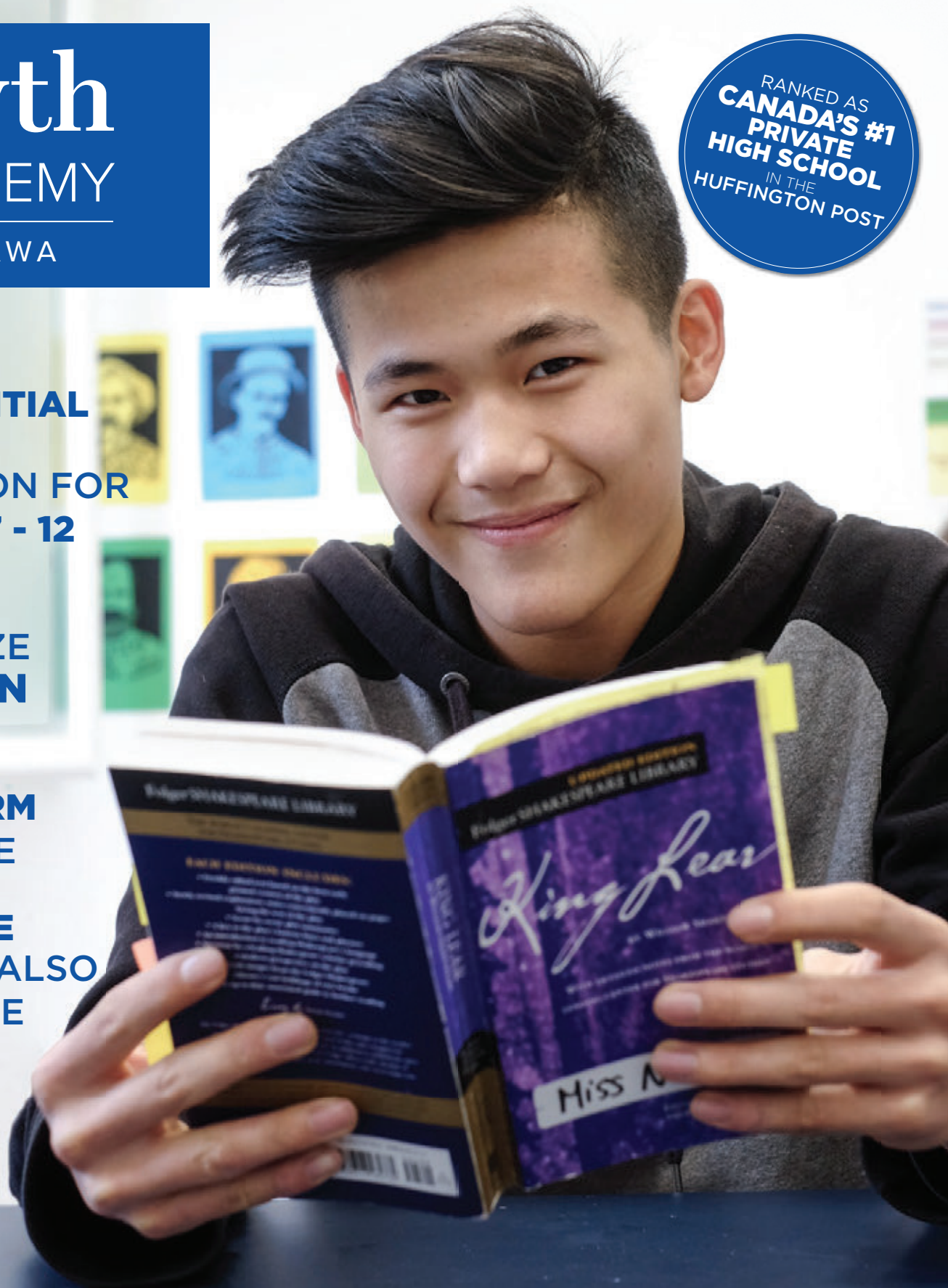


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# Autumn recipes: Four-course meal ahead of Thanksgiving

Photos by Larry Dickenson



Quick Irresistible Waffle Sandwich with Smoked Salmon



**W**ith Thanksgiving and the holiday season rapidly approaching, I have assembled several of my favourite recipes to put you in the spirit for special family dining as well as entertaining. Now, from our table to yours, bon appétit.

## Quick Irresistible Waffle Sandwiches with Smoked Salmon

*Makes 4 servings*

4 thick single waffles

2 tbsp (30 mL) Zesty Ginger Mayonnaise\*, divided  
 ½ cup (125 mL) thick sour cream or crème fraîche, divided  
 6 oz (175 g) smoked salmon, sliced  
 2 cups (500 mL) tender salad leaves (e.g., mâche, arugula, spring mix)  
 1/3 cup (80 mL) vinaigrette, a mustard herb type

### Garnish:

2 tsp (10 mL) capers, well drained  
 fresh herbs (e.g., chive stems, dill, etc.)

1. Cut waffles horizontally in half to create 2 thin slices, keeping the halves together in matching pairs.
2. Open each pair so that the cut sides are up. Drizzle a touch of Zesty Ginger Mayonnaise (½ tsp or 3 mL) over central area of just one slice (of each pair) and add a dollop (1½ tsp or 8 mL) of sour cream. Then top with 1 oz (30 g)

of smoked salmon and another dollop of sour cream before closing the waffle sandwich with the other slice of waffle (cut side down).

3. Crown the waffle sandwiches with another dollop of sour cream and finally a rosette of the remaining smoked salmon.

4. For each individual serving, secure one waffle “sandwich” in position on an individual dinner plate with a touch of Zesty Ginger Mayonnaise and sour cream (to act as “glue”). Add ½ cup (125 mL) of salad leaves to each plate.

5. Drizzle salmon rosettes, salad and plates lightly with mustard herb vinaigrette. Garnish with capers and fresh herbs. Serve promptly.

\* To make ¼ cup (60 mL) Zesty Ginger Mayonnaise, whisk together ¼ cup (60 mL) of mayonnaise, 1 tsp (5 mL) of peeled and grated fresh gingerroot and ¼ tsp (1 mL) of granulated sugar.



Sautéed Mixed Mushroom Salad (with Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce)

**Sautéed Mixed Mushroom Salad  
(with Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce)**

*Makes 4 servings*

Salads that can be prepared all year round and still evoke a “wow” reception are among my favourites. In this unique recipe, basically any type or combination of mushrooms may be used. Sliced, torn or left whole, the mushrooms are sautéed in garlic butter before being arranged on top of a pile of fresh, tender salad leaves. Drizzled with Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce, then sprinkled with roasted pine nuts and, if desired, hearty chunks of Stilton cheese, the result is culinary heaven.

7 oz (200 g) fresh mushrooms\*  
 ¼ cup (60 mL) garlic butter (or butter)  
 To taste, salt and crushed black peppercorns  
 4 cups (1 L) fresh tender salad leaves (e.g., spring mix or arugula)  
 3 tbsp or 2 oz (45 mL or 60 g) crumbled Stilton or feta cheese

3 tbsp (45 mL) roasted pine nuts, divided

Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce

3 tbsp (45 mL) Balsamic Vinegar Syrup\*\*

3 tbsp (45 mL) sesame oil\*\*\*

1. To make the Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce, whisk together Balsamic Vinegar Syrup and sesame oil. Set aside.

2. As desired, slice, tear (e.g., for oyster mushrooms) or leave the mushrooms whole. Melt garlic butter in a couple of large skillets over medium-high heat. Promptly add mushrooms and season with salt and crushed black peppercorns. Stirring frequently, sauté mushrooms until lightly browned.

3. Meanwhile, for individual servings, arrange 1 cup (250 mL) of salad leaves in 4 separate bistro bowls (or on 4 dinner plates) and season with salt and crushed black peppercorns. Drizzle each salad with only 2 tsp (10 mL) of Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce before sprinkling with crumbled Stilton cheese and 1 tsp

(5 mL) of roasted pine nuts.

4. Carefully arrange ¼ of the sautéed mushrooms on top of each serving of dressed salad leaves.

5. Garnish salads according to taste, with drizzles of Sesame Balsamic Vinegar Sauce and remaining roasted pine nuts.

\* It is best to use a variety of different types and shapes of mushrooms (e.g., shiitake, oyster, cremini, chanterelle, maitake, etc.). Note: If strictly using cremini, portobello or readily available white mushrooms, increase the quantity to 10 oz or 280 g.

\*\* To make 3 tbsp (45 mL) of Balsamic Vinegar Syrup, place ¼ cup (60 mL) of balsamic vinegar and 2 tbsp (30 mL) of granulated sugar in a small non-stick skillet over medium heat. Stir until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Reduce heat to medium-low and allow mixture to simmer, stirring frequently, until reduced to 3 tbsp (45 mL). Remove from heat immediately, cover, cool and refrigerate until



ready to use.

\*\*\* For a milder sauce, add more sesame oil, as much as desired, to achieve an appropriate balance.

### Lobster and Shrimp en Papillote

Makes 2 servings

If, on occasion, a menu demands something spectacular in taste and presentation, here is a winner. This is my version of fish/seafood en papillote. The recipe may appear complicated, but it is not. Just fol-



Lobster and Shrimp en Papillote

low the steps. For larger numbers, create the papillotes in an assembly-line process. Cooking time is predictable; presentation is quick.

2 sheets of parchment paper (each: 15x20 inches or 38x50 cm)

½ cup (125 mL) white wine

½ cup (125 mL) coconut milk (fat: 22 per cent)

1 oz (30 g) whole cremini mushroom caps

2 lobster tails (each: 3 oz or 85 g)

6 jumbo shrimp (count: 16 to 20 per lb/450g)

2 tsp (10 mL) olive oil (preferably garlic-infused)

2 tsp (10 mL) chopped fresh chives

½ tsp (3 mL) finely chopped fresh lemon-grass\*

½ tsp (3 mL) minced fresh garlic

½ tsp (3 mL) crushed dried tarragon leaves

1/3 tsp (2 mL) curry powder

¼ tsp (1 mL) peeled and grated fresh gingerroot

¼ tsp (1 mL) ground coriander seeds

Pinch of nutmeg and dried red pepper flakes

6 sprigs of fresh cilantro

1. In a small saucepan over medium heat,

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reduce wine to ¼ cup (60 mL). Whisk in coconut milk, bring mixture to a boil and remove from heat.

2. Cut mushroom caps vertically into ¼-inch (0.6 cm) slices.

3. Using scissors, cut away the shell from the underside of the lobster tails. Slip your thumb in between the flesh and the upper shell, leaving the loosened meat in the shell and attached at the extreme end of the tail.

4. To facilitate the filling of the papillote, push the centre of each piece of parchment paper into separate deep narrow bowls, thus taking on a bowl-shape.

5. To each "parchment bowl," add 1 lobster tail and 3 shrimp; drizzle with half the oil and season with salt and crushed black peppercorns. Sprinkle with half the mushrooms, chives, lemongrass, garlic, tarragon, curry, ginger, coriander, nutmeg and red pepper flakes. Drizzle with half of the wine mixture before topping with 3 sprigs of cilantro.

6. Bring sides of parchment paper together enclosing the ingredients within the "parcel." Tie tightly with string. Place the parcels on a baking sheet.

7. With the oven rack set at the lowest level, bake parcels in a preheated 450F

(230C) oven for about 10 minutes before checking to see if cooking is complete. To do this, remove the parcels from oven and untie one. The thick end of the lobster tail should have just turned opaque and shrimp pink and rather firm; if they're not, retie parcel and return to oven until done.

8. To serve, set each papillote/parcel in a wide shallow soup dish or bistro bowl. If desired, snip string and open.

9. With each papillote, present a separate side plate with a variety of accompaniments (e.g., farfalle pasta, small florets of broccoli and pieces of coloured cauliflower) designed to be gradually added to the papillotes as desired and bathed in the broth. Buttered corn on the cob (cut into small lengths) sprinkled with salt and crushed black peppercorns, is another great side (but not meant for dipping in the sauce). If desired, also present individual side-servings of an aioli mayonnaise\*\* as a dipping sauce for the lobster and shrimp.

\* Use only the bottom white part of the lemongrass.

\*\* To make ½ cup of aioli mayonnaise, whisk together ½ cup (125 mL) of mayonnaise and 1 tsp (5 mL) of finely chopped fresh garlic.

### Goat Cheese-Stuffed Fresh Figs (with Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup)

Makes 4 servings

I have designed a goat cheese and fresh fig recipe for those who are not normally tempted by desserts and would rather opt for a piece of cheese or fruit.

The culinary finesse of the final plate lies in the drizzle of Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup, which pairs exquisitely with the fresh figs and the soft, unripened goat cheese.

6 fresh whole figs, ripe

½ cup (125 mL) soft, unripened goat cheese

¼ cup (60 mL) Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup\*

#### Garnish

sprigs of fresh herbs (e.g., lavender) and/or edible flowers

1. Wipe figs clean with a soft cloth. Cut them vertically in half through stem to base.

2. Lay out fig halves on a clean flat surface with cut side up. Press an indentation into centre of each half. (Avoid cracking outer edge of fig.)

3. Add 1½ tsp (8 mL) of goat cheese to the indentation of each half-fig. Note: The figs may be prepared to this point hours in advance of serving. Place them in an airtight plastic container and refrigerate until shortly before serving.

4. To serve, arrange artistically on a platter or individual plates (3 half-figs per serving). Drizzle each fig half with about 2/3 tsp (3.5 mL) of Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup.

5. Garnish with sprigs of fresh lavender.

\* To make the Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup, in a small saucepan over medium heat, stir 1 cup (250 mL) of granulated sugar and ½ cup (125 mL) of lemon juice together constantly until sugar dissolves and syrup comes to a boil. Immediately reduce heat to lowest setting. Add 6 whole star anise, cover saucepan and allow syrup to rest for 5 minutes. Remove syrup from heat and stir in ¾ tsp (4 mL) of grated lemon zest. Let cool. Store syrup refrigerated in a well-sealed jar for up to several months. (Makes 1 cup or 250 mL.)

Margaret Dickenson is a cookbook author, TV host, menu/recipe developer and a protocol, business and etiquette instructor.



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Goat cheese-stuffed fresh figs with Anise-Infused Lemon Syrup



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# Biodynamic wine production up by 20 per cent annually



Alex  
McMahon

**I**t's 2018 and any good wine list in the country will likely include wines produced following the principles of biodynamics. You may be a keen consumer, or you may have even consumed biodynamic wines at top restaurants without realizing it. You may also have heard a sommelier reference the movement while suggesting a wine at your table. So what are the principles of biodynamics and how do they apply to wine?

Rudolph Steiner developed biodynamic farming in 1924, but he's better known for his role in developing the Waldorf school system. Biodynamics was a response to a lack of fertility and life in the soils of farms, which Steiner said was the result of the over-industrialization of farming.

In essence, biodynamics, which pre-date the organic movement by roughly 20 years, is about creating a healthy, self-sufficient and sustainable ecosystem within every farm. It makes the same commitments as organics, including prohibiting chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, but goes many steps further by insisting on values such as biodi-

versity and the inclusion of farm animals. Biodynamic certification also requires the use of holistic treatments, which include "teas" made from plants known to have anti-microbial and medicinal properties that are used as sprays, as well as animal manures used as compost. In addition, decisions on a biodynamic farm or winery are made based on the lunar calendar.

Demeter, the body responsible for certifying farms or products as biodynamic, is seeing an annual growth of roughly 20 per cent. It offers two certifications for wine. The "made with biodynamic grapes" category denotes a wine is made entirely with biodynamic grapes, but makes no requirements for how it's produced once the grapes are harvested. The "biodynamic wine" category denotes wine that does not include additions such as enzymes, sugar, aromatic yeasts and acids. It also limits the use of sulphur dioxide or SO<sub>2</sub>.

So why have biodynamics become so popular with grape growers and vignerons? Winemakers and sommeliers are obsessed with the idea of "terroir" or a wine's connection to place, time, weather, climate and soil. It's the belief of advocates for biodynamic wines that this natural approach is the best way for a wine to express its terroir — and that means it'll result in the best possible final product.

Mark Cuff, owner of Toronto-based wine agency The Living Vine ([www.thelivingvine.ca](http://www.thelivingvine.ca)) is the largest importer of biodynamic wine in Ontario and has been representing biodynamic wines since 2006. He says there is a long list of reasons bio-

dynamics appeal to the wine world.

"Biodynamics is recognized as the highest standard of organic-based farming available today," Cuff says. "The byproduct of a biodynamic vineyard is an integrated closed-gate farming system that regenerates itself, leads to lower long-term operational costs and healthier disease-resistant crops/vines. Because of the lack of chemicals being used in the vineyards, biodynamic farms are a safer work environment for farmers and their employees. Naturally lower yields and higher quality grapes contribute to more interesting and complex wines for consumers."

Nicolas Joly of la Coulée de Serrant in France's Loire Valley is often referred to as the godfather of biodynamic winemaking. He says it's hard to hide mistakes if you're following biodynamic principles.

"The work of the cellar has only needed to become intense to correct the grave secondary effects of synthetic chemical products that farmers were advised to use, without warning them of the consequences," Joly writes on his winery's website. "It is these products that 'spoil' the unity that an AOC [appellation d'origine contrôlée] should express. This is why then one must no longer make a wine to please Mr. X or Mr. Y who, because of their name, can sell to consumers who are too confident and badly informed of the changes of the past 25 years. How many people know, for example, that winemakers can make use of 350 aromatic and genetic yeasts along with a whole arsenal of other products as well?"

To paraphrase, the need for so much intervention and manipulation in the winemaking process is to correct problems that arise due to unhealthy fruit, which are a result of the use of harmful chemicals, and to appease critics and markets rather than to produce a quality product. These practices are a deterrent to producing a wine that truly expresses the terroir.

Readers interested in drinking biodynamic wine can try the Spanish Pablo Claro Biodynamic Cabernet Sauvignon/Graciano by Dominio de Punctum S.L. (\$18.95) or New Zealand's Millton La Cote Pinot Noir 2016 (\$34.55.) Both are available in the Vintages section of select LCBO stores.

Alex McMahon is wine director at Riviera restaurant in Ottawa.



Vines at la Coulée de Serrant winery in France's Loire Valley.



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# A contemporary couple in a charming residence

*Photos by Ashley Fraser*



The 1940s Tudor Revival-style residence of the Cuban ambassador sits on Rockcliffe Park's leafy Acacia Avenue and was built in the 1940s.



**Margo  
Roston**

**J**osephina de la Caridad Vidal Ferreiro and José Anselmo López Perera have all the comforts of home in their snug residence on Acacia Avenue in Rockcliffe. There is a vast array of fine

Cuban rum and a wooden humidor full of Cuban cigars. But this unique diplomatic husband-and-wife team would be at home anywhere they land. In Ottawa, she is Cuba's ambassador and he is the minister-counsellor, although with a twinkle in his eye, Perera insists he's the ambassador at home. They are actually quite used to role reversal. In past public service life, he has had the leading title in postings, she the lesser.

The couple arrived in March, just in time to face an ice storm, but since then, they've settled in nicely to their 1940s Tudor Revival-style home, which is typical of many homes in the area. The two-

storey house has leaded glass windows and belonged to an exchequer court judge named Camil Noël when Cuba bought it as its ambassador's residence in 1970. Of moderate size, the main reception room had already been extended with the addition of two rooms; a smaller sitting room and a sunroom attached by French doors. The casually decorated sunroom is now a smoking room to which Perera retires with guests to try a variety of Cuba's best Havanas. "We shut the doors," his non-smoking wife points out.

At the time of the extension, the ambassador of the day added to the garage to make room for two cars and extended the





The comfortable reception room is full of Cuban art, and features a well-stocked bar full of fine Cuban rum.



A photo of former Cuban president Fidel Castro sits on a table in the main reception room.



Cuban Ambassador Josephina de la Caridad Vidal Ferreiro and her husband, José Anselmo López Perera, in their warm Acacia Avenue home.



very small dining room forward towards the street to make some more room. Now at least 14 guests can sit down for a Cuban dinner.

Comfortable leather furniture dots the two principal reception rooms and a bright pink wall is the focal point of the main room, where a large modern portrait hangs over the fireplace. Many examples of works by artists of the Cuban Vanguard movement of the '20s and '30s adorn the walls of the house. These artists broke with the European style at that time. Case in point: a portrait of a *guajira*, or peasant, by well-known painter Victor Manuel and a contemporary view of Havana's cathedral.

Proudly displayed is a stunning photograph of Fidel Castro taken by iconic Canadian photographer Yousuf Karsh in Havana after Castro invited him to take his portrait. This is one of several that Karsh printed and was chosen by the ambassador at the time for the embassy. There is also a picture of the ambassador with Castro and the father and grandfather of Elian Gonzalez in Havana. In 2000, six-year-old Elian sparked a firestorm in Miami between the U.S. and Cuba after his mother and others died at sea trying to reach Florida from Cuba — he and two others survived and were rescued.

At the time, Ferreiro was working at the Cuban Interest Centre in Washington and was at the centre of the negotiations for Elian's release. She eventually flew back to Cuba with him and still keeps in touch with him and his father. There is also a smiling picture of the ambassador with Raul Castro. It's very casual, she says, because she was at the airport saying farewell to Jimmy Carter when she bumped into him and asked for a picture. He gave her and her colleague a big hug. Voilà... a lovely shot.

In the dining room, the neutral theme is delightfully brought to life by a large painting of a rooster by Mariano, a painter whose bright and lively images of roosters are well known in his island home. The dining room table is enhanced with gold-embossed glasses with the crest of Cuba and by cream and gold plates along with engraved silverware for formal dinners. A lovely collection of silver was provided by Cuba's first ambassador to Canada.

The residence has a young Cuban chef who is deft with the flavours and spices of his Caribbean island. "We serve rice and black beans," the ambassador says, "and roasted pork and *ropa vieja*" which translates to "old clothes." Legend has it that this national dish originated



After a small renovation, the dining room now has room for 14 dinner guests.



The ambassador's husband has a fine selection of Cuban cigars in his humidor.





The casually decorated sunroom is now a smoking room to which the ambassador's husband retires with company to try a variety of Cuba's best Havanas.



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hundreds of years ago in Spain when a poor, hungry elderly man who couldn't afford food for his family shredded and cooked his clothes. As he said a prayer



José Anselmo López Perera lights a fine Cuban cigar in the residence's smoking room.

over the boiling cloth, a miracle transformed it into a thick meat stew. *Ropa vieja* consists of slow-cooked, easily shredded meat with vegetables.

Tamales, flans and mango ice cream are among the chef's specialties and there are always mojitos and daiquiris spiced with Cuban rum.

The house is bigger than it looks, with seven bedrooms, two of which have been converted to offices and one reserved for visiting dignitaries on official business. And there is a very large garden, where children of diplomats often come to play.

With the verve and enthusiasm of these new residents on Acacia Avenue, the streets of Rockcliffe should be grooving to the pleasures of Cuban music and the spices and scents of all things deliciously tropical.

Margo Roston is *Diplomat's* culture editor.

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## New arrivals

**Vitae Verkammen**  
Ambassador of Belgium



Ambassador Verkammen joined the foreign service in 1992 as an attaché in the cabinet of the foreign minister and from 1994 to 1997, he was consul at Belgium's consulate general in Hong Kong.

From 1997 to 2002, he served as first secretary at the permanent mission to the European Union and from 2002 to 2003, he returned to the foreign ministry in the department for Central and Eastern Europe, working on Balkan and Russian files. In 2003, he became a diplomatic adviser to the prime minister and in 2007, he was sent to Lebanon as ambassador.

From 2011 to 2015, he was ambassador of Belgium in Senegal, with dual accreditation to Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. He then returned to the foreign ministry as director for the Middle East and North Africa.

**Svetlana Sashova Stoycheva-Etopolski**  
Ambassador of Bulgaria



Svetlana Sashova Stoycheva-Etopolski joined the foreign ministry in 2003. At headquarters, she served in the information directorate and worked on Bulgaria's accession to

the EU. From 2007 to 2011, she headed the consular office at the consulate general in New York.

From 2011 to 2014, she worked at headquarters, working on bilateral and transatlantic issues. In July 2014, she was posted to Ottawa as head of the political section.

Before joining the ministry, she worked for the UN development program and on EU pre-accession projects. In 1996, she worked with the British Council to modernize Bulgarian vocational education.

She holds a master's degree in economics and speaks English and Russian, with a working knowledge of Spanish. She is married to Hristo Iliev Etopolsky.

**Vasilios Philippou**  
High Commissioner for Cyprus



Ambassador Philippou began his career in Brussels at the European Commission, but soon joined Cyprus's foreign service and began working in the EU division of the ministry.

Soon, he went to New York as a consul and four years later, he became the first secretary at the mission to the EU. He later returned to New York as consul general.

Back at headquarters, he worked in economic affairs. Soon, he became counsellor in multilateral affairs before becoming ambassador to several Latin American countries, including Mexico.

He returned to headquarters and later became high commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. He is also currently Cyprus' representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal.

The high commissioner speaks Greek, French and Spanish. He is married to Anthea Vanech.

**Thomas Winkler**  
Ambassador of Denmark



Ambassador Winkler joined the foreign ministry as head of section in 1988, after having graduated from the law faculty at the University of Copenhagen.

Two years later, he went on his first posting, as second secretary in Moscow. After two years in Russia, he moved on to Ukraine, where he served as deputy head of mission. In late 1994, he returned to headquarters, this time as deputy director of the department of EU law. In 1998, he became deputy head of mission at the embassy in Sweden.

From 2002 to 2004, he returned again to headquarters, where he served as deputy director of the Russian department after which he became ambassador and undersecretary for legal affairs. In 2013, he became Denmark's ambassador to Moscow.

The ambassador also served as an associate professor of law between 2005 and 2013 at the University of Copenhagen.

**Pedro Vergés**  
Ambassador of Dominican Republic



Ambassador Vergés has had a long and varied career, much of it in the world of academia and culture. He has been a professor or visiting lecturer at schools in Spain, Dominican Republic and the U.S.

From 1982 to 1991, he was executive secretary of the Dominican Institute of Hispanic Culture and from 1990 to 1993, he served as cultural director of the Hispanic Cultural Centre, based in Santo Domingo.

In 1996, he was named ambassador to Spain with concurrent representation to Morocco, Finland, Norway and Andorra and four years later, he became ambassador in Spain. From 2004 to 2009, he was ambassador in Germany and from 2009 to 2013, he served as ambassador to Japan. Finally, from 2013 to 2016, he was ambassador to the Organization of American States. He later became minister of culture for Dominican Republic.

**Toomas Lukk**  
Ambassador of Estonia



Ambassador Lukk joined the foreign ministry's political and international organizations division in 1993, after having spent eight years working at the Estonian Academy of Sciences.

Three years later, he was sent to Estonia's permanent mission at the UN in New York, where he spent three years.

In 1999, he returned to Tallinn to work in security policy and arms control, after which, in 2002, he became ambassador to Latvia. From 2006 to 2008, he was director of the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia division and was then appointed as ambassador to Georgia and Armenia in 2008. From 2012 to 2016, he was ambassador to China, Mongolia and Vietnam.

Beginning in 2016, he was director of the Asia-Pacific, Australia, Africa, Latin America and Middle East division.

The ambassador speaks Estonian, English, Russian, Finnish, Latvian and some French. He is married to Piret Lukk and they have two sons.



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## Boomo Frank Sofonia High Commissioner for Lesotho



High Commissioner Sofonia worked as a senior management services officer for a few years before being named first secretary to Lesotho's embassy in Denmark in 1988.

He was then sent to Britain as counsellor, where he stayed for six years. From 1997 to 2001, he was deputy chief of protocol, after which he worked as controller of police standards at the ministry of home affairs and public safety.

He left the public service in 2004 and then, in 2006, he joined the All Basotho Convention, a newly established political party in Lesotho. In 2012, he was elected to Parliament and was re-elected in 2015. In 2017, he retired from elected office.

The high commissioner has a bachelor's degree in administration and political science from the National University of Lesotho. He speaks Sesotho and English. He is married and has three children.

## Roberto Rodriguez Arnillas Ambassador of Peru



Ambassador Rodriguez Arnillas is a career diplomat who joined the Peruvian foreign service in 1990, beginning his work in the economic promotion division. He soon moved to

the international co-operation and cultural division and had his first posting two years later, as consul in Ecuador.

In 1995, he was posted to Brazil and in 1999, he went to Washington to head the embassy's trade and economic division. From 2005 to 2006, he was the prime minister's adviser on trade issues. In 2007, he became chief of staff for the deputy foreign minister.

In 2009, he was sent to New York as deputy permanent representative to the UN and then in 2012, he came to Canada as deputy chief of mission. In 2015, he became chief of staff to the foreign minister and later chief of staff to the secretary general of foreign affairs. Prior to this appointment, he was senior adviser on foreign affairs in the office of the president.

He is married to Roxana Recalde Mosquera de Rodriguez.

## João do Carmo Ataíde da Câmara Ambassador of Portugal



Ambassador do Carmo Ataíde da Câmara finished his military service in 1984 and joined the foreign ministry the same year.

He worked in the office of the minister of state for European integration in 1987 and was then posted to the embassy in South Africa two years later. In 1994, he was posted to Brazil and then returned to headquarters as director of the European department.

In 1999, he became head of the cabinet of the minister of state for European affairs and a year later, he was sent to Britain as minister-counsellor. From 2003 to 2005, he served three different departments: Sub-Saharan Africa, European Union affairs and the foreign intelligence service. He was then sent to Zimbabwe as ambassador with dual accreditation to Zambia and Malawi. He was ambassador to Angola in 2012 and then ambassador to India in 2015.

He is married to Maria Raquel and has three children.

## Vít Koziak Ambassador of Slovakia



Ambassador Koziak is a career diplomat who joined the foreign ministry in 1999 in the department of Western Europe and North America. Soon after, in 2003, he received his

first posting, as third secretary in Paris.

In 2007, he returned to headquarters as co-ordinator of the directorate for international organizations and development assistance. A year later, he became co-ordinator of the directorate for global challenges, human rights, the UN and other international organizations.

In 2009, he became first secretary at the embassy in Washington, where he spent the following four years. From 2013 to 2015, he was deputy director for foreign policy in the office of the president and then became director for three years prior to coming to Ottawa.

The ambassador, a graduate of the foreign service program at Oxford University, speaks English, French and Slovak. He is married and has two daughters.

## Melita Gabrič Ambassador of Slovenia



Ambassador Gabrič started her diplomatic career as a diplomatic affairs adviser to the prime minister. She had completed a bachelor's in journalism and social affairs at the

University of Ljubljana and subsequently studied at the diplomatic academy. She later completed a master's degree and PhD from the same university, this time in international relations.

In 2003, she was named senior foreign affairs adviser to the president of Slovenia and then spent one year as senior adviser to the president of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, after which she served as consul general of Slovenia in New York. In 2012, she joined the foreign ministry's department of human rights. She then served as director of development co-operation and humanitarian aid before being posted to Canada.

The ambassador speaks Slovene, English, French, Italian, Serbian and Croatian. She is married.

## Alphayo J. Kidata High Commissioner for Tanzania



High Commissioner Kidata studied economics at the University of Dar es Salaam and then pursued a master's in computer science at Sichuan University in China in

1998. He also completed a master's in public economic management and finance in 2004.

The high commissioner has a long civil service record. He joined the ministry of lands, housing and human settlements development in 1993 upon completion of his first degree. Eventually, he was named senior economist and director of policy and planning in the same ministry.

From 2011 to 2015, he was deputy permanent secretary and permanent secretary in several ministries before becoming commissioner general of the Tanzania Revenue Authority from late 2015 to 2017.

Before his posting to Canada, he was the permanent secretary in the office of the Tanzanian president. He is married and has three children.



## Non-heads of mission

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Jarrod Wood  
First secretary  
Stephen Kay  
Counsellor

### Azerbaijan

Fuad Aliyev  
Chargé d'affaires

### Benin

Freud Ulrich Klissou  
Counsellor

### Bulgaria

Stanislav Dimitrov Stanoev  
Second secretary and consul

### Cameroon

Marguerite Abeng Bilongo Epse  
Esso  
First secretary

### China

Shan Bai  
Counsellor  
Yue Zhong  
First secretary

### Cuba

Areadna Quintana Castaneda  
Third secretary  
David Aldama Pando  
Third secretary

### Dominican Republic

Erika Ylonca Alvarez Rodriguez  
Minister-counsellor

### Egypt

Mohy Mohammed Moussa Khalil  
Attaché

### European Union

Jaime Manuel Duran Navarro  
Attaché

### Finland

Jyrki Tapio Nissila  
Minister-counsellor

### France

Géraldine Ondine Christophe  
Vallaud  
Third secretary  
Jérôme Marie Christian Bresson  
Minister-Counsellor

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Minister-counsellor  
Lennart Eisentraeger  
Attaché  
Ramin Sigmund Moschtaghi  
First secretary

### Israel

Bar Segal  
Second secretary

### Italy

Stefano Cont  
Defence and air attaché

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Takeshi Miyake  
First secretary

### Yoshifuru Funahashi

First Secretary  
Yutaka Konishi  
First secretary  
Naoki Seki  
First secretary  
Takuya Sasayama  
Minister

### Kenya

Vascaline Kanini Mbogo  
Third secretary

### Kuwait

Hamad M F M KH Aldhafeeri  
Second secretary

### Latvia

Katrina Kjaspere  
Third secretary

### Libya

Mohamed S M Zreg  
First secretary

### Mali

Alou Sarembe  
Attaché

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Alfonso Vera Sanchez  
Second secretary  
Dalia Franco Jimenez  
Attaché

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Zolzaya Dorjtsoo  
Second secretary

Munkh-Ulzii Tserendorj  
Minister-counsellor

### Paraguay

Oscar Augusto Luiz Divaldo Baez  
Galeano  
First secretary

### Poland

Mikolaj Agaton Cholewicz  
First secretary  
Aneta Dorota Lukas-Cholewicz  
Third secretary  
Karolina Marta Willmann-  
Duralaska  
First secretary

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Counsellor

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Counsellor  
Marwa M. I. Alshaman  
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Osama Abdulhaleem A.  
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Mosaad Abdulaziz S. Alabdullatif  
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Talaie S.M. Al Askar  
Third secretary

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Huseyin Gurel  
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Necmettin Emre  
Counsellor  
Mustafa Toprak  
Attaché

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First secretary  
David Olof Reed  
Deputy high commissioner

### United States

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Assistant Attaché  
Leslie Stephen Degraffenried  
Minister-counsellor  
William Joseph Rowell  
Defence attaché  
Michael Gerald Carovillano  
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Thanh Tung Nguyen  
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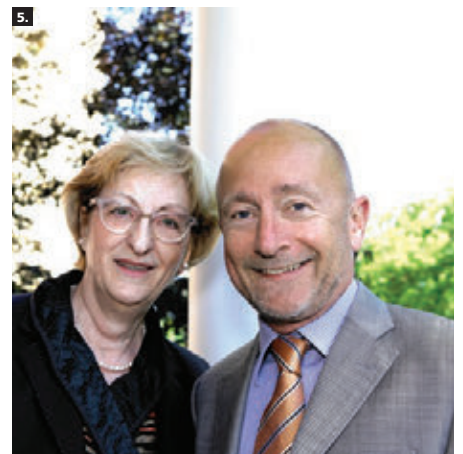
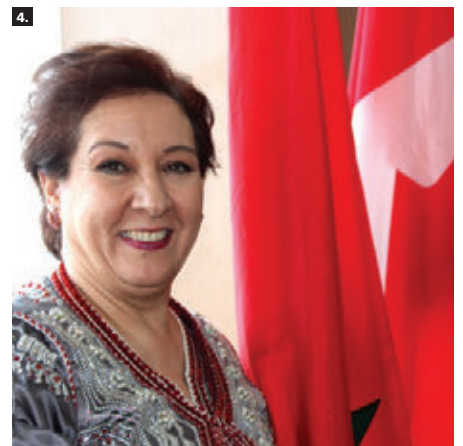
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1. The Indo-Caribbean Organization of Ottawa held its annual Indo-Caribbean Cultural Show at St. Joseph's Parish Hall. Shown are Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner Garth Chatoor and MP Mona Fortier. (Photo: Yasmin Asgarali) 2. Japanese Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane and his wife, Kaoru, hosted a reception at the ambassador's residence in Rockcliffe for this year's departing JET Program participants. The diplomatic couple is shown in the middle, surrounded by JET participants. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. In celebration of the 91st anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Ambassador Shaye Lu hosted a reception at the embassy. He's shown with Lt.-Col. Haifeng Wang, assistant defence attaché of the embassy. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. In celebration of the 120th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence, Ambassador Petronila Garcia hosted a reception and "concert on the Hill" by renowned Philippine pianist Raul Sunico, who performed with the Ottawa Chamber Orchestra. More than 450 people attended. Ambassador Garcia stands with Donald Bobiash, assistant deputy minister for the Asia-Pacific. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. A celebration of Cameroon's national day took place at the Fairmont Château Laurier. From left: Cameroon High Commissioner Solomon Anu'A Gheyle Azoh-Mbi and MP Matt DeCoursey, parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. The Slovak embassy hosted a farewell reception for Ambassador Andrej Droba and his wife, Daniela Drobova. Droba (left) is shown with MP Harold Albrecht. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. To bid farewell to Zimbabwean Ambassador Florence Zano Chideya, who was dean of the diplomatic corps, Saudi Ambassador Naif Bin Bandir Alsudairy hosted a luncheon at his residence. From left: Alsudairy, Chideya and John Baird, senior adviser at Bennett Jones LLP and former foreign minister. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. To mark his presentation of credentials and the 20th anniversary of Kazakhstan's capital, Ambassador Akybek Kamaldinov, and his wife, Olga Kamaldinova, hosted a reception at the Westin Hotel. The ambassador is shown here. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and French President Emmanuel Macron, shown here, held a joint press conference on Parliament Hill during Macron's visit to the capital. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Moroccan Ambassador Souriya Otmani and her husband, Merouane Sadqi, hosted a national day reception at the Westin Hotel. The ambassador is shown here. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. Croatian Ambassador Marica Matkovic hosted a national day reception at her embassy. She's shown with outgoing Danish Ambassador Niels Boel Abrahamsen. (Photo: Lois Siegel) 6. The Amazing Thailand Festival, held at the Horticulture Building of Lansdowne Park, featured cultural shows, handicrafts and food. From left: Thai Ambassador Maris Sangiampongsa, his wife, Kokan, and son, Chain, with colourful Thai umbrellas. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. To celebrate Austria's centenary, Ambassador Stefan Pehringer and his wife, Debra Jean, hosted a reception at their residence. From left: Grant J. McDonald, managing partner, KPMG LLP, and the Pehringers. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. The defence and security team of the British High Commission's international trade department hosted an evening of networking and whisky tasting. From left: trade officer Colin Horton, Marie-Hélène Roberge, senior director at Public Services and Procurement Canada and Sean Crossan, director at Public Services and Procurement Canada. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. An Indonesian fashion festival took place at the Horticulture Building at Lansdowne Park. Designers from Indonesia, Chicago, New York and Montreal took part. Ambassador Tuku Faizasyah and his wife, Andis Erawan, attended and shown here are fashions by designer Entin Garti, of Montreal. This collection is known as Batik Ombak and the patterns represent ocean waves. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. The International Cultural Festival took place at Lansdowne Park's Horticulture Building. From left, Margaret Kyogire, deputy head of mission for Uganda, and Benedict Ddungu, founder of Shangaza Performers from Toronto, attended the opening night. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. Hungarian Ambassador Bálint Ódor hosted a vernissage of a photography show of Hungarian-born documentary photographer Gábor Szilasi, shown here, standing in front of one of his photographs. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. A seminar titled "Europe in Perspective" and organized by the embassies of Bulgaria, Austria and Global Affairs Canada, took place at Global Affairs Canada. Bulgarian Ambassador Svetlana Stoycheva-Etropolis gave a speech. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. The Ottawa Diplomatic Association hosted its annual general meeting at the Westin Hotel. From left, Serbian Ambassador Mihailo Papazoglu, South African High Commissioner Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-Mntambo, Guyanan High Commissioner Clarissa Sabita Riehl, former Zimbabwean ambassador Florence Zano Chideya, Saudi Ambassador Naif Bandir A. Alsudairy, Jamaican High Commissioner Janice Miller (president of the ODA), Macedonian Ambassador Toni Dimovski, Pakistani High Commissioner Tariq Azim Khan and Cameroon High Commissioner Solomon Anu'A Gheyle Azoh-Mbi. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. The Belgian embassy hosted a national day celebration and farewell reception at the ambassador's residence. Ambassador Raoul Delcorde bid farewell in his remarks. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. To mark the end of Ramadan, Brunei High Commissioner Pg. Kamal Bashah Pg. Ahmad held an open house at the embassy. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Egyptian Ambassador Motaz Mounir Zahran and his wife, Hala Elhusseiny Youssef, hosted a reception to mark Egypt's national day and bid farewell. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. The Great India Festival took place at City Hall. This dancer was among many performers over the weekend-long festival. (Photo: Lois Siegel)





1. Indian High Commissioner Vikas Swarup, centre, and his wife, Aparna, hosted a reception to mark the 71st anniversary of India's independence. MP Bardish Chagger, left, attended. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. An evening of art by Darlene Kulig took place at the Mizrahi presentation gallery in support of the Ottawa Hospital Foundation. From left: Yang Yundong, counsellor at the Chinese embassy; Toronto-based developer Sam Mizrahi and his wife, Micki. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. Latvians in Canada celebrated their native country's centenary by planting a red oak at Strathcona Park. Shown is Ambassador Kārlis Eihensbaums doing the honours. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Vietnamese Ambassador Nguyen Duc Hoa, left, and his wife, Tran Nguyen Ahn Thu, hosted a national day reception at the Canadian Museum of History. It marked Vietnam's 73rd national day and the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Canada. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. Italian Ambassador Claudio Taffuri, shown here, and his wife, Maria Enrica Francesca Stajano, hosted a reception at their home to mark Italy's national day. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. A 10th annual Iftar harmony dinner took place at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building. Larry Lederman, retired ambassador and former chief of protocol, left, and Rabbi Idan Scher, of the Congregation Machzikei Hadas, attended. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 7. Elizabeth Heatherington hosted a coffee party at her home to congratulate Anna Ustuba, wife of the EU Ambassador, on the birth of her newborn son, Markuss, born in July. Ustuba is joined in the photo by her daughter, Kristiana. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. Philippine Ambassador Petronila P. Garcia hosted a fundraising concert and dinner for 20 at her residence in support of the Friends of National Arts Centre Orchestra (FNACO). From left: Suzanne Gumpert, first vice-president of FNACO; Garcia; and Albert Benoit, president of FNACO. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. More than 125 people attended the Black Ribbon Day event that took place at the Centre Block of Parliament. From left: Estonian Ambassador Toomas Lukk, MP Chandra Arya, who was the event patron, and Andris Kesteris, president of the Central and Eastern European Council in Canada, president of the Baltic Federation in Canada and president of the Latvian National Federation in Canada. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. To mark the 208th anniversary of the independence of Mexico, Dionisio Pérez Jácome Friscione and his wife, Maria Jose Gonzalez de Cossio Higuera, hosted a reception at their residence. (Photo: Ülke Baum)

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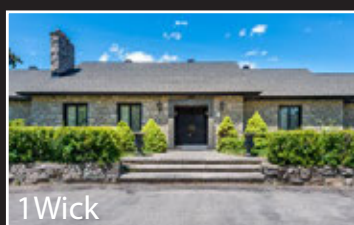
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# Autumn and winter activities: The lesser-known gems

By Patrick Langston

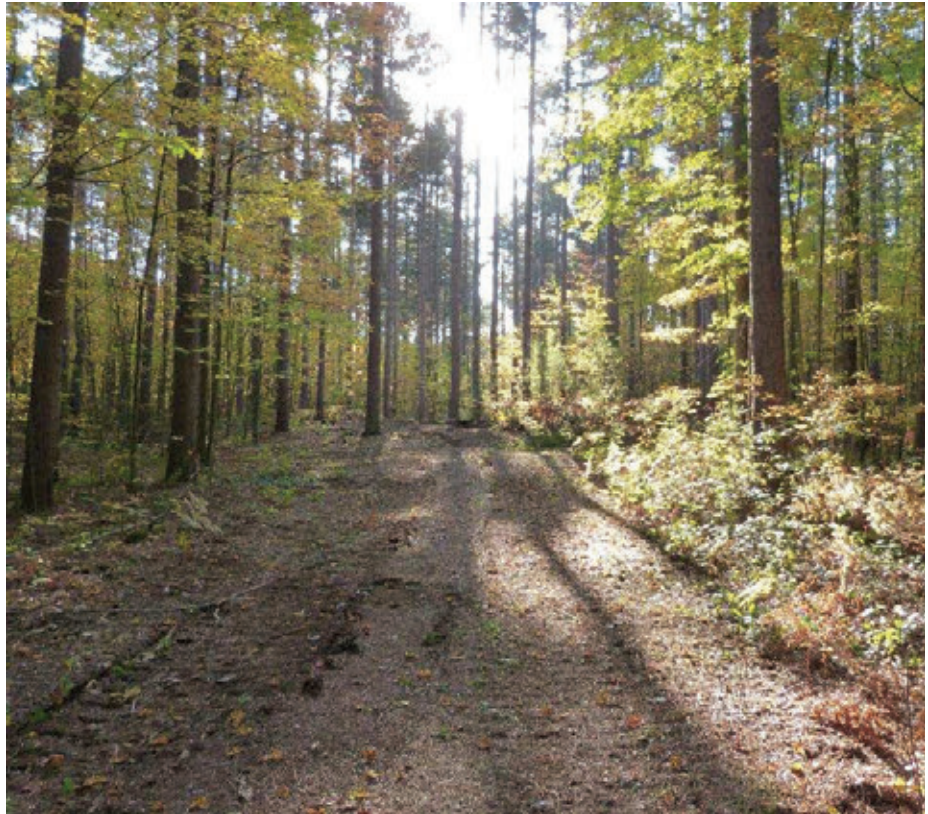
**O**ttawa summers are short. That makes it way too easy to start cocooning or to slip into the usual social routine come October. Nothing wrong with familiar stuff, of course, but it doesn't do much to broaden our perspectives or sharpen our brains.

To that end, we offer some lesser-known places and events in and around the city. They're fun, readily accessible, and not exactly budget-breakers. Best of all, you'll return home invigorated.

**Overnight, the rustic way:** Why sleep in your same-old, same-old city bed when you could be dreaming sweet dreams in a yurt, cabin or four-season tent as the snow drifts down over Gatineau Park? These structures sleep anywhere from four to 17 people, come furnished and equipped with basic needs such as kitchen utensils, and can be rented by the night. But be prepared, because they are rustic. That means outhouses, a wood stove and most likely a trek via skis or snowshoes to reach them. But hey, weren't you looking for something different to do this year? Winter rentals start Dec. 1. Visit [ncc-ccn.gc.ca](http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca) for more details.

**A short jaunt south:** Merrickville, 50 minutes south of downtown Ottawa, is a small-town gift that keeps on giving. When you visit, don't miss the unexpected, sometimes purely whimsical creations at Gray Art Glass (classes also available) and the stunning display gardens at Rideau Woodland Ramble (open till November, with plants, shrubs and more for sale). Also on the must-visit list: the historic Blockhouse, built in 1832-1833 to defend the Rideau Canal against possible incursions by the Americans and now an enticing museum spotlighting local artifacts. The Blockhouse is open until Oct. 10. Boutiques and more also abound in Merrickville. [realmerrickville.ca](http://realmerrickville.ca)

**God bless us, every one:** That iconic line is, of course, spoken by Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens' much-loved *A Christmas Carol*. Few give better voice to Dickens' ghostly story of seasonal redemption than John D. Huston. The Toronto actor has been presenting his one-person rendi-



Larose Forest is a magnificent 10,000-hectare treasure about 30 minutes east of Ottawa.

tion of *A Christmas Carol* in Ottawa for more than 25 years, re-creating in everything from gesture to costume the public performances Dickens gave of his own story. Huston is a master of nuance and his show at The Gladstone Theatre, Dec. 16-22, will be a Christmas highlight. The Gladstone, at 910 Gladstone Ave., is close to Preston Street's restaurants and pubs. [thegladstone.ca](http://thegladstone.ca), 613-233-4523.

**Who needs skiing?** Sure, Mt. Tremblant in the Laurentians north of Montreal made its name as a picturesque ski resort, but that doesn't mean you need to be a skier to enjoy winter there. You could, instead, go dogsledding nearby, guiding your own team of Siberian huskies. Or strap on a headlamp for the evening ziplines and aerial games. Never gone ice climbing? Learn how from a pro. Mt. Tremblant also brims with shopping, dining and other enticers. [tremblant.ca](http://tremblant.ca) and [tremblantactivities.com](http://tremblantactivities.com)

**All about art:** The new Ottawa Art Gallery at 50 Mackenzie King Bridge is a multi-storey treasure trove of intimate galleries, fascinating collections and special exhibits. The collections spotlight painting, sculpture, photography and new media by everyone from A.Y. Jackson to Lynne Cohen. Exhibitions this fall and winter include international design darling Karim Rashid, who studied at Carleton University and whose creations include the Garbino waste can and the Oh chair. The OAG has a licensed café — soon to be a full restaurant — and it's close to the ByWard Market and the highly walkable neighbourhood of Sandy Hill. 613-233-8699, [oaggao.ca](http://oaggao.ca)

**The real thing:** An artificial Christmas tree is tidy and maintenance-free, but when it comes to a fresh, woodsy aroma, well, artificial doesn't exactly cut it, does it? Speaking of cutting, if you celebrate Christmas, why not do the cutting your-



self? Cut-your-own Christmas tree farms pepper the countryside around Ottawa, and an hour or so hunting for the perfect one on a crisp December day is a bracing Canadian family experience. Sturdy boots and gloves recommended. For a list of farms: [christmastrees.on.ca](http://christmastrees.on.ca)

**One very old bog:** Mer Bleue in the east end of Ottawa is an oddity, a northern boreal landscape within striking distance of a large city. But at more than 6,700 hectares, the Mer Bleue Conservation Area isn't just a treat for hikers, cross-country skiers, snowshoeing enthusiasts, birders and photographers, It's also a 7,700-year-old bog that's one of the most studied in the world, boasts a research station at its centre and features an interpretative boardwalk. Admission and parking are free. [ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/green-belt/mer-bleue](http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/green-belt/mer-bleue)

**Getting literary:** Why should children be the only ones to enjoy sitting quietly while someone reads aloud to them? At the annual Ottawa International Writers Festival, Oct. 25-30, first-rate authors read from their books and discuss the writing life, discourse on topics ranging from science to history to politics, interact with audiences and generally celebrate all things literary, including poetry. This year's lineup includes Scottish crime writer Ian Rankin, whose newest book is *In a House of Lies*, as well as Pulitzer Prize-winner Chris Hedges on the unravelling of his native U.S. [writersfestival.org](http://writersfestival.org)

**River sculptures:** Remic Rapids Park, just off the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway and four kilometres west of Parliament Hill, wouldn't be the same without John Felice Ceprano. He's the man who's been creating extraordinary balanced rock sculptures there for more than 30 years, using materials from the Ottawa River. The sculptures, which can be breathtaking at sunset, remain all summer. Winter puts paid to them, but then Ceprano returns the next year to create anew.

**Touring delights:** The Perth Autumn Studio Tour is marking its 27th year, and organizers know a thing or two about mounting a good event. During Thanksgiving weekend, Oct. 6-8, 33 juried artisans from Perth and the Ottawa Valley showcase their creations, including jewelry, etchings, canoes, pottery, furniture, stone sculpture and wood carvings. To minimize travel time and maximize engagement with the art, everything is



Mont Tremblant isn't just for skiing. You can also go dogsledding nearby.

grouped in eight rural studios near Perth, many of them within biking distance of each other. Some of the studios feature demonstrations and garden walks. Admission to the tour is free and a hearty lunch is available at Brooke Valley School. 613-267-5237, [perthstudiotour.com](http://perthstudiotour.com)

**Let there be light:** Heritage-themed Upper Canada Village in Morrisburg, about 90 kilometres south of downtown Ottawa, celebrates the Christmas season with Alight at Night from late November to early January. The village and its historic buildings blaze with close to one million lights, creating a magical backdrop



Upper Canada Village boasts cheery Christmas lights from late November to early January.

for a horse-drawn wagon or two-person carriage ride, carolling or just a stroll. Overnight accommodation is available at Montgomery House, a historic log home with room for a large family. 1-800-437-2233, [uppercanadavillage.com](http://uppercanadavillage.com)

**The Diefenbunker:** International sabre rattling earlier this year reminded us that the threat of nuclear war is alive and well. That same, growing threat six decades ago impelled the government of prime minister John Diefenbaker to build what's now known as the Diefenbunker, a 100,000-square-foot underground facility in west-end Carp to house key government and military officials during a nuclear attack. Now a Cold War museum, the bunker — including the PM's suite and the CBC emergency broadcasting studio — powerfully evokes a past that sometimes feels like the future. Fortunately, it's not all doom and gloom in Carp, as Christmas craft shows, Alice's Village Café and the soon-to-open Ridge Rock brewpub attest. 1-800-409-1965, [diefenbunker.ca](http://diefenbunker.ca)

**A desert transformed:** A scant century ago, what is now the magnificent, 10,000-hectare Larose Forest about 30 minutes east of downtown Ottawa, was known as the Bourget Desert. Forestry, farming and fires had stripped the sandy soil of trees, leaving the land useless and, eventually, all but abandoned. A replanting crusade begun in 1928 under the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture's Ferdinand Larose resulted in the transformation of the area into what it is today: a haven of pines, maples and other trees relished by hikers, cross-country skiers, dogsledders and birders. Nearby on Grant Road is the abandoned village of Grant, now just a small, secluded cemetery and some foundations. More on Larose Forest at [prescott-russell.on.ca/en/](http://prescott-russell.on.ca/en/)

**Music at The Laff:** Partial to blues, folk and rock music with a side order of wit and stage smarts? Try John Carroll, who's been performing at the Château Lafayette — AKA The Laff — in the ByWard Market every Wednesday since 2004. A consummate musician and a darn good songwriter, Carroll is a local gem who has long deserved a broader reputation. The Laff is Ottawa's oldest tavern, in operation since 1849, and clearly favours longevity. Its other mainstay musician is Lucky Ron, who plays country music every Saturday afternoon and hasn't missed a show since he started at The Laff in 1999. *The New York Times* dubbed his show a must-see for anyone spending a day and half in Ottawa. 613-241-4747, [thelaff.ca](http://thelaff.ca)

Patrick Langston is an Ottawa writer who's convinced there's something new and fascinating to discover every time he leaves home.

# Welcome to 100-year-old Latvia



Latvia's capital, Riga, a picturesque and fairytale-like medieval town, was established as a city in 1201. It boasts rich architecture, complete with Gothic spires.



By *Kārlis Eihensbaums*  
*Ambassador of Latvia*

In 2018, Latvia celebrates 100 years since we became an independent state on Nov. 18, 1918. The birth of Latvia as a state coincided with major changes on the political map of the world.

We celebrate our centenary of statehood with the very best that we can offer: an ancient, well-rooted, but modern culture, great lifestyle and never-ending innovation.

## Driving force

History is a big deal for Latvians. We feel that our history is special and it's also certainly very complicated. It is a history of the birth and development of the idea of an independent nation, as well as a consequential struggle to attain, maintain and renew it. Coming to terms and dealing with the consequences of the past is an ongoing process, especially when the past

is so turbulent, as is the case for Latvia.

Latvia has been both an idea and a political reality, but not always concurrently. In the last 100 years, it has been hit by brutal interventions, oppressions and destruction from bigger neighbours. But still, Latvians are resilient and we have shown that again and again.

Latvia is a moderately sized, democratic member of the European and international system of national states. For Latvians, joining NATO and the European Union in 2004 were both significant events. Both organizations embody the values and visions that Latvians have held dear since the beginning of the fight for



our own state. As a result, this has created a unique environment, the likes of which has not been found anywhere in the world.

To find out what Latvia really is, you have to visit. Consider this my personal invitation to a cultural adventure that will take you to a country in Northern Europe, by the Baltic Sea, that is celebrating its centenary.

#### The capital

Riga — the longstanding metropolis of the Baltics — was established as a city in 1201. A picturesque and fairytale-like medieval town, Riga boasts rich, wooden 19th-Century architecture and above it all, the finest collection of Art Nouveau buildings in Europe.

Understandably, the historical centre of Riga has been granted UNESCO World Heritage status. The unforgettable majestic skyline of Riga, with the Gothic spires of the numerous churches in the old town, is the most visible indication of the superb esthetic sense that has shaped much of the city's architecture up to now.

Riga is also host to numerous entertainment options for all ages and tastes, including museums, world-class opera, ballet, theatres, exhibitions, zoos, an open-air Skansen-style museum, cinemas, clubs and even casinos.

#### Nature in Latvia

Any visitor will immediately discover our beautiful nature — bountiful forests, lush meadows, rich rivers, quiet lakes and above all, a 500-kilometre shoreline full of sandy beaches.

Jūrmala — whose name translates to “the city on the coast” in Latvian — is one of the finest resort towns in Northern Europe. Its sandy white beaches, pine-covered forests, mineral springs and naturally occurring medicinal mud has made it a favourite tourist and spa destination. Even during the windy spring and autumn seasons, the impressive sight of white-capped waves crashing into the shoreline recalls the untamed forces of nature at work. Once the storms have subsided, amber seekers scour the beachfront in hopes of finding pieces of this unique yellow-toned stone washed up along the coastline.

#### Culinary charms

Ask Latvians about typical Latvian cuisine and they will mention rye bread, bacon rolls (*pirāgi*), pearl barley, grey peas with bacon, herring and smoked sprats, a fish that is similar to sardines.

What we eat, and what remains typi-



Jūrmala beach is one of the finest resort towns in Northern Europe and a favourite spa destination for tourists.



Latgale is called “the land of blue lakes.” The country's largest lake, as well as its deepest, are both in this region.





Riga has been granted UNESCO World Heritage status. Shown here is one of many examples of Art Nouveau architecture.

cally Latvian, is food that is prepared from fresh, locally grown produce. For Latvians, a salad is always on the menu, soups are appreciated and so are dairy-rich products. What probably stands out the most is our smoked meat and fish, the revered Riga sprats (also available in Canada), fresh cottage cheese, traditional cheese with caraway seeds, sour cream and *kefirs*, wild berries that are made into delicious desserts, jams and pastries, as well as mushrooms straight from the forest.

#### What we celebrate

A typical Latvian is likely to celebrate a

healthy mix of Christian, pre-Christian and commercial traditions.

Similarly to the rest of Northern Europe, every Latvian celebrates the summer solstice or midsummer (called *Līgo* and *Jāņi*, on the 23rd and 24th of June) with folk songs and customs such as jumping over a bonfire and singing until dawn. Great festivities can be found for a few days all around the country. If you're lucky enough to take part in them, you'll remember them forever.

It's also very Latvian, and even important, to celebrate name days. Each person's name has a specific day on the Latvian cal-

endar, and it is marked with festivities that are similar to birthday celebrations.

#### Singing and dancing

Unquestionably, the biggest event of all is the nationwide song and dance festival, held every five years.

Imagine 16,000 mostly amateur singers on one stage singing a *capella* with all the nuances, technical skills, tonal colour and style you would expect from a professional ensemble. Imagine a *corps de ballet* of another 16,000, this time with dancers who create patterns on stage based upon ancient Latvian designs. Imagine a 50,000-person audience and the rest of the country watching the festival at home on TV.

All of that, remember, happens in a country of only two million people. The Latvian Song and Dance Festival is an incredible phenomenon, recognized as a "masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO.

This tradition, which dates back to 1873, is a grassroots festival that literally pervades all of Latvian society, engaging huge numbers of people from all walks of life and all around the world.

#### What language do Latvians speak?

We always like to get this question because we can inform anyone who is interested that we speak a very ancient language: similar to Sanskrit (the language of ancient India) and not Germanic or Slavic.

The Latvian language belongs to the Baltic language group of the Indo-European family of languages. Its closest and only living relative in modern times is Lithuanian.

In history books, you can also find the Old Prussian language, which is another close relative to Latvian and Lithuanian. Our languages appeared in the 6th and 7th Centuries AD.

Based on the Latin alphabet, we have a few special features in our language, including guides to pronunciation by use of diacritics, which look like this: ā, č, ē, ģ, ī, ķ, ļ, ņ, š, ū, and ž. We also keep the old tradition of transcribing names and surnames as they are pronounced, and adding Latvian endings to properly conjugate names in sentences. You have to challenge your mind in order to see that Charles Dickens in Latvian is Čārlzs Dikenss.

#### Finally — and don't miss...

In order to understand us you have to know that every Latvian has his or her own folk song, known as *dainas*. *Dainas* are quatrains in the form of songs or poetry, carrying ancient wisdom and traditions.



Dating back well over 1,000 years, these tales were part of celebrations, daily work and reflections on life. *Dainas* capture the Latvian worldview and are the core of Latvian cultural history. More than 1.2 million texts and approximately 30,000 melodies have been identified and collected in the Cabinet of *Dainas*, first published in 1894.

Before I sign off, I must tell you not to miss the Castle of Light, the new building of the National Library of Latvia, designed by Gunārs Birkerts. The architectural form draws inspiration from the metaphors and images of our rich folk legends. Originally, it was associated with a simple mound of glass, as a symbol of obstacles that have to be overcome in order to reach your most lofty goals. But now, the building is linked with the Castle of Light — a tale representing the nation's aspirations for freedom and spirituality. (Also, this is where the unique Cabinet of *Dainas* is on display.)

I have a lot more to tell you, but visit Latvia, and you can see this all for yourself. Before you go, check out [www.latvia.travel](http://www.latvia.travel) and for easier personal planning, you can use the trip planner at that site.

Kārlis Eihenbaums is the ambassador of Latvia.



Latvia's bathhouse tradition continues today, but dates back to the 19th Century, when there was a bathhouse on every farmstead.



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## Celebration time

A listing of the national and independence days marked by countries

October		
1	China	National Day
1	Cyprus	Independence Day
1	Nigeria	National Day
1	Palau	Independence Day
1	Tuvalu	National Day
2	Guinea	National Day
3	Germany	Day of German Unity
3	Korea, Republic	National Foundation Day
4	Lesotho	National Day
9	Uganda	Independence Day
10	Fiji	National Day
12	Spain	National Day
12	Equatorial Guinea	National Day
23	Hungary	Commemoration of the 1956 Revolution and Day of Proclamation of the Republic of Hungary
24	Zambia	Independence Day
26	Austria	National Day
27	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Independence Day
27	Turkmenistan	Independence Day
28	Czech Republic	Proclamation of Czech States
29	Turkey	Proclamation of the Republic
November		
1	Algeria	National Day
1	Antigua and Barbuda	Independence Day
3	Dominica	Independence Day
3	Micronesia	Independence Day
3	Panama	Independence Day
9	Cambodia	National Day
11	Angola	Independence Day
18	Latvia	Independence Day
18	Oman	National Day
19	Monaco	National Day
22	Lebanon	Independence Day
25	Bosnia and Herzegovina	National Day
25	Suriname	Independence Day
28	Albania	National Day
28	Timor-Leste	Independence Day
28	Mauritania	Independence Day
30	Barbados	Independence Day
December		
1	Central African Republic	Proclamation of the Republic
1	Romania	National Day
2	Laos	National Day
2	United Arab Emirates	National Day
5	Thailand	National Day
6	Finland	Independence Day
11	Burkina Faso	National Day
12	Kenya	Independence Day
16	Bahrain	Independence Day
16	Kazakhstan	Independence Day
23	Japan	National Day





# Beautiful and unique Indonesian fashion mesmerized Ottawans

**The Embassy of Indonesia** in Ottawa once again held the annual Indonesian Festival this year. Featuring Indonesian Fashion as its theme, it took place at Lansdowne Park's historic Horticulture Building on Saturday and Sunday, July 28 and 29. Through this year's Festival, the Embassy aims to introduce and promote the country's booming fashion industry by showcasing creative products of Indonesian fashion designers to Canadians.



Spotlighting 15 Indonesian designers based in Jakarta, Bali, New York, Chicago and Montreal, models took centre stage to display the beauty and uniqueness of Indonesia's heritage in modern fashion designs. Canadians had the chance to see the creative works of such designers as Alleira Batik, Sekar Kedaton, Ning Zulkarnain, Handy Hartono, Batik Kartini, Entin Gartini and Amdiskastara Bali. Visitors were impressed by the elegance of Indonesian Couture Collections ranging from stunning modest wear and unique Batik-patterned attires to lush attractive accessories.

Indonesian Festival 2018 was officially opened on Friday evening, July 27, by Ambassador of Indonesia, His Excellency Dr. Teuku Faizasyah and Mayor of Ottawa, His Worship Jim Watson. The Opening Night was attended by more than 150 guests, including Ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps, MP Chandra Arya and the city's fashion enthusiasts. During his opening speech, Ambassador Faizasyah explained that this year's Festival aimed to find opportunities for Indonesia's thriving fashion industry to enter Canadian markets while also continuously promoting the country and its untapped potentials to the Canadian public and to business communities. Mayor Jim Watson expressed his appreciation to the Embassy of Indonesia for its tireless and continuous efforts in promoting the rich and diverse culture of Indonesia with the goal of bringing the two communities closer.



The Festival showcased the country's diversity and multiculturalism through traditional dance and musical performances, including Gamelan from Java and Tari Saman from Aceh. Gamelan is a traditional music ensemble consisting of percussive instruments, including xylophones, gongs and the two-headed "kendang" drum, while Tari Saman dance is internationally famous for its fast-paced rhythm and attractive and harmonious movements among dancers. The Festival entertained visitors with its traditional dance-fashion shows that tell the folktale of Jaka Tarub and the Seven Fairies. The audiences were also impressed by the talented Indonesian students group from Papua who performed Indonesian traditional folk songs.



Indonesian Festival 2018 provided a taste of Indonesia's delicious popular cuisines which are rarely found in Ottawa. Eight food stalls sold the country's most popular dishes, including Beef Rendang and Nasi Goreng, voted by CNN as the No. 1 and No. 2 World's 50 Best Foods. Visitors also had the opportunity to sample Indonesian traditional beverages known as "Jamu" which are not only thirst-quenching, but also known to cure ailments. During the three days' festivities, visitors gained more information on Indonesia's exotic and incomparably wonderful tourism destinations, including Bali — famously known as the Island of the Gods — and Raja Ampat, a true paradise for divers.

Indonesian Festival 2018 successfully attracted more than 3,000 visitors and received warm responses from the local community and media in Ottawa. Held by the Embassy of Indonesia since 2006, last year's Festival was the highlight of Ottawa Welcomes the World (OWTW) program in celebration of Canada's 150th and attracted more than 14,400 visitors.



MIKE BEEDELL WWW.MIKEBEEDELLPHOTO.CA

Photographer Mike Beedell: "These masters of the Antarctic breezes, zephyrs and gales calmly go about their life's purpose — to ride the winds of the Southern Ocean with acrobatic elegance. They feed at sea and touch land only to mate and raise their young. I once sat for an hour near a male albatross on its nest on South Georgia Island, which lies between the southern tip of South America and the northwestern tip of Antarctica. He sat Buddha-like on a single egg and I looked into his eyes and admired his colourful beak and calm demeanour. Single eggs incubate for 70 days. These aviators travel millions of kilometres in their average 40-year lifespan. They weigh up to 4.5 kilograms and have a wing-span of 2.2 metres. They eat fish, squid and crustaceans. They are also one of the swiftest horizontal flyers, reaching speeds of 127 kilometres per hour. One grey-headed albatross, wearing a transmitter, flew 22,000 kilometres in 46 days. Sadly, they're in steep decline because they get hooked by longline fishermen and drown. Readers can help preserve them by buying only sustainably caught fish. Look for the Marine Stewardship Council emblem on all fish packaging.





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