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RODA
Renewing our Democratic Alliance

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG

DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY:

REDISCOVERING COMMON PURPOSE FOR THE WORLD'S INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES

FINAL REPORT FOR THE PROJECT "RENEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE"

Ben Rowswell, Convenor
Network for Democratic Solidarity

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The Network for Democratic Solidarity owes its existence to the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung of Canada. The opening of a KAS office in Ottawa could not have come at a more important moment, delivering new ideas, resources and relationships to Canadians exploring options to meet the new challenges liberal democracy faces in the rise of populist authoritarianism and isolationism. The leadership of Dr. Norbert Eschborn ensured the project got off the ground and stayed on track through all that followed.

The Network was born out of the Canadian International Council. This organization of citizens engaging in Canada's foreign policy was uniquely positioned for a study of the relevance of democracy to international affairs. Its network of 18 branches across this country provide the CIC with a grassroots sense of the priorities of Canadians, grounding our discussions in their views in useful balance to the perspectives of foreign policy professionals whose focus faces outward. We are grateful to the CIC for supporting an exercise of deeply-focussed policy development at a time when its branches were recovering from the diminished citizen engagement of the COVID and post-COVID era.

We owe a particular debt of gratitude to Jeremy Kinsman, whose decades of diplomatic work uniting democracies across the G7/G8 informed the approach and whose tireless energy brought dozens of senior actors together for this project. Samantha Tristen provided invaluable organizational support throughout the three years of the project.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past three years, the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Canada have been engaged in the search for a practical means by which liberal, inclusive democracies can renew the basis of their cooperation.

As democracy retreats around the globe, the former paradigm of democracy promotion must be replaced with a mutual approach to supporting one another in advancing the interests of our respective citizens. We call this approach democratic solidarity.

Prompted by the potential loss of the United States from among the world's democracies, Canadian and German officials, scholars and activists explored an approach that inclusive democracies could use to build that solidarity. At the outset of the project in the depths of the COVID pandemic, we surveyed eight shared challenges our democracies face and debated potential solutions.

The insights generated demonstrated the value of engaging in a continuous process of examining shared challenges and exchanging best practices. This approach of mutual learning should take place on two tracks that inform and support one another.

The first track is between civil society and scholars of participating countries, who can provide the holistic view of how challenges impact the ultimate stakeholders of democracy – citizens themselves. Civil society can also maintain longer focus and a focus on the longer-term that elected officials. The second track is between ministers and officials, who can prioritize the challenges based on urgency and the feasibility of effective action, and implement the solutions identified.

The project culminated in the launch of the first track, convening civil society actors and scholars in a process of mutual learning around the poisonous impact of disinformation in undermining our ability as societies to take decisions in the public interest. A new non-profit organization was incorporated for the purpose. The Network for Democratic Solidarity was launched in July 2023, and hosted its first conference in Calgary, bringing experts on disinformation from Germany and Canada together in October of the same year.

The Network for Democratic Solidarity provides a basis for systematic mutual learning between inclusive democracies on other issues that undermine the interests of our citizens and that require solutions beyond what our respective domestic political processes can muster. By engaging in mutual learning, we will deepen the collective commitment democracies have to one another and for the future of our system of government throughout the world.

REPORT - BEN ROWSWELL AND JEREMY KINSMAN

In June 2018, liberal democratic countries had a premonition of how their long history of international leadership could end, with the defection of the United States.

Since the genesis of the current world order in the depths of the Second World War, liberal democratic principles have been the glue that has held together the most powerful collection of states in a unity of purpose that has delivered unparalleled security, prosperity and human dignity to our respective citizens.

First articulated in the Atlantic Charter negotiated by the U.S. and the UK in 1942, these principles formed the basis of the military alliance that won the war. Great sacrifices require an even greater cause to unify disparate nations. Allies found that cause in the mutual support they pledged for one another's democracies, forging a deeper bond than the superficial ties that had formed the basis of the earlier experiment in international order under the League of Nations.

This common cause, of mutual support between liberal democracies, emerged as the DNA of the international system born from the ashes of that war. It informed the design of the UN Charter that set the norms for the new international order, and the design of the North Atlantic Treaty which provided the muscle to uphold the order. When the Cold War ended in 1989, the principal ideological alternative to liberal democracy until that point also faded away.

The original basis for the postwar international order founded on mutual support between democracies expanded well beyond the original North American and Western confines of liberal democracy. Many assumed its global spread was inevitable.

U.S. power had been central to the institutions by which liberal democracies organized their collaboration, however. So much of the original design of these institutions was American in inspiration that the survival of liberal democracy in world affairs seemed predicated on leadership from Washington DC.

That all came into question in 2016 when the U.S. elected a president who spoke openly of his contempt for democracy, for allies and for commitments to their defence. At first leaders of fellow democracies cajoled and flattered President Trump, confident that the roots of American democracy were strong enough to outlast a demagogue.

Confidence in 75 years of alliance takes time to shake, but it was certainly shaken by the time Canada hosted the G7 Summit in Charlevoix in 2018. Months of the intensive negotiation and careful choreography that goes into the final communique, the central result of any summit of these seven most significant democracies, were

wasted when President Trump abruptly left the summit, insulted the host publicly on the plane ride home. Three weeks later he embraced the Russian President who had openly manipulated the U.S. election in Trump's favour, making his preferences clear.

The genesis for our project lies in the scramble that followed. Foreign Ministers of Canada and Germany confided their anxieties to one another later that summer, and soon foreign policy experts in both countries were discussing the need to dramatically expand the scope of strategic thinking. How could major liberal democracies like Canada and Germany advance their interests if the U.S. defects from the principles of the international order our countries had built together?

The stakes are too high for our democracies to leave to governments alone. So while governments have engaged in strategic thinking, citizens and civil society have a role to play as well.

RENEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE

German traditions for engaging civil society in the work of democracy run deep and the institutions are more developed than in Canada. It was natural, therefore, that the initiative would come from Germany.

In 2019, the German political party foundation KAS established an office in Ottawa. Motivated, no doubt, by the increased interest in a likeminded liberal democracy in Canada now that the United States was less likeminded than ever, German foreign policy experts reached out to Canadian foreign policy experts to propose a partnership.

The Canadian International Council answered the call. Founded in 1928 to engage Canadians in foreign policy, the CIC hosts discussions about Canada's international relations with thousands of citizens in 18 cities across the country. Together, KAS Canada and the CIC launched a project in 2021 called Renewing Our Democratic Alliance (RODA).

The partnership enabled foreign policy experts of the two countries to consider how liberal democracies could renew their cooperation in international affairs, in light of the challenges we share in the 2020s. We mobilized more than 150 experts from government, academia, the private sector and civil society from Canada and Germany. To anticipate a future in which the U.S. might not be part of the group of liberal democracies that have shaped the international order, we did not include the U.S. in our discussions.

METHOD EMPLOYED

The CIC engaged veteran Canadian diplomats Jeremy Kinsman and Ben Rowswell to design and deliver the project. Kinsman had served as ambassador to Russia, the European Union, Italy and the United Kingdom. Rowswell had led Canada's mission in Kandahar, Afghanistan, and served as ambassador to Venezuela. Dr. Norbert Eschborn provided intellectual leadership for KAS Canada.

Jeremy Kinsman

Together, the organizers drew on an extensive network of officials, scholars and activists to commission papers and convene strategic discussions on the most pressing shared challenges facing our democracies in 2021. The list was developed in consultation with the Canadian Ambassador to Germany, the German Ambassador to Canada, and an advisory group.

Ben Rowswell

The emphasis, where possible, was on practitioners over scholars to ensure a focus on practical options that governments could convert into action within a short timeframe.

Discussions were held in closed format, to encourage maximum candour, with public summaries of the discussions released afterward. The sessions were chaired by leaders with experience driving government agendas, from former Clerks of the Privy Council to a principal drafter of Canada's last official foreign policy strategy, and the chairs drove discussion toward practical recommendations at all times.

Dr. Norbert Eschborn

SHAPING A NEW GLOBAL AGENDA FOR INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES

Based on the survey of challenges facing inclusive democracies over the course of 2021, the RODA project proposed to mobilize now the inputs in specific and substantive ways, drawing from the dual RODA partners to engage directly the respective foreign ministries.

From among the more than 150 participants in RODA panels, working groups will be formed to address key topics which could represent the priorities of the two

governments. The topics would likely be the prioritized policy outcomes from RODA consultations thus far.

- The groups would draw from civil society consultation and interact with government policy centres.

- Inputs would be sought from a broad range of policy proponents on the international scene, perhaps by Track II-type informal consultations.

- The intention is to form a network of geographically diverse countries, international non-governmental bodies, and mandated intergovernmental agencies, which could promote a sense of coordinated purpose in supporting solidarity on the pressing issues facing democracies in an increasingly challenging global environment.

The network should focus on issues consistent with the pursuit of inclusive democracy: human rights, the treatment of minorities, open media, and countering disinformation. The network would also be a clearing-house for mutually reinforcing policy positions on emerging challenges to fellow democracies such as backsliding and the disintegration of public institutions. There will be opportunity to plan shared audits, joint country case studies as appropriate, and division of labour on international democracy development support issues, including mutual learning.

The Canadian International Council proposes to:

- Set up a joint secretariat with a German organizing partner - the KAS - to oversee the process of organizing four initial policy themes via detailed policy proposals and seminars that can serve to provide the agenda for outreach to build in cooperation with the respective foreign ministries the network.

- Establish communications platforms engaging international civil society, centres of excellence, and advocates, as well as national public policy networks.

- A conference of the parties - civil society and governmental - could convene the organizational meeting of the network.

RECURRING THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Global Landscape Facing Inclusive Democracies

Rising competitive nationalism, populism, nativism, and the passing of peak globalization: Populations are demanding more national regulation of trade, greater self-sufficiency, and protection of social stability.

The assertion of national sovereignty is driving policy impulses toward protectionism and tighter border controls. Conflict has intensified between political urges to control national impacts and the strength of spontaneous transnational events surging out of control that insist on international cohesion and cooperation.

Events and the political landscape have been widely affected by the advent of the Internet and by the often-pernicious impact of unmoderated, unregulated, and untransparent social media unaligned with the need for information to be evidence-based. Additionally, cyber-crime and national security cyber-threats require international cohesion; the positions of major cyber-powers on regulation and oversight – China, Russia, and to a lesser extent, the US – are ambivalent.

Multilateral Linkages and Vulnerabilities

Principal transnational challenges are linked in cause and disruptive effect: global warming and the damage to biodiversity; the pandemic and global health; migration; food security; debt; economic development; conflict; human security; openness; and rights. Each can unravel others. They all generate migratory waves.

The current overarching crises of climate and the pandemic affect all people but unequally.

The world is failing to rise to these crises as stress tests of the multilateral system. There is little policy coherence in policy approaches.

Inclusivity and Inequity in the Multilateral System

"Whose multilateralism?" is a relevant question. Multilateralism must deliver visible benefits – for citizens of all states.

The multilateral system is unfair, especially to low-income countries, with fragile infrastructure for public goods and health. They are the hardest hit by effects of climate change, the pandemic, migration, debt, etc. The most evident common feature is inequity: on climate impact, vaccine availability, economic wealth and opportunity, and the burdens of migratory adjacency to conflict zones. Different panels urged a system-wide effort to multiply the strengths of the multilateral system in an effort to build more trust and confidence in it, irrespective of domestic governance systems. Vaccine reticence is a function of international distrust.

In almost every panel, reference was made to the self-absorption of the "West" and a habitual reference to a "liberal" rules-based order many non-western countries see as designed to serve "western" legacy interests.

Western countries resist their responsibility to accept refugees, even in small numbers compared to the 23 million trans-border refugees, 86% of whom are harboured in conflict or crisis-adjacent countries ill-equipped to handle them.

Developed countries are urged to jettison "donor-recipient" mentalities. Responsibilities on structural issues like financing of adaptation to climate change and damage and loss should be seen as systemic strengthening in a common perspective of shared benefit, not as humanitarian relief.

Diplomatic Outreach and Variable Geometry

The consensus rule that applies to many universal UN negotiating bodies argues for the formation of coalitions and affinity groups of higher-ambition countries to prompt progress, such as a notional "climate customs club," the Ottawa group on WTO reform, or a "democracy support network."

Developed democracies must connect beyond the "like-minded." To promote effective resilient global outcomes, they have to reach the "silent majority" of about 150 states which are non-primary influencers, but which together can be decisive.

Connection is also urged with "non-like-minded," including "cross-walks" to China and to other major players – India, global warming mitigation opponents, and on some issues, to the US.

Democracy Support and Protection, and the Central Role of Civil Society

The trends toward democratic regression and backsliding are stark. Projection of negative US trends encouraged polarization elsewhere while reinforcing negative reflexes and arguments of authoritarians, making it incumbent on internationalist democracies like Germany and Canada to protect and advance the democratic agenda, even with a welcome return of the US to the pro-democracy fold.

Democracies need to counter the transnationalization of autocratic practices, notably by demonstrably improving their own governance.

Partnerships such as RODA should share audits of democracy support experience, and coordinate support projects.

Democratic partners should develop joint democracy action plans with civil society at their centre, placing the engagement of citizens in the policy and program formulation process for solidarity with aspiring democracies in a spirit of mutual learning. However, the effectiveness of civil society is also inter-linked with the need for healthy state institutions. The cultivation of cooperative civic behaviour is often best nurtured through non-political functional projects and capacity-building activity which may in any case suit the less permissive international atmosphere regarding sovereignty compared to the 1990s.

Democracies absolutely need to firm up solidarity and consistency in support for universal civil rights, opposition to abuse, and protection of open media.

A concerted approach is also needed on the toxic issues of social media distortion and disinformation.

Coherent Strategic Governance for Sustainability

The prevalence of silos in national governments and in international systems is dysfunctional.

"Climate strategies are bigger than the environment." Strategic thinking should be based on the inter-dependency of systems under all-of-government, and all-of-international-system, umbrella strategies for sustainability.

Misplaced emphases favour short-term economic optics, and an excessive focus on national material outputs; in communications technology, there is too much preoccupation with technological transformation, and not enough with content, disinformation, and its consequences.

Policy and finance need closer coherence. Panels called for the central engagement in positive policy formulation of Ministers of Finance, in part to consult the unprecedented levels of global debt, now at 360% of global GDP.

Proposals for new international agreements and modifications to international governance

- A Charter of updated refugee rights.
- National and international governance to encourage greater transparency for communications technologies, and to moderate content.
- International regimes to counter cyber-crime and ransomware.
- A convention to counter corruption.
- An international mechanism to systematize carbon pricing and carbon border adjustments in trade.
- An international "pandemic treaty" to govern future international response, equitable global health, vaccine availability, and the transfer of vaccine manufacturing capacity.
- A new Bretton Woods Agreement to re-gear multilateral financial governance more to social realities and to climate and global health threats.
- A reformed WTO that covers the digital economy.

The establishment of a bilateral Deputy Ministers' Committee of the two governments to monitor and enhance cooperation is a promising development, subsequent to the close ministerial relationships that have developed.

SELECTED SPECIFIC PROPOSALS ON THE PRINCIPAL SHARED CHALLENGES

1. Climate Change

- Establish a common time frame for national commitments on mitigation.
- Agree to common formats for fit-for-purpose, documentation and templates, and shared definition.
- On financing, expand the pool of donors, recognizing financing needs are aggravated because of Covid-19.
- Ministers of Finance should be brought together internationally to address financing for climate action.
- Designate foreign policies as "foreign policy for sustainability" (as some have self-identified as "feminist foreign policies."

2. Global health and the pandemic

- Strengthen COVAX and national commitments and deliveries: "Equity, equity, equity".
- Ensure that health crisis recovery is equitable, resilient and green.
- Negotiate controversial waivers of intellectual property rights for the manufacture in LDCs of vaccine, and address the issue in the WTO.
- In IFIs, and especially the IMF, maximize financing conditionality favourable to crisis solutions.
- Clarify WHO mandates, roles, and assured multi-year financing.
- Build partnerships to enhance LDC public sector capacities.

3. Democracy development support and human rights defence

- A focus on human rights commonly acknowledged by covenant as universal and irreducible, litigating as necessary.
- Use leverage of productive bilateral relationships.
- Take a "big tent" approach to multilateral democratic groupings.
- Follow German scrutiny of supply chains to trace human rights abuse.
- Joint Canadian and German pilot development projects with specific countries of mutual interest.
- Division of labour in support programs and shared research.

4. Disinformation and democracy

- Objective journalism and reporting need support to re-establish a viable business model, having been ravaged by communications technologies.
- Governments need to legislate algorithmic, corporate, and platform transparency for social media.
- Privately-owned social media platforms need alignment with public values.
- Democracies need to cooperate on research, and on the provision of digital media education.
- Cyber-crime which is rampant, including ransomware, needs resolute confrontation internationally.

5. Trade and the global economy

- Update WTO rules that have not evolved since the GATT's adoption in 1947 of rules for trade in goods.

- Empower the WTO to cover the digital economy.
- Build a concerted effort to valorize common approaches over rising recourse to national measures.
- Engage the private sector in formulating standards and guidelines.
- Ensure populations can see themselves as beneficiaries of the process which is too remote.
- Acknowledge China mostly adapts its economic system to global consensus rules - strengthen the consensus while assessing Chinese economic success as an earned reality.
- In financial and monetary governance, end the detachment of monetary from regulatory spheres.

6. Refugees, migration, borders, and identities

- Equip UNHCR with the means to meet the unprecedented volume of migrants and refugees.
- Correct practice by wealthy countries to over-recruit skilled personnel at the expense of also needed lower-skilled labour.
- Generalize Canadian experience in fostering inclusion and settlement via inclusive public schooling, and private and community sponsorship;
- While also looking to coordinate international repair of forces propelling migratory waves.
- Moderate the tendency to "push borders out" by de-territorializing the primary inspection process for travel.

7. Reforming and valorizing the multilateral system for solutions to vital transnational challenges

- Include non-state actors - civil society, centres of excellence, NGOs, the philanthropic community - in solution-focused affinity groups like the Human Security Network of the 1990s.
- Intensify bilateral outreach and relationships in support of multilateral reform.
- Resist drift of political controversy into essential technical bodies.
- Identify specific points of pressure in rules-based agencies and who should lead.
- Use new plurilateral groupings to complement existing institutions, not to circumvent them.
- The rule of law should not be seen as being synonymous with democratic governance.
- Respect a plurality of systems in our diverse world.
- Prioritize long-term forecasting and planning for systemic needs in 25 years.

OPERATIONALIZING THE AGENDA

The principal feedback from officials in the first year was that detailed recommendations would be required to secure political attention. The CIC and KAS responded by selecting the four most promising topics and commissioning scholarly experts in these areas to articulate specific proposals for official consideration.

The first proposal was to create a new likeminded group in international diplomacy to convene liberal democracies, both officials and experts, and to implement the proposals under development. Veteran German foreign policy expert Dr. Thorsten Benner was tasked with the vision for an appropriate structure.

Dr. Benner proposed that Canada, Germany and fellow inclusive democracies create a Network for Democratic Solidarity, a group which unite pro-democracy actors across the Global North and Global South to coordinate action on the basis of mutual respect. The Network would operate on two interlocking tracks: a first stream of research and advocacy by civil society, feeding into regular meetings of policymakers at political and working levels. The full paper can be found in the Appendices to this paper.

The second proposal was to deepen cooperation in sharing the burdens of increased migration. This most difficult of topics for liberal democracies was in fact the problem that had most attracted German attention to Canada in the previous decade.

As democracies engage in the mutual learning that this project was designed to facilitate, the record of Germany systematically studying and applying lessons from Canada's success in absorbing large numbers of immigrants and refugees into our country merited further attention.

For the task, Craig Damian Smith was commissioned to sketch out a common approach inclusive, pluralist countries can take to the mushrooming challenge of global migration. Taking a different tack from the bureaucratic compromises most liberal democracies take to avoid the issue, Smith outlined a modest proposal that addresses the ultimate resolution too many countries now avoid: settlement of refugees in a permanent new home.

His paper outlines a powerful approach to determining a recipient country's actual capacity to absorb refugees, and proposes an allocation formula to relieve a specific

source country's democratic crisis. His formulas show how Canada, Germany and a third country to significantly relieve the pressure that a large Syrian population in Lebanon places on that country's fragile democracy.

The thrust of Smith's approach demonstrates how the very principles of liberal democracy that Canada and Germany share can provide practical solutions to problems illiberal political forces discourage our governments propose.

A third area for liberal democracies to deepen collaboration is normally shunned by governments reluctant to offend the private sector but in fact eminently suited to the application of liberal democratic principles and so to the deepening of our mutual ties. That area is corruption, scourge to democracies around the world.

In a paper written by the chair of Canada's leading authority on corruption, Transparency International Canada, Susan Cote-Freeman and veteran Canadian diplomat Jon Allen point out that countries of the Global North unwittingly play a major role in encouraging corruption in countries of the Global South. Strict regulations against corruption involving the funds of our governments do not extend to the funds coming from the citizens being defrauded in other countries. To the contrary, the regulatory regimes in Canada, Germany and elsewhere encourage service providers such as banks, lawyers and other professionals in our countries to benefit from resources stolen from taxpayers of the Global South.

Cote-Freeman and Allen set out several modest, practical proposals that would demonstrate Canada and Germany take corruption seriously no matter where it occurs. One example is a registry of the corporations that benefit from funds transferred, to assist investigations into possible wrongdoing.

A fourth paper commissioned by the project examined the remarkable linkages between crises currently engulfing countries across the world. The "polycrisis" refers to the triggering effect that one crisis now has in exacerbating other crises, in the way that the COVID pandemic exacerbating income inequality, set back the cause of gender equality and worsened food insecurity around the world.

The authors commissioned for this paper, development economist Jean-François Tardif and head of the Global Canada Initiative, Robert Greenhill, focussed on the impact of the polycrisis on low-income countries. In a tightly-argued piece they lay out a costed and manageable proposal by which international financial institutions can break the cycle of crises begetting crises, at least in the case of COVID's impact in setting these countries even farther behind the rest of the developing world.

DISINFORMATION CORRODES THE VERY FABRIC OF DEMOCRACY

The paper that most shaped the development of the agenda for renewing cooperation between liberal democracies in the RODA project focussed on disinformation.

German scholar Dr. Ulrike Klinger argued persuasively in her paper 'Platform Governance for Digital Democracy' that citizens cannot exercise the power democracy gives them if the news they read is intentionally distorted to polarize or otherwise render public debate impossible.

This struck a chord because the information that Canadians, Germans and others now use to exercise their role as citizens is so distorted by incentives of digital communications technology to inflame and polarize that their very ability to reach decisions together is in question. Democracy invests ultimate power in the hands of voters, but disinformation disempowers them and so threatens the very basis for our political systems.

It did not escape the notice of participants in this project that disinformation is what generated the political dysfunction that now leads the United States to defect from the community of democracies. The 2016 election would not have been won by Donald Trump without the divisions that disinformation wreaks. The impact is now being felt in every liberal democracy as citizens turn against citizen, enraged by manipulated information they have read online.

For this reason, the RODA project concluded in late 2022 that the first and most urgent focus for liberal democracies seeking to renew collaboration must be on disinformation.

A joint effort for mutual learning about, and coordinated action against, disinformation

Over the past three years, the CIC and KAS have reviewed the major threats our democracies face and explored how we could work together. How could we muster the solidarity needed to fight a global pandemic? To counter climate change? To reverse an uptick in violent conflict sweeping over the globe after the erosion of the post-Cold War peace?

Time and again, we came back to the corrosive effect technology has on our democratic way of life. The threat is both ominous and addressable. It's ominous because technology undermines our very ability to make decisions together, which is

the essence of democracy. But it is addressable because the solutions lie in the hands of individual citizens – as users of the same social media that set us against one another.

The salvation of liberal democracy lies in the hands of citizens – in the way we learn about the world, in the way we participate in public debate and in the way we vote.

Let us take heart – liberal democracies have made a lot of progress since the dark days of 2018. Not only have we shown impressive alliance cohesion in the defence of a fellow democracy in Ukraine. Populist authoritarian forces suffered a defeat in the U.S. election of 2020, in the coalition that formed to keep the National Front out of power in France, and more recently in the parliamentary elections in Poland.

Governments have started to build the capacity to support each other's democratic systems. You have just heard from Global Affairs Canada about the impressive degree of collaboration between G7 countries in countering the disinformation aimed at undermining our respective elections. Our governments have already embraced this new approach to democracy promotion, that of democracies helping one another remain democracies.

Scholars have risen to the challenge to our democracies as well. There has been an explosion in the volume and the quality of research into the impact technology has on democracy. I've been impressed to see the extent to which academics are comparing experiences across countries and across language environments online. The old distinction between the disciplines of International Relations, and political science with its domestic focus seems to be vanishing.

Just as governments are engaged in mutual learning, scholars are too. Our countries are in this together, our abilities to maintain democratic systems inextricably linked now that all public discourse takes place on the same global social media platforms.

But what about our citizens? What means exist for civil society in one country to coordinate with civil society in other country. When Germans want to learn from Canadian democracy, and when Canadians want to support German democracy, where do we turn?

This is important because in a world where technology distorts democratic debate and democratic practice, citizens are the front line. It is our action, or inaction, that will ultimately determine the future of democracy.

Will we descend into mutual recrimination and hatred, or will we search for compromise and understanding? Will we vote for parties who promise to unite us or for parties who appeal to our desire to put other citizens in their place? That's up to us.

On this point, we have considerably more grounds to be concerned. Governments, and scholars, may be learning how to engage in mutual learning across national borders. Governments are necessarily constrained in their ability to act, however, since the power they hold inevitably provokes suspicion. Any communications they engage in are more likely to deepen polarization than to reduce it.

Similarly scholars are constrained, because the pursuit of knowledge requires an objectivity that is undermined by direct action. In the populist turn our societies have taken in which everyday people question the elite, scholars are counted among the elite. This work must be done by those same everyday people.

When it comes to citizens, however, we are by default focused on our own countries. We are caught up in our nations' political dramas and divisions, prey to the same processes of polarization and division.

But as we have seen today, the forces dividing our societies are themselves aligned. Political actors who seek to mobilize fear of migrants, and rejection of sexual minorities learn from their counterparts in other countries. Viral content passes easily from one nation to another, even from one language to another. The tactics by which false information is laundered, fed into social media and promoted by superspreaders are copied and pasted from one place to another.

Why else would anti-2SLGBTQIA+ campaigns be on the rise simultaneously, and at such high rates, in practically every liberal democracy today? There is some kind of coordination going on.

If the forces that divide citizens and weaken our democracies are coordinated internationally, then pro-democracy forces better get into the same game.

From left to right: Paper Author Dr. Craig Damian Smith, Canadian Senator Ratna Omidvar, Convenor Ben Rowswell, Chargée d'Affaires Mme Isabelle Poupart, Ambassador (ret.) Jeremy Kinsman at a CIC and KAS conference on refugee resettlement at the Canadian Embassy to Germany in September 2022.

SUMMARIES OF SHARED CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE

May 25, 2021

Chair: Dr. Melvyn Cappe, OC (University of Toronto)
Paper Author: Dr. Jenifer Allan, PhD (University of Cardiff)

On behalf of the Canadian International Council, President Ben Rowswell set the objectives of the CIC/KAS project, and the day's discussion:

- to explore the potential for translating shared bilateral ambition on the issue, and in support of multilateralism, into greater multilateral progress
- to bring policy proposals on the issue into international discussion
- to build a network of Canadian and German think tanks and civil society

Chair Mel Cappe urged participants to provoke and stimulate discussion that meets the gravity of this existential threat to the "future of life on earth."

Indeed, speakers repeatedly underlined the need to mobilize political will adequate to the challenge. The task is boosted by President Biden's definition of global warming as a "national security threat." The urgency was captured by description of the November conference of the parties in Glasgow as the "last chance COP."

As several intervenors noted, this a critical election year in Germany, and probably in Canada; climate change is a forefront issue in both countries, though from the standpoints of different situations in energy.

Presenter Dr. Jen Allan candidly assessed the negotiating situation. There have been no formal negotiations since 2019, due to COVID. There remains enduring dissent over fundamentals, aptly symbolized by "energy dialogue" meetings scrubbing references to "net zero" goals from published texts (while, others later noted, the IEA issued a report on pathways to net zero that was something of a seachange in their approach.)

Committed countries need to multiply the strengths of the multilateral system and build more trust and confidence in it among parties.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) remain inadequate. If all pledges were implemented, the temperature target would not be met.

The gap reflects inadequate political will, and this political shortfall, its causes, and possible organizational remedies, dominated subsequent discussion.

Dr. Allan emphasized the importance of the Glasgow meeting making progress on a few key issues:

- reconcile the variety of market systems for carbon pricing
- establish a common time frame for NDC pledges

- agree to common formats to document progress toward NDCs and work to align definitions.....e.g., "net zero"
- start to build confidence in the process to determine a new collective finance goal that includes a larger pool of donors, particularly given financing needs in developing countries have been deepened by Covid-19.

Speakers diagnosed the reasons for inadequate progress, stressing apparent scarcity of political will. It was less a matter of climate change skepticism, than of national self-interest in the process. Many countries are more fixated on benefiting as much as possible from carbon offsets than in re-gearing to address national emissions. A corporate aversion to governments picking "winners" and "losers" in a kind of "industrial policy" skepticism endures, despite the fashion of ESG commitments, though many companies endorse primarily as a form of "greenwashing."

Quite clearly, China's enduring commitment to a carbon-based business model remains a major challenge, especially as it is marketed by China as a model for LDC clients. despite lofty rhetoric, China's emissions continue to rise. Chinese reticence works into resistance in several multilateral fora, including the WTO, where China opposes specific liberalization of trade in "green" products.

Discussion of remedies very much endorsed the need of fit-for-purpose documentation: common templates, definitions, timetables, and formats.

Countries of ambition need to form coalitions of the willing to advance changes in multilateral architecture and reporting norms.

Germany and Canada are on the same page on carbon pricing. The international community had to address the fact that pricing of carbon is still set too low.

As to national political organization, strong emphasis emerged on the need to ensure "all-of-government" coherence nationally. The carbon reduction project had to be guided by the directed view that it was "bigger than the environment." The strategies of all ministries - agriculture, fisheries, health, industry, housing, etc. - had to be cohered.

But it would only have conclusive effect if Ministers of Finance were centrally engaged, both to encourage the mobilization of capital and to ensure climate change conditionality of all funds invested by public and para-public institutional investors. Ministers of Finance should be brought together as an international body to address financing for climate action. Debt relief is a central factor.

Discussion of Canadian and German national approaches reflected their difference as a national exporter of oil and gas from that of an importer. A further difference was in Germany's declared public aversion to recourse to nuclear power, even in the modern mini-reactors favoured by some Canadians. Whether nuclear energy will be critical to meeting carbon reduction goals is disputed.

The difference in national energy profiles explains in part a difference in performance in meeting climate targets. Canadians were clear that Canada has missed all targets thus far, and lags behind others in the G7.

Federalism is generally a complicating factor. It encourages loop-holes and trade-offs to forceful coherence. Emphasizing that the only remedy is in deeper cuts, speakers acknowledged that in Canada, regional differences inhibit forceful national political strategies. These strategies have to be comprehensive of both "safe bet" risks and "wild cards" and balance sheets have to reflect both. Speakers emphasized though that public opinion has evolved remarkably in the last three decades. Civil society is an enormously valued partner in moving the political dial, as it has been in Germany, where carbon reduction targets were not regionally abrasive. Germany has made significant progress in decoaling the economy. A notable recent high court decision to require the schedule of carbon reduction to respect inter-generational impacts (by a more even balance in front and back-loading) will reinforce civil society momentum.

Despite differing national situations, Canada and Germany share global goals and approaches to multilateral discussion. Their approaches have to expand from all-of-government intentions to all-ofsystem. Given that the majority of parties to the Convention remain skeptical about climate goals, Canada and Germany need to partner closely, and with like-minded countries, in all multilateral discussions. The importance of WTO and other trade discussion was repeatedly stressed, including to deal with carbon production subsidies.

While intervenors tried to address the Chair's question of whether international institutional architecture is adequate, it was also advanced that the "like-minded" discussion is one that isn't possible multi-laterally. The possibility of key national players reaching agreements through bilateral deals is a recourse, and possibly a contributor, but nonetheless the overall solution has to reside in universality.

One intervenor underlined the importance of setting and meeting global goals in a proposal to redesignate foreign policies to fit the overarching purpose, as Foreign Policies for Sustainability.

Following on from Dr. Allan's closing description of the discussion as having revealed a "a chess board of climate action," the Chair urged the discussion - which resists a simple summing up - to continue in other ways. CIC President Rowswell closed the meeting with an undertaking to ensure that participants remain in contact.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN LEARN FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

June 2, 2021

Chair: Dr. Alan Bernstein, PhD, OC, FRSC (Canadian Institute For Advanced Research)
Paper author: Dr. Peter A. Singer, M.D. (World Health Organization)

After welcomes from the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Dr. Norbert Eschborn) that recited the origins of the Canadian - German policy affinity project to reinforce international commitment and ambition on global human rights and on international cooperation, Moderator Dr. Alan Bernstein introduced the topic before the panel.

The world faces a pandemic whose costs are catastrophic in health terms, but also in terms of international trust. It is a stress test of international systems and cooperative potential.

What will be the verdict of history in a hundred years? will this moment be seen as a successful pivot to a better international governance culture, post-pandemic? Can Canada and Germany, working together, set a leadership example?

Dr. Peter Singer, introducing his paper, agreed this critical challenge presented the world with a "Mandela moment," to change direction, and to build solutions.

There are three broad swirls of issues:

- The competence, fairness, and capability of the multilateral system with the WHO at the centre to confront overarching challenges, including the mobilization of financing;
- The critical immediate question of vaccine availability, equity, production AND sharing. Current vaccination targets are inadequate;
- Crisis recovery that is equitable, RESILIENT, green, and responsive to the 17 interlinked UN Sustainable Development Goals, that promote global partnerships and a common approach, including, if possible, a "pandemic treaty" to govern future behaviour.

Panelists then intervened. No one contested Dr. Singer's assertion the three immediate priorities are "equity, equity, and equity."

There appeared to be unanimity also that:

- The status quo is unacceptable
- The window of opportunity to fix it is brief - six months to a year
- Political leadership is the key governance issue.

Germany and Canada are seen as having significant influence by reputation, extent of international institutional engagement, and public health care commitment. Internationally, panelists saw this as "Germany's world leadership opportunity" (2022 G-7 chair). Both countries were urged to lean in to the international debate, channeling their declared ambition to energize international solutions, taking advantage of the more favourable context offered by the Biden administration.

Most speakers underlined that the Covid pandemic has to be managed in a wider context. It should not be de-linked from other health, developmental, and diplomatic challenges.

Lower income countries are hard-pressed by multiple environmental, migratory, financial, food, and other insecurities. Their state of development and their fragility of health infrastructure deepen their vulnerabilities. The crisis of the pandemic aggravates existing ongoing shortcomings in primary health care, surgical care, and chronic pediatric disease exposure.

Urgency is of the essence. it was pointed out that the obvious need to increase vaccine supply from 30 m daily doses to at least 50 m. Many participants perceived a need to pursue all options for vaccine equity, including (1) FINANCIAL SUPPORT (2) DOSE SHARING, and (3) DISTRIBUTED VACCINE MANUFACTURING simultaneously in a way which addresses the urgency, but also the inter-linked policy inequity in all its harmful aspects.

Some participants believed that building up production facility in lower income countries which would, among other challenges, require the negotiation of controversial waivers of international trade policy measures to protect the pharmaceutical industry's property rights.

Several saw the world as stuck in old donor-recipient development models and cultures, and even perceived "neo-colonial" impulses. The need for an international community response to the global crisis needs to be consciously comprehensive of the needs and situations of all. While there is a need to pinpoint emergency supply as a focus, it has to take account of inherent existing inequities and infrastructural frailties of lower income economies.

Forming a coalition of the like-minded to drive for higher levels of policy ambition and action is helpful but the outreach must broaden to include less like-minded countries. Global health care insists on human universality, if it is to work for all.

Global health issues, and pandemic management should ideally be de-coupled from current geo-political competition.

All countries need to contribute data sets, evidence bases, and evaluation. The needs of all countries and conditions need assessment: for example, it is probable that if lower income countries were enabled to develop a vaccine fit for purpose for them, it would not have been a double-dose, expensive, vaccine requiring costly maintenance.

Financing is vital, not to throw money at a problem which is as structural as it is financial. Alas, some developed countries are ducking obligations to a one-world health solution, even using the crisis to cut development assistance by stealth (the UK slashed its development assistance budget by 1/3, citing pandemic costs). Leaders have to make defining financing decisions, and work in such fora as the IMF to maximize conditionality favourable to solutions, underlining the economic and security costs of not addressing the crisis adequately. Global health financing cannot be addressed by appealing to charity. This isn't an issue comparable to distributing surplus food, as in the WFP. There is a need to transfer productive manufacturing capacity for vaccines, and for an adequate public health infrastructure. Seeing to it is a foremost international responsibility in the interests of all.

Interestingly, the Chair of the prior webinar, on the challenge of global warming as a comparable stress test of the adequacy of our global multilateral system, Mel Cappe, intervened to underline the way in which the two issues align, including on discrepancy in capacities among developed and less developed economies.

Clearly, there has been damage to international trust from the perception of vaccine inequity, competitive hoarding, and national political reticence to share supply until all "donor" citizens are vaccinated. The longer we take to fix the vaccine supply shortfall, the more we feed vaccination reticence, and delay global security. There is higher reticence in less developed and vulnerable countries to accept vaccines rejected as "unsafe" by various authorities in developed countries, enhancing the elusiveness of global immunity, and increasing divisiveness and global resentment.

Of course, democratic and even non-democratic electoral politics influence political behaviour, priorities, and choices. Developed countries are doing too much posturing and committing too little. Leadership is urgently needed, from political leaders. Civil society's capacity to press for equitable and cooperative decisions could be instrumental.

The reputation of the medical and international care community is probably unrivalled. It should be mobilized and deployed to inform publics everywhere, and to nudge political decision-makers, not as a lobby for a special interest, but in the interests of all, for global health, equity, and comprehensive security, for all peoples and nations.

Specific policy proposal included:

1. A high –level trilateral meeting among the German Chancellor, the Canadian Prime Minister, and Dr. Tedros to provide the political momentum needed for multilateral solutions to vaccine equity

2. Canadian support and leadership for the WHO MRNA vaccine technology transfer hub to scale up the global manufacturing

The conference closed with CIC President Ben Rowswell underlining the plan to strengthen links among participants and centres of excellence going forward.

<u>Policy proposals</u>

1. Multilateralism and the WHO:

- Create a permanent, resident, Executive Board that would strengthen member states' responsibilities to exercise their oversight and evaluation of the organization
- Members of the executive board must be meet clear and specific qualifications and are obligated to act independently and not be responsible to the interests of their governments
- develop an independent staff survey similar to the one used by the World Bank and IMF
- as per the IPPR, the Director General and Regional Directors should serve one seven-year term
- an independent data board should be created with representatives from national statistics offices to review and validate data. They would report their findings directly to the public.
- Canada and Germany should set an example and voluntarily provide the equivalent of 80% of what would be their assessed contributions to the WHO for three years and encourage other countries to do the same at various multilateral fora

2. End the pandemic and promoting vaccine equity:

- Strengthen the Global Health Security Agenda which currently has over 69 countries, foundations and INGOS within its membership. Gaps have already been identified through

joint external evaluations. These should be addressed. Canada, Germany and the WHO are members of the GHSA.
- Send surplus vaccines to the COVAX Facility and encourage other countries who have a surplus to follow suit
- Collaborate on the development of an end-to-end research and development preparedness and response ecosystem that could develop new vaccines & meds and also identify new therapeutics to address an array of neglected tropical diseases that create an enormous burden for the world's poor yet received scant research and development funds.

3. Catalyzing an equitable and resilience recovery to the SDGs:

- Innovations can be developed but unless there is a mechanism to fund and deliver those innovations, they are not going to be accessible to the world's poor. Strengthening public-sector capacity is foundational to achieving the SDG's. Canada and Germany can collaborate with a focused number of low-income countries that are interested in strengthening their ministries. This can occur through partnerships between ministries and with academic institutions to help build, sustain and retain human resources within ministries (health, finance, public works, justice, environment etc.) in partner LIC's.

4. Climate change:

• 5% of greenhouse gases come from 20 countries and 4 economic sectors, transportation, construction, manufacturing and power. Canada and Germany could collaborate and convene those 20 countries to focus on how we could work together to dramatically reduce these emissions. This should include creating a collaborative effort to invest in protecting the critical ecosystems identified by the IUCN. Protecting these ecosystems will not only utilize nature-based solutions to address climate change but will also be a focused effort to address the other existential crisis, the massive, global loss of biodiversity.

5. Canada and Germany together should:

- Clarify WHO mandates and roles
- Agree on IP waivers
- Collaborate in helping low-medium income countries to develop future manufacturing capacity for future infectious diseases as well as Covid
- Both countries' leaders should join on the above with DG Dr. Tedros of WHO
- Take the lead on de-coupling health from geopolitics
- Should join in laying out a ten-year program

<u>Additional proposals</u>:

- We should build a network of academic and expert advisers to engage with political leaders
- We need to encourage manufacturers to be more transparent on vaccine stability/shelf-life
- The G-7 should commit funding for COVAX
- Democracies need to make the parallel world of China, Russia, Cuba part of a common effort
- We need a global mandate, a treaty, on how to approach vaccine inequity
- Cooperation on high temporal and spatial resolution data; synchronize standards
- Increase research collaboration with low- and middle-income countries, and learn more about their needs and conditions
- Support the new WHO infectious disease hub in Berlin

- Pull together ideas on "de-colonizing" global health
- Join in making the public economic and security case to get away from the "charity" model.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN PROTECT DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

June 21, 2021

Chair: Dr. Jennifer Welsh, PhD (McGill University)

Paper Author: Dr. Kurt Bassuener, PhD (University of St. Andrews) and Mr. Jeremy Kinsman (Canadian International Council)

CIC President Ben Rowswell introduced himself and the project, explaining the origins of the project and how it was inspired by shared concern about democracy and human rights. "More potential is left on the table" since the bilateral effort's genesis with Foreign Ministers Freeland and Gabriel in 2018. The recognition that our countries' values are challenged at home as well as abroad called for reinforcing bridges between our countries, not just our governments – this is what RODA is all about.

An opening premise for the panel is that Germany and Canada have similar ambition on supporting democracy and defending human rights. Rowswell proposed two general desired outcomes from the series: 1) develop policy proposals, and 2) develop a network of influencers.

Dr. Norbert Eschborn of the KAS affirmed the strength of bilateral ties and the project's potential, including for establishing real networks. He quoted German Ambassador to Canada Sabine Sparwasser as saying that the countries are "big on announcements, but weak on implementation."

The German Ambassador herself added that the point is not just to agree on everything, but to translate ideas into something more concrete, such as generating proposals. In that spirit, the Prime Minister Trudeau – Chancellor Merkel bilateral at the G-7 Cornwall summit constituted a steering group of deputy ministers to oversee concrete intensification of the relationship.

In her introduction of the topic, Chair and Moderator Dr. Jennifer Welsh of McGill University noted "the elephant in the room" of the question hanging over democracy is the US, whose evident fragility makes it difficult to predict American behavior and posture very far into the future. It makes it incumbent upon other "like-minded" liberal democracies to cooperate on advancing the democratic agenda, taking account of new actors in the global theatre who must be included and engaged with.

Presenters Jeremy Kinsman and Dr. Kurt Bassuener introduced their discussion paper, "In Search of Democratic Revival."

Kinsman pointed out that the two preceding panels in the series, on the impacts on multilateral cooperation of the two overriding global crises of global warming and the pandemic, had emphasized the inter-relationships among issues, and outcomes, on climate, health, poverty, migration, food security, debt, trade, openness, security. They all relate to governance and human rights. They affect all people but unequally.

He recalled how human rights defenders and democracy advocates felt abandoned as established democracies turned inward and became less confident in their ability to assist, because of inward stress, uncertainty over solutions, and the disruption of the Trump years.

While the US Administration proclaims it is "back," democracies are not yet providing compelling examples to others of successful and inclusive delivery of positive outcomes for citizens, which might help reverse the deepening trends of democratic recession around the world.

Sustaining positive outcomes needs the development of civil society where citizens learn and experience agency, and the ability to compromise. Building an inclusive democracy depends at least as much on behavioral elements as it does institutional ones. To develop, civil society needs the nourishment and protection of basic human rights.

Some countries, particularly France, have seen the human rights door as the essential priority, believing that democracy promotion is too easily conflated with geopolitical competition and economic motives; their preference is to focus on human rights protections in international covenants, which are irreducible and mitigatable.

In any event, we must (1) display solidarity and consistently support human rights; (2) we must communicate with those not clearly like-minded, underscoring that human rights abusers cannot hope for full partnerships; (3) empower our own civil societies to reach out to peers, including support in "non-political" areas; (4) these issues need to be discussed in our own solidarity groups including governments and NGOs, like the Human Security Network which developed in the late 1990s and yielded the ICC and R2P; (5) we must focus on what we can do, recognizing it is our deeds that count most.

Bassuener posited that our external constituency consists of bottom-up exponents of human dignity who aim to further the cause of human and democratic rights. Our solidarity with them should be demanddriven – and expressions of support should navigate from their own risk assessment. Our domestic constituency consists of our own civil society, writ large. Citizens are the elementary particles, animated by agency for human dignity. And solidarity is the binding agent among them. Our efforts to assist should be agency-embracing and where possible agency-catalyzing.

Geopolitical competition/alignment – particularly regarding China – was a running theme through the G-7 and NATO summits, as well as evident in US President Biden's meetings with the EU and with Russian President Putin. The danger of such an approach, even couched as "democracies vs. autocracies" is twofold: (1) that the organizing principle beyond democratic defense becomes about resisting an adversary, rather than about assisting others who wish to maintain or establish accountable governance and (2) that as a result, the actual dynamics, challenges, and opportunities "beyond the perimeter" of established democracies is obscured from view. This not only affects democracies' credibility, but also can feed a popular conclusion that geopolitical actors are "all playing the same game" – ironically generating the cynicism in which authoritarians at all scales thrive, while demobilizing civic potential.

Given the radically different, less permissive, global environment vis-à-vis the 1990s, an audit of our democracy support efforts, navigating from first principles, is deeply needed. The presumptions of that period no longer hold. More creativity and flexibility will be required.

New modalities for engagement would best be identified and informed by a deep bench of self-driven civic actors from a variety of countries. There is a danger of presumptively ruling out support in the hardest cases, partly for fear of doing harm to those who seek change.

Assistance on health, climate, and other shared global priorities may well inter alia provide avenues for engagement, allowing some latitude for facilitating popular agency, which can have a beneficial transferal impact.

Values-based solidarity is the philosophical connective tissue in the paper – among democratic allies, among their and other civic actors in "like-minded" societies, and for those who espouse and take risks in defense of human dignity in more challenging environments. This will entail choices for democracies like Canada and Germany.

The Chair then opened the floor for interventions from the participants.

A theme often repeated throughout the workshop was that humility is necessary for all democracies – their credibility as exponents of their values and in defense of human rights depends upon it.

We must interrogate our own institutions and failings. "If we don't put our own house in order – including within the EU – we won't be credible," observed one participant.

Liberal democracies should avoid complicity in supporting authoritarian regimes – including with "elites who are for sale" and law firms and consultancies that actively promote the interests of autocracies and kleptocrats. Mandatory transparency mechanisms and regulations could counteract this current reality. Germany has recently adopted a supply chain law, requiring companies to declare the origin of inputs and certify they not involve human rights abuses. This will be mirrored at the EU-level – which should force a reckoning in many member states.

Among democracies, there is a need for collective solidarity. The "transnationalization of authoritarianism," including backsliding on civil liberties and accountability, has reached into democracies themselves. We must look to collective protection of dissidents, including granting asylum, and defence of academic freedom.

Situations like Canada's frictions with Saudi Arabia, or China's retaliatory imprisonment of Canadians and Australians merit determined solidarity.

Human rights and other liberal priorities need radiation and consistency in multilateral institutions, including the UN – despite deadlock of the UNSC and resistance from many in the UNGA. Together we must consciously collaborate to protect and advance important normative agendas and resist authoritarians' normative agenda – China, for example, is pushing hard against the universality of human rights norms. One participant summed up the irreducible essentials of our common values to "the human dignity of the individual and democratic equality" which ought to be central in our messaging, as are economic, social, and cultural rights.

Democracies should look beyond our traditional sphere (i.e., Atlantic world), and drop allusions to "European values," or civilizational discourses that support an apparent agenda of particularism, which is then exploited by autocrats. At the same time, we should be "unabashedly universalist", insisted one participant, and emphasize the breadth of the pursuit

of the values underpinning liberal democracies – such as human dignity, responsible government, and the broad set of rights identified above.

Many people agreed that language is critically important. In other words, part of what 'needs to be done' is the development of a new narrative, that is better coordinated among liberal democratic states and more deliberately shared with domestic publics. A new case needs to be made for why democracy support is vital and how it can be done. A participant emphatically called for "the West" to be banished from our lexicon; the democratic world is wider than that. Another noted that the term "allies" carries with it a military connotation that "like-minded" does not. Another noted that "like-minded" did not mean "like us." We may need to develop typologies for regimes.

Targeted development and infrastructure support especially to potentially biddable governments can counter the Chinese state attempt to maximize "performance legitimacy" as exemplified by the Belt and Road Initiative and marketing of Covid vaccine, though their governance model has little appeal.

Regarding the proposed Summit of Democracy, some observed that the planning is ever-changing and uncertain. The US still doesn't have a clear focus on what it aims to achieve. Several ideas emerged from participants, including to make the summit primarily non-governmental, with a focus on sharing experiences and developing strategies of mutual support. Civic actors from semi-democracies and authoritarian regimes who are agitating for greater democracy and human rights protection could participate with civil society counterparts from democracies. Another observed, in agreeing that that dichotomy of democracies vs. non-democracies was not useful – no democracies provide all their citizens with empowerment and equality – that the key litmus test of governments is their willingness to be reflective of their own shortcomings and openly share this in discussion. A "big tent" approach could be more effective.

There is a striking "self-doubt" within the US, noted one participant, which means the US is not demonstrating the confident energy that normally attends presidential initiatives. At the same time, the US, but is devoting massive financial resources to the issue of democratic solidarity, beyond the absorptive capacity of its democracy support infrastructure, in what appears as a "back to the future" attempt to reanimate the approaches from the self-confident 1980s and 1990s. In light of the "false starts" we have seen from the administration, there is an opportunity for other liberal democratic states to help shape this agenda. But in order to do so, insisted another participant, Canada would have to "step up in a significant way" that shifts from the approach of backing a number of smaller initiatives.

Mutual learning was another common theme, often paired with innovation. Democracy is not static, but constantly evolving – it is not a point of arrival. Efforts to learn from new developments, successes, and failures were raised repeatedly, with some specificity. The notion of the inevitability of "democratic consolidation," one participant averred, was always theoretically weak, as demonstrated by democratic backsliding literature. A new conceptual understanding of democratic erosion, as seen in the US, and even more deeply in India, is needed to better protect democracy, along with both a conceptual and practical move to prioritize innovation within democracy support agendas.

More normative audits of democratic successes and failures – and those of democracy assistance – are required. A Swedish study was cited demonstrating that 20 years of support

had a positive impact, though "there is lots of room for improvement." Further dedicated efforts to tease-out the causal and connective tissue are needed.

A participant made a detailed linkage between postwar multilateralism, social democracy, and popular investment in democratic norms. The pursuit of neoliberal economics beginning in the 1980s undercuts consensus, as has the growing power of non-majoritarian decision-making structures within key institutions. Rather than supporting the consolidation of democracy 'at home', as it did in the early post 1945-period, key features of the international order over the past few decades (particularly in the economic sphere) are now undermining it and providing ammunition for populist forces.

What constitutes a democracy? Several variations on the theme of avoiding creating camps and instead engaging those governments constituting a "middle ground" – not openly anti-democratic, but lacking solid practice (for a variety of reasons) – were made.

More than one participant noted it is unproductive not to engage with China, Russia, and Iran, while at the same time and challenging their values. Otherwise, warned one participant, we, or risk being seen to concede the field. While "trade-offs are inherent in foreign policy", we have to agree on clear red lines. A "big tent" approach could be more effective. Another This participant also observed that the terminology of "defense" of democracy conveyed a divisiveness and hostility that "protection" did not. Another wondered what "interoperability" in the civilian sphere would look like, observing the lack of effective coordination among democracies.

The quality of governance Government was a recurring theme. As one participant put it "we are not born free; we are born governed...Good government ought to be a fundamental human right." It was also noted that the balance in the background paper was weighted disproportionately to civil society, which risked overlooking rather than the need to strengthen institutions (including parliaments) and to develop healthy state-society relations. "Civil society on its own", cautioned one participant, "will not work". institutional connections, such as parliaments. But the developmental contribution of civil society as a building block of democratic behaviour remains essential. Another agreed that democratic and human rights are not synonymous and the agendas should not be confused as it potentially shortchanges both.

Both civil society impulses and inclusive government that delivers are essential to achieving the results we want to see. Chile was cited as a recent example of bottom-up initiative leading to government action and real change, as well as open government. Corruption was recognized as corrosive of democracy and the social contract; governments are the instruments to fight it – and they may need help to do so.

How to address democratic backsliding/erosion with allies, or their committing human rights violations? The "illiberal democracies" in Hungary and Poland came up for repeated mention in the context of the EU and NATO, and Turkey regarding the latter, which entail serious credibility deficits. It was suggested that a conscious effort was needed to take stock of the erosion of liberal democracy in Eastern Europe, despite all of the tools at the disposal of the EU, and to internalize and share the lessons.

As vividly displayed in the US – and not just under Trump – democracies can have problematic mechanics – the electoral college, gerrymandering, the filibuster, etc. Canada's own "notwithstanding clause" was raised as an example. How do democracies weigh-in with fellow

democracies regarding evident issues in their systems with an approach of mutual learning and solidarity in improving democracy? The University of British Colombia-Harvard Participedia platform, a crowdsourced resource including information and assessments of democratic innovations, can provide a resource to researchers, civic actors worldwide, and governments.

Democratic governments have a responsibility to engage with counterparts on democratic deficits. Deficiencies in a country's domestic policy have wider impact beyond its borders. Countries acknowledging gaps between actions and words make good partners.

Several participants noted Canada's deficits in democracy development support: insufficient resourcing, inconsistent inconstant commitment, and fragmentation across government and within Global Affairs. Canada fails to capitalize and invest in what it does well. "Canada needs to recognize its gems," as one participant put it. Radio Canada International's being discontinued was juxtaposed with DW's support to democracy and human rights activists. The partnership with Germany might prompt Ottawa to up its game.

A participant observed that neither Germany nor Canada carries the baggage of the US with regard to other countries, and therefore might have greater latitude to operate on behalf of supporting democracy development. Concretely, this could be pursued by each country choosing a country in which it has a greater interest or leverage, then developing a joint strategy that could possibly include other like-minded democracies and integrated across government.

At the same, a participant who had not spoken later stressed in writing, Germany and Canada need to "pay more attention to the quality" of their own democracies. In developing their agendas at home and abroad, both countries need to evaluate democratic processes with an eye to policy outcomes. Particular importance also needs to be paid to stronger inclusion mechanisms, as inclusive democracy is clearly a marker of strong democracy today. Finally, this participant stressed that at this pivotal time in history, when democracy is being challenged, leadership that is drive by outcomes, and not by image, is essential. The obsession with image has been one of the pathologies of advanced democracies that has also diffused globally.

Chair Jennifer Welsh wrapped up with main takeaways, building on one participant's effort to segment Canadian and German efforts at three different levels:

1. At the more micro level, she had heard that several specific initiatives that Canada and Germany can being undertake jointly. This includes: a) broadening Germany's recent law on supply chains; b) identifying new ways to coordinate advanced democracies in their efforts to counter transnational threats to democracy (perhaps starting with collaboration on protecting diaspora of authoritarian government); c) initiating a collaborative 'pilot' by choosing two specific countries are of particular interest to Canada and Germany respectively but in which we can have a particular synergy in impact, and discussing how to coordinate diplomatic, economic and development assistance tools; and d) convening a joint session with policy branches and select researchers to examine studies on the effectiveness of democracy and to establish new categories that accommodate the phenomenon of backsliding. The emerging deputy ministers' network could provide a ready infrastructure for collective action on these specific action steps. In addition, both countries could proactively seek to shape US thinking on the forthcoming Summit of

Democracies, and stress the need for a forum for mutual learning below the level of heads of state.

2. At a more meso-level, participants had stressed the need for Canada and Germany to step back and re-evaluate their foreign policy narratives and to consciously craft and disseminate a new 'case' for the urgency of democracy support and language around its modalities. In addition, specific strategies for the realization of democracy support are required. On the Canadian side, this could extend to the mandate of a a new Centre on good governance and democracy, but also more investment specifically for democracy support. As part of this strategic development, the two countries should focus on elaborating the three elements of the agenda stressed in the workshop: protection, support and innovation (identifying priority action steps within each) and then build and resource a consolidated agenda, concentrating on elements of the agenda in which their countries have distinct advantages. Inequality is particularly corrosive. There needs to be greater attention to the interaction of institutions and civil society. Political economy needs more thought devoted to equity and fairness.

3. At a more macro-level, deeper reflection and analysis on the structural factors that have undermined democracy is essential. First, Canada and Germany could examine the political economy of democratic recession, and identify specific proposals for addressing inequality that can form part of a broader 'build back better' agenda. As part of such an effort, the two countries could jointly commission and convene, research on the relative success of democracy assistance, as well as the political economy and multilateral and social democratic underpinnings of internal and external democratic legitimacy and solidarity. Such dedicated, clear-eyed research and public exchange could inform the deployment of resources beyond the two countries. Second, Canada and Germany could seek to reinvigorate the collective action that is so essential at an international level to support democracy, by identifying particular normative agendas in which they will invest diplomatic and political capital and help to build broader coalitions. This effort could begin through a lesson-learned exercise on failures of collective action (e.g., Hungary) and long-range planning of diplomatic efforts given the evolving composition of different intergovernmental bodies.

4. Finally, Germany and Canada could collaborate on their engagement with the US on democracy support, but also seek to identify key democratic partners globally (i.e., beyond the West) that could be key discussion partners in a new and more coordinated democracy support agenda.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN PROTECT DEMOCRACY FROM TECHNOLOGICAL THREATS

July 5, 2021

Chair: Sue Gardner (formerly of Wikimedia)
Paper Authors:
1) Aaron Shull, JD, & Kailee Hilt, MA (Centre for International Governance Innovation)
2) Dr. Ulrike Klinger, PhD (European New School)

The fourth panel of German and Canadian experts, July 5, on global cyber-security and the impacts on democracy of communications technologies, was chaired by Sue Gardner.

There were two issue papers prepared, reflecting the two basic topics: Aaron Shull and Kailie Hilt of CIGI on "Securing Cyberspace in an Age of Disruption," and Ulrike Klinger of the European New School and Weizenbaum Institute, on "Digital Democracy and Public Discourse: dissonant, disrupted and unedited?" .

Co-Chairs of the RODA project, Ben Rowswell President of the Canadian International Council, and Norbert Eschborn, Director in Canada of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, welcomed participants. They sketched out the purposes and program of the overall Canada-Germany like-minded project, emphasizing the aim to a) provide the two governments with expert advice on critical issues affecting democracy and human rights support and international cooperation, and b) strengthen research and scholarly networks between Canadian and German civil societies and centres of excellence.

German Ambassador to Canada, Sabine Sparwasser, underlined the immediacy and importance of the issues before the panel, recalling Japanese technology entrepreneur Masayoshi Son's dictum that "those who rule the data will rule the world." Indeed, the world is at an inflection point on issues of cyber security and democratic health, without the infrastructure of socially responsible international governance for cybertechnologies affecting so many lives.

Canadian Ambassador to Germany, Stephane Dion, reminded the panel that freedom of expression is precious, fragile, and needs protection.

Chair and moderator Sue Gardner set the context for the discussion by reflecting on her personal journey from internet optimist to "horrified pessimist" during the 12 years in which she lived and worked in the San Francisco Bay Area at the epicentre of tech. She recalled the internet's origins among "dreamers, visionaries and idealists," in the period in which it was felt the advent of the internet would usher in a new era of knowledge-sharing and communication across borders, and traced tech's evolution through the entrepreneurial startup era and into the consolidation phase of Big Tech, in which a small number of powerful near-monopolies now dominate the tech landscape.

She summarized for panelists the ways in which tech is now harming democracy: by providing tools used by authoritarian governments to surveil and control their citizens; by accidentally breaking the business model of the journalism industry, leaving people less well-informed and

power less accountable; by social media's algorithmic amplification of misinformation and disinformation, which empowers demagogues and extremists, and leaves everybody else confused and distrustful; and by refusing to moderate discussion spaces and thereby enabling the harassment and abuse of people with marginalized identities, silencing them and pushing them out of public discourse. She described governments' response to these harms as mostly "hanging back, unsure," but praised Germany as a global leader in terms of taking steps to require tech platforms to modify their practices to bring them in line with the values of the people of Germany.

As moderator she set for the panel the central task of proposing structures which could deliver more positive outcomes for society, underlining the real need for countries to work together - which became a leitmotiv of discussion.

An introductory tour de table of panelists to identify forefront preoccupations elicited several points that were subsequently expanded by the panel, among which:

- Infrastructure for governance of communications technologies and cyber is inadequate, barely existent.

- There is little connection of privately owned platforms to public values and beneficial norms.

- The world is unprepared and under-equipped to cope with the explosion of hugely disruptive cyber-crime.

- The trajectory from total optimism to total pessimism has been enabled by too much focus on technology and too little on society and on human agency.

- Technology companies' practices are completely opaque, which makes it difficult to study or analyze their societal effects.

- Much more research, digital media education, and cross-border work among scholars and governments is essential.

Aaron Shull and Kailee Hilt introduced their paper which focused primarily on the cyber-security challenges, and on the need of international governance of cyber and social media platforms.

It is a clearly dangerous time. We are living unprepared and barely protected in a grey zone in which preparation of cyber war goes on at a time of ostensible peace, without universally accepted rules.

Cyber-crime, notably the expanding practice of ransomware, is rampant, without agreed measures for determining responsibility and appropriate responses.

State-to-state preparation for offensive cyber-weapons of disruption and coercion is conducted in great secrecy. The publics of potentially targeted countries are unprepared, their increasing vulnerability enhanced by rapidly expanding inter-connections of the Internet of things.

Middle powers like Germany and Canada should join up to promote the development of governance infrastructure and acceptance of rules of the road.

On governance, policy elaboration must be inclusive of public input. The issues are not just those of national security but bear heavily on normative social values.

Subsequent discussion agreed there is a paucity of laws and constraints on Big Tech; as Sue Gardner had put it, some CEOs operate abroad to conform to contradictory national legal regimes, while others conform to nobody's at all.

Germany's efforts to strengthen cyber-security laws, most recently in 2017, are upgrades to governmental practice, and extend across the board: Germany did not rule out Huawei 5-G networks because they represented a unique geo-strategic threat, but strengthened security requirements for all potential entrants.
Cyber-security legislation succeeds a long history of German preoccupation with disinformation, the other main topic before the panel: German hate laws are severe and have been reinforced by more recent laws against the monetization of harmful information content. The European Union has drawn up a Democracy Action Plan to provide essential context, including for expanded research, consumer protection, and defensive citizen education.

The question was asked whether German legislation, while welcome, can really do much to improve the unacceptable current imbalance in power relationships between the "1% who control platforms and the 99% who are their users" and rectify serious underlying problems, which include:

- Inconsistency between the language of security and technology with norms of democracy.

- A lack of corporate and platform transparency, exacerbated by the impenetrability of algorithms, shrouded in secrecy, designed to maximize profits, and not amenable to policing.

Middle countries should indeed consult and act jointly to obtain leverage with Facebook, for example, buoyed by its $1 trillion valuation, to counter its "complete untransparency."

However, several intervenors underlined that international cooperation on all the issues of cybergovernance, transparency, and social responsibility, has a very long way to go. President Macron had urged international coherence of effort but China, Russia, and the US were unsupportive. It has to be realistically acknowledged that these major countries are preparing their capabilities for inserting malware strategically, breaching the national security of potential adversaries. Cyber-espionage is routine.

It was observed that Canada doesn't seem to be sure where its interests lie, in security alliances or in supporting complete transparency and rules-based governance. The apparent fact is that Canada and Germany are like-minded while the US is an outlier, and the proposition of an alliance of democratic countries needs deeper definitional understanding.

Dr. Ulrike Klinger then presented her paper on social media and disinformation.

A baseline fact is that social media are not an exogenous factor to the challenges; they "are" society. But they are built-for-purpose for profit, not to promote rational discourse.

They have become central to political communication but political users target for effect old media as vehicles as well as new, in a hybrid fashion; e.g., Donald Trump's provocative use of Twitter to obtain more mainstream media coverage - a "new door to an old house."

We do focus too much on the technology itself, rather than its effects. But she urged recognition that:

- We can control technologies to attenuate negative collateral effects - i.e., they are not immutable

- But we need to understand the technologies and their effects.

The key question is how we can ensure public values, and rights, are kept in the forefront. We should not "blame" the technology, which is neither "good" nor "bad," but instead shore up human agency as the driving factor - to take control.

It is up to society to force change in platform behaviour. Their lack of transparency is a fundamental obstacle to mediation. It should not be up to the platforms to self-police. They need incentives to change, that should be shaped for public policy from users whose data constitute the algorithms that represent the platforms' monetized assets.

Discussion concurred that civil society must be central to the writing of the rules. Generally, publics are too passive, aroused more by publicized complaints about specific objectionable commentary on social media than by the need for structural improvement of governance and transparency. It is pointless to leave to politicians the responsibility for rectifying the effect of specific harmful comments.

As we record the harmful incidents and effects of deliberate disinformation, empirical observations have to be aggregated and translated into action recommendations to deter the harm.

Several speakers emphasized again the importance of collaboration in research and determination to prepare an educated public, able to discriminate facts from fiction, which begins with children.

It was pointed out the European Commission and Union is driving relevant rule-making in the world community. But the overall task of providing for governance will consume the next decade, before priorities of public good prevail in practice.

Moderator and Chair Sue Gardner, in closing, polled panelists on their self-identification as optimists or pessimists at this stage of the evolving set of issues: their inclination is pessimistic but with some room for hope. The Chair saw hope as being justified if serious trans-national cooperation becomes a reality.

It was clear from discussion that the need of governance infrastructure, whether for cyber security, or for social networks, is overriding.

Greater public and user competency in on-line media is essential to progress and redress in governance and to consumer and citizen protection.

But we can't regulate what we don't understand, and the necessity of seeing behind the industrial "curtain" is essential. Ben Rowswell closed the meeting by urging participants to stay connected, including to further webinars of the RODA Canada-Germany like-minded colloquium on issues of multilateral cooperation and human rights and democracy protection.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN BUILD RESILIENCE IN TRADE AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

July 26, 2021

Chair: Dr. Ailish Campbell (Canadian Ambassador to the European Union)
Paper authors:
1) Lawrence Herman (Herman and Associates)
2) William White (C.D. Howe Institute)

The fifth panel of the Canada-Germany RODA webinar series on world trade and economic prospects, took place July 26, 2021. Ambassador Ailish Campbell chaired this third webinar to probe the resilience and effectiveness of the world's multilateral system in dealing with global challenges on vital transnational issues. Earlier panels considered the impact of global warming and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Joining KAS Director Dr. Norbert Eschborn in welcoming participants, CIC President Ben Rowswell said that while the debate was between Canadian and German experts and what the two like-minded partners can do together, the stakes involved in these issues are truly global, about the interlocking sets of international relationships and issues, and our cooperative system.

In her scene-setting introduction, Ambassador Campbell situated the panel within the "monumental" themes of our time which are indeed stress tests for our multilateral system. The pandemic has vividly exposed global disparities. 55% of citizens of North America and the EU are now vaccinated at least partially, against only 1.5% of citizens of African countries.

Merchandise trade itself slumped 20% since the outbreak in early 2020, though only 7% between Canada and the EU. Recovery is uneven - China is back to positive growth, reinforcing its growing impact on the world system which is obviously an additional contributor to the system's need to accommodate change.

Presenting his paper, "Brave New World: Trends in Global Trade Governance," Lawrence Herman laid out the WTO's adjustment issues as a member-based institution that needs reform and upgrading to keep up with profound and incredibly rapid global changes, in anticipation of the important ministerial conference in November ("MC12").

Mr. Herman outlined his views of what has to be done, both to reform the institution, its rules, and its coverage, and more widely to re-orient international methodologies to enable the world community to deal with interlocking trade, financial, and governance systems that have too long operated in silos.

There are four stand-out issue areas where the WTO must gain understanding and competence regarding the ways these affect trade and inter-disciplinary policy development:

- The impact of the pandemic
- Climate change
- The digital economy
- Cyber security and data privacy

The WTO's decision-making mandate, competence and culture have not really evolved since the original GATT rules affecting trade in goods across physical borders were elaborated in 1947.

Those rules are still transcendent as foundation principles, governing non-discrimination, MFN treatment, bound tariffs, export and import restrictions and exceptions, etc. But the fact is that the world's only global trading institution has nothing to say about the digital economy, or the way in which the global economy is being transformed by technology.

On process, because the culture of consensus decision-making insists on unanimity which cannot accommodate meaningful responses to significant global change and challenge, decision-making has become dysfunctional, even if the judicial review mechanisms that were undermined by the Trump administration are now being reinforced.

While new Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is leading an effort to reclaim WTO competence and authority, she will need greater support, especially from liberal democracies, to bolster resistance to growing trends toward dissonance among member states on economic governance. National measures are gaining favour over common approaches, especially in the wake of dismay over the ratio of costs to benefits of globalization.

Referring briefly to his paper, Mr. Herman said the role of the private sector in formulating standards and guidelines– independent of governments – must not be overlooked as a global factor. This was due to investor pressure demanding corporate social responsibility (CSR), notably in human rights and climate change activities.

The following debate by the panel certainly concurred that not just the WTO, but the world itself is at a crossroads, for all the reasons we know, especially the challenge of dealing with climate change. It was acknowledged, though, that deglobalization has not occurred; supply chains are not unravelling. But the world has passed the high point of hyper-globalization.

As to the WTO's governance, it was universally recognized to have been disabled by rules from another era, slowness of process, and inability to reflect the urgencies of the climate challenge and other issues overwhelming national governments and the world community.

Public trust and expectation are low because the beneficiaries of the institutional system for trade are not as apparent as they should be - populations need to see their realities reflected in decision-making. The WTO is seen as "top-down;" its preoccupations are situated in a "Geneva-based" policy vacuum that inhibits consideration of "outside" forces and issues.

Above all, the trade body and system have to demonstrate the ability to advance sustainability goals. The WTO's capacity to adapt to the advent of carbon border adjustments will be a test of the both the WTO and of the political will of its global membership.

The combination of low expectations for the system's flexibility with enduring regard for the need of functional systemic cooperation led to questions about the possibility of forming affinity groups that could align on vital issues when unanimity is unavailable. A "climate customs union" was cited, or regional organizations, such as APEC.

The China factor was repeatedly referred to. If "one big tent" with China inside would not work, why not two "tents?"

There were vivid objections to a two-tent optic, and to the belief Chinese participation in a consensus institution is unavailable. Many countries will object to having to choose between tents.

In any event, the issue of effective governance and competence is "bigger than China." Some intervenors did not see China as rocking the WTO boat, pointing out China does play by consensus rules. Most of the demands for relationship changes are being made to China about China, making for a very unbalanced negotiation. A few emphasized we need to accept China's economic system as it is and as it evolves. Panelists underlined that Chinese economic impact is an earned reality that is likely to grow, along with the preponderance of Asian markets in world trade (already at 60%).

On the other hand, distrust of China is becoming a more common feature. But preponderant panelist view was that "the world we want" is not a divided and de-coupled one. Chinese buy-in and participation in every major international issue (such as climate change and access to vaccines) are essential to success.

But panelists saw merit in the notion of countries aligned in ambition grouping efforts to formulate and market workable solutions to advance progress. The "Ottawa Group" was cited as an exemplary effort. The speculative beneficial value of partnerships of "middle powers" (though the term itself is contested) - explicitly Canada and Germany - was tabled several times.

Obviously, panelists saw the WTO's governance weaknesses to be reflections of the governance liabilities of member states themselves. One panelist was of the opinion that WTO governance and rules are essentially biased toward the private sector. attaching inadequate value to the vital need of "exclusive public goods" which require differentiated treatment by trade rules. According to this panelist, a free and democratic debate needs to recognize that too many actors - participants in the care economy, and especially women in general - are victims of inequalities, whose repair is increasingly a feature of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, and should be a WTO preoccupation as well.

William White then introduced his paper, "If Something Cannot Go On Forever, It Will Stop," with its wider lens on systemic issues in the world economy and in international governance.

Mr. White acknowledged that since writing the paper, he has deepened his preoccupation with national political governance whose defects and distortions inevitably affect international governance.

There are glaring fault lines surrounding growing inequality of wealth and of opportunity, with increasingly severe inter-generational effects. The populist notion that the system "is not fair" and that governments "can't be trusted" also degrades belief in multilateral cooperation which is essential if humanity is to address effectively the threats represented by the potential for financial crisis, pandemics, and climate change.

The issue areas are interlinked - each has the capacity to unravel the others. Environmental issues are especially over-arching. Mr. White reminded that they contain several global "tipping points" beyond carbon emissions and global warming: bio-diversity in general is in danger, a warning that panelists registered with shared concern.
Solutions to these challenges aren't available if the economic-financial system is fragile. Global debt has increased as a result of efforts to enable economies to cover the costs of the

pandemic, now exceeding 360% of global GDP, which even the levels at the time of the damaging 2008 financial crisis at 280%.

The debt burdens of lower income countries are increasing as the pandemic worsens for them. Meanwhile, they are experiencing high degrees of costly de-linking from international markets.

But a pre-condition of fixing these very major problems is the world community's ability to come together to master global health challenges. Longer-term fixes need increasing emphasis on prevention.

Amajor change is needed on the political level, to generate more trust in government. It requires an ability to think about longer-term investment solutions rather than quick fixes. Political will and leadership are essential.

So, strategic thinking and remedies need to focus more on this inter-relationship of systems. It requires jettisoning organization by "silos." It is corrosive within sectors - e.g., the detachment of monetary governance from regulatory governance in finance - within governments, and across the multilateral system, which is functionally organized by "siloed" components.

The debate that ensued Mr. White's remarks agreed most issues are joined to others and need interlinked analysis and prescription. Leaders have to confront the need for better governance at both national and multilateral levels - - not necessarily "bigger." Governments need a longer-term perspective, to target investment to risk, and to address needs that emerge from the social contract It requires, resisting the tendency toward short-term populism and polarization.

It was postulated that such greater and more thoughtful emphasis on investment, and less catering to promoting consumption, may slow growth. The trend could be reinforced by the braking effect of concerted thrusts against global warming, and remedial action against inequality. Leadership is required.

The point was made that actual outcomes on the pandemic are in some ways hopeful - the decisive role of science in creating solidarity was cited (though its validation in public support differed in Europe and Asia from the treatment accorded by wayward and politicized adversarial information systems in the US in particular.)

Pursuing the search for positives, panelists discussed the essential role of "trust," and the "power of benevolence." Economics is too focused on material outputs, rather than well-being whose evaluation should traverse all policy areas.

Covid has been a "great teacher" in demonstrating the decisive value of science - not as intellectual property - but as a public good. China and the Western Pacific area succeeded in confronting the pandemic because there was a more widely shared appreciation of the "common good" in play in policy approaches.

A question is whether such outcomes will track into the WTO whose rules can be "a chill" on national initiative.

There were calls for a new "Bretton Woods" accord to re-gear the multilateral approach to social realities and over-riding issues of inequality, and to transnational threats in climate and health, that could cover discordances of gender as well.

Panelists referred to the stress between national tendencies and historic multilateral impulses to free trade as much as possible. Nationally, populations are demanding some regulation of trade and remedial protection from the negative impacts of global exposure. The multilateral process needs to be address these from the standpoints of less equipped low-income countries as well as from the perspectives of the interests of the major powers. However, it was noted that 3/4 of changes to national trade practices emerging from the pandemic crisis have actually been liberalizing as opposed to protectionist.

The role of the private sector was addressed several times (including in Mr. Herman's paper). Its codes of conduct provided some guidance, but need also consideration of civil liability for abuses. Nonetheless, building back trust will take time and needs to use all available fora and tools, especially to counter the power of negative emotional appeal.

There is wide agreement that the digital sector cannot continue with no oversight internationally. Moreover, more widely, recent agreements to dampen national competition on minimum corporate tax rates should be taken further.

The role of "middle powers" in helping to broker progress, inter-linkages, and breakthroughs was repeatedly addressed. There was alignment with the perception that Canada and Germany have a specific positive potential to join up with like-minded others, including in multilateral fora, to pursue a linked-up agenda.

The agenda extends across the board, but as preceding panels also concluded, has to be constructed on the assumption that addressing linkages under the overall title of sustainability, with organizational consequence for government, are top of mind and purpose.

Trust is the vital currency for success. It grows with engagement and exchanges across borders. The debate - all too short - was summarized by the Chair as representing a systemic assessment that we need to reduce the friction between the component systems that compose international governance, echoing the advice of former Chief Economist at the OECD, Sylvia Ostry.

Ambassador Campbell left the participants with two major questions for consideration:

- How can we make the WTO and other institutions work to benefit all fundamental participants in the world economy, and not just the most prominent states and users?
- And how can we best harness and deploy the influence of our relatively successful inclusive democracies?

In closing the meeting, Ben Rowswell outlined the process for bringing these views, analyses, and questions before the German and Canadian governments, and urged participants to take every opportunity to consolidate research and other links among each other.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN ACCOMMODATE REFUGEES, MIGRATION, BORDERS, AND IDENTITY

September 20, 2021

The prior five panels in this 2021 Canada-Germany colloquium threw themselves at issue areas that represent major global challenges and opportunities for the two countries to intensify a partnership to promote greater multilateral cooperation.

The prior panels concluded that:
a) positive outcomes on climate change, global health and the pandemic, human rights and democracy protection, cyber-security and disinformation, and economic prospects and equity are all inter-linked;
b) and without progress, they all contribute to the pressures of unprecedented global migration.

These global pressures on the international system and the responses of Canada and Germany to refugees, skilled labour recruitment, immigrant integration, and the management of diversity and pluralism, were the focus of the sixth panel of the series on September 20. It was chaired by Canadian Senator and migration scholar and advocate of refugee rights, Ratna Omidvar.

Welcomes from Ben Rowswell and Dr. Norbert Eschborn on behalf of the sponsoring institutions, the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, re-emphasized the commonalities of approach to world affairs of Canada and Germany. Respective Ambassadors, Stephane Dion for Canada and Sabine Sparwasser for Germany, noted the elections in both countries this week. They reminded of the perceived political need of our governments to demonstrate they are in control of borders to ensure that refugees are welcome.

In setting the scene, Senator Omidvar underlined that the tension between global migratory pressures on people displaced by poverty, crime, persecution, conflict, drought, and Covid-19, and the concurrent diminishment of receptivity to refugees, indeed represent major national and multilateral policy challenges.

Geographic exposure is highly unequal. Most of the world's 82 million displaced people are in the global South. Of these, 86% of the world's 23 million trans-border refugees are harboured by essentially "unwilling" and under-financed adjacent host countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Jordan, Turkey, Colombia, Iran and others. The UNHCR has not been equipped to cope. The world community needs to enhance the agency's finances, operational mandate, and the commitment of more member states to accept refugees. With the exception of Germany's remarkable absorption of a million Syrian refugees in 2015, refugees accepted for settlement are what one panelist would term "a drop in the bucket." The Chairman suggested that limited resettlement by a few enable wealthy countries enabled the world to "ignore the lives of millions."

Canada and Germany are among the very few countries that still pursue recruitment immigration for settlement. However, our "addiction" to highly-skilled workers who bring

economic benefit undervalues our increasing dependence on immigrants who are also essential workers in such vital fields as long-term care and agriculture.

The good news is that for our two countries at least, national identities are becoming more inclusive, as German Writer Jan Plamper emphasized in his landmark 2019 book ("Das Neue Wir" - the "new we").

In placing these issues before the panel, the Chairman asked how Germany and Canada can converge to reconcile competing policy tensions and to intensify multilateral cooperation by bringing others into the fold.

Issue presentations followed from Dr. Fen Hampson, President of the Global Council on Refugees and Migration, on current international trends and prospects, Ulrike Kober of the Bertelsmann Foundation on Germany's integration of refugee children, and Dr. Ayelet Shachar on the virtual outward protective extension of the national borders of wealthy countries targeted by migrants.

Dr. Hampson described the current and anticipated global migration picture as being desperate, again emphasizing the crushing burden of hosting refugees for countries adjacent to conflict and crisis.

Efforts to update the overtaken multilateral post-World War Two system for refugee rights and resettlement such as the UN General assembly's Global Compact on Refugees and the 2018 Intergovernmental Agreement on Migration need to be reinforced by new agreements to correct the chronic underfunding of assessed national contributions (as exists for UN peace-keeping) and by the mobilization of contributions from world agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank, and from supplementary sources such as civil society, the international business community, or even from re-purposing assets frozen under anti-corruption provisions in various jurisdictions.

Canada and Germany indeed need to "lean on" developed countries unwilling to take in refugees to contribute at least offer much more in financial and international political support.

The second presenter, Ulrich Kober, reported on the extent to which German public authorities have been able to respond to educational and integration urgencies affecting refugee children. Between 2015-2017, around half a million asylum requests were lodged on behalf of minors and Germany had to absorb 130,000 refugee children and youth in the school system which is roughly equivalent to building 500 "additional schools." Half of the refugee children were from homes where the adults had no or only primary education. Their incomes were also considerably lower than German norms. Thus, the challenge of including these young persons in the educatio was not only quantitative in terms of numbers but also qualitative in terms of equity.

With regard to early childhood education, shortcomings endure in pre-school kindergarten spaces, partly because of a shortfall in trained staff. However, the vast majority of educators think inclusion is working well. With regard to school education, 80% of refugee youth express satisfaction with their socio-cultural and educational accommodation. Yet, academic language is a challenge and only few profit from special language courses. With regard to vocational training, Germany's internationally renowned “dual system” works as an “inclusion engine” for refugee youth, too, keeping youth unemployment down, even though Covid-19 has disrupted progress. (Subsequently, a panelist who noted that disadvantaged family background can

indeed impede integration, urged Germany to restore the benefits and efforts of the 2015 emergency reception programs.)

Mr. Kober closed by asserting that Germany can learn from the “world leader of equity in schools” Canada ensuring all-day schooling for refugees, teacher training for managing diversity in classrooms and special support for schools with disadvantaged neighbourhoods. German authorities know what must be done to ensure equity and excellence in schools and now is the time for further action.

The third presenter, Dr. Ayelet Shachar channeled insights from her many years researching refugee rights and the changes in the way national border protection has evolved, especially for wealthy countries that are migratory and refugee target destinations. The overall effect has been to "de-territorialize" national border protection in ways that may undermine refugee rights.

The historic Westphalian system of fixed national borders, protected even by walls, that defended against entry (The Great Wall of China) or even exit (the Berlin Wall), gave way first to the post-1989 euphoric moment when the world seemed increasingly borderless, and then to borders that shift in time and space as a protective device from waves of refugees that destabilized public acceptance.

National border controls are consequently being pushed outward virtually in concentric circles by which prospective migrants are screened far from the destination country, with visa screening performed in country of origin, enforced by airlines at points of embarkation, and tracked by digital metric record-keeping on individuals ("borders in our bodies"), so that asylum-seekers are assessed as often as possible remotely.

The motives are, in general, to assert the effectiveness of national sovereignty over admissibility by controlling numbers of migrants actually accessing the land border itself.

Dr. Shachar fears the dilution of refugee and asylum-seeker rights by the distanced approach to assessment but endorses the outward deployment of visa officers (such as Canadians sent to Syrian refugee camps in the region) which can enable better preparation for eventual settlement. This is part of her broader policy recommendation that human rights attach to the “shifting border.”

But the nub of the "trilemma" involved is the often-irreconcilable tension between legal obligations states have taken upon themselves and efforts at national control - seen as necessary to maintain public support for the admission of adjudicated asylum-seekers and recruited immigrants - and the spontaneous and essentially uncontrollable surges of migrants fleeing harsh international conditions and security crises.

The current crisis in Afghanistan has reinforced border protection and political messaging in several potential recipient countries that a repetition of the 2015 experience of Germany, for instance, when refugees were accepted without prior security clearances, will not be permitted.

Dr. Shachar urges scrupulous international attention to refugee rights and to emergency needs, requiring open humanitarian corridors, and that countries keep Embassies open in countries in chaos, to the extent possible.

The rich debate that followed reinforced concern especially over the tensions between the national political urge to control the situation and the spontaneous refugee events apt to surge out of control.

One intervenor reflected that our agencies, services, and scholars may have focused too much on "integration" and settlement of incoming migrants, and not enough on the forces propelling migratory waves, and their regional and other impacts. Such inward-looking preoccupation brooded excessively about "the burden of Europe" and not enough about the fateful realities and humanitarian vulnerabilities of migrants and the international causes and remedies of their situation.

Intervenors criticized democratic political behaviour. They agreed that "selling" migration in developed democracies which requires political communicators to emphasize its demographic and economic upsides, valorizes only skilled workers, and even investor-class migrants (increasingly illviewed for their adverse impact on local issues, such as housing price inflation), in order to win acceptance for small numbers of involuntary asylum-seekers in need of protection.

The Canadian propensity to enable visa entrants who are highly-skilled swift access to naturalization and citizenship while impeding it for essential workers with lower skill levels deserves hard scrutiny. It was pointed out that in current election campaigns in both countries, these issues received little candidate attention except to re-emphasize border protection.

There was wide support among panelists for the beneficial impact of engaging private sponsors as a way of putting selection more directly in the hands of citizens, though numbers involved are inadequate to bursts of mass displacement. Still, enabling community hosting initiative and responsibility can be a powerful tool for successful settlement, and counters polarization over the desirability of refugee and migrant intakes.

Overall, it was also agreed that political communication needs "re-balancing" from repetitive emphasis on control that can perpetuate the fear of immigration.

Panelists urged greater effort to celebrate the real positives of immigration such as its contribution to national achievement (e.g., the German refugee-immigrant inventors of the life-saving Pfizer vaccine), and underlining the paradigm shift in Germany from 2013 that increased naturalization levels considerably and counters the notion that anti-immigration attitudes are hardening.

The wider question of whether the world can co-operate was asked repeatedly. As in previous panels, there was regret expressed over the quality of national political leadership on these issues. It is imperative that UNHCR be empowered to provide protection of refugees as intended.

"Pushing borders out" as is being done in extreme cases by Australia in Samoa and Nauru assessment centres, by Denmark and the UK, in Africa, and by the US regarding Mexico, and elsewhere, is indeed concerning to panelists on human rights grounds. Regional "deals" such as Turkey/ EU are unreliable and indifferent to refugee long-term welfare, though asylum-seekers themselves are acquiring increasing degrees of agency that merits support from governments as well as from civil society.

In closing the debate, the Chair reviewed the main issues discussed, and urged Canada and Germany to:

a) further improve their example for integration of immigrants and valourization of diversity and pluralism;
b) and to renew their effort to bring other countries into the multilateral fold, with UNHCR as the hub.

She again emphasized the contribution of civil society in our countries, and private sponsorship, and urged much greater attention to the burdens assumed by the "secondary" adjacent countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Venezuela, Colombia, Iran, and others.

Finally, Ben Rowswell urged participants to knit the contacts and communications made here into an ongoing network for cooperation on the issues, which is a main intention of the colloquium itself.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

October 12, 2021

Introduction and Background

The seventh panel of the Canada-Germany colloquium focused on the conditions and prospects for international cooperation through the multilateral system of institutions, organizations, and alliances - formal and informal - that the global community has constructed to manage transnational threats of all kinds, and to promote well-being and protection for its states and citizens. The CIC-KAS RODA project itself, designed to explore ways in which Canada and Germany could benefit from the insights of scholars, experts, and centres of excellence in order to reinvigorate democratic alliances and international institutions, has been a joint civil society effort to assist governments in fostering the kind of cooperation needed to match the challenges of our time.

Introductions by Canadian and German Ambassadors, Stephane Dion, and Sabine Sparwasser situated the origins of the "Renewing our Democratic Alliance" (RODA) project in the disarray caused by the increase in recent years of competitive nationalisms to which the post-war institutional system of rules-based cooperation had meant to be an antidote. The apparent defection from reliance on this system by the Trump Administration had caused significant worry to both Canada and Germany, for whom reliance on an effective multilateral system is foundational to their internationalist vocations and outlooks.

Ambassador Sparwasser recalled the commitment to multilateralism by then-Foreign Minister of Canada Chrystia Freeland who outlined to the House of Commons in 2018, "that our friend and ally (the US) has come to question the very worth of its mantle of global leadership puts into sharper focus the need for the rest of us to set our own clear and sovereign course. For Canada, that course must be the renewal, indeed, the strengthening of the postwar multilateral order." Those sentiments, shared by Foreign Ministers Gabriel and Maas of the Federal Republic, articulated the essence of the "like-mindedness" of our two countries' perspectives which the October 12 discussion was convened to debate.

The discussion in this panel applauded that dual commitment, but also interrogated the extent to which the postwar multilateral order may now be in need of more comprehensive reform to make it fully responsive to changes and challenges in international affairs and alignments of the last several decades. It also encouraged Western governments like those in Germany and Canada to rethink their conception of 'like-minded" and to recognize the degree of disenchantment with the "liberal international order," as evidenced in various speeches to the most recent General Assembly meeting in New York in September.

Earlier panels had analyzed the experience of the international community in confronting the severe global challenges of climate change and the Covid pandemic and global health, as direct stress tests of the effectiveness of multilateral institutions and global cooperation. Subsequent panels on democracy and the status of human rights, the impact of the Internet and social media in enabling disinformation, the global economy, and mass migration,

confirmed the interconnectivity of outcomes in each area, and the need of a concerted approach to reinforcing the relevance, strength, and effectiveness of the multilateral system itself.

Presentations

Prof. Jennifer Welsh set the scene for this "most integrative" of RODA panels. After the thematic panel discussions that had preceded it, the task before this panel was to assess the challenge of multilateralism's effectiveness itself, for promoting peace and security, but also for wider systemic challenges and opportunities. She urged participants to analyze what needs to be done, including in terms of reform and renewal, and specifically the roles that "like-minded" Canada and Germany might play.

In introducing his discussion paper, "Can Middle Powers Save the Liberal World Order?" Prof. Roland Paris noted that his analysis, completed before the change in the US administration, had not fundamentally changed because though the new US administration is again internationalist, the US is seemingly less able than in decades past to exercise as full and as internationally responsible a role. Because Canada and Germany share a fundamental interest in helping to ensure that existing and strained international institutions are sustained, the two governments are right to explore together and with others new ways and combinations for improving the system's effectiveness.

Prof. Paris emphasized the need to communicate more effectively how the multilateral system delivers direct benefits to our publics which show signs of increasing cynicism about its continued relevance to their interests.

Multilateral (or "plurilateral") structures need to be variable, their form fitting their functional purpose and the specific issues they are addressing. They also need to include non-state actors, civil society, as partners. Some informal solidarity groups of countries which share specific policy and performance objectives can help galvanize progress in the wider international community whose divisions and individual national ambitions are obstructing consensus. He cited the 1990s precedent of the informal Human Security Network (which included international NGOs as partners along with its like-minded state participants) as an example.

Before introducing the second paper before the panel, the German Federal Government's recent White Paper, "A Multilateralism for the People," Ambassador Sparwasser addressed the issue of German and Canadian convergence. She recalled how in 2018-19 Canadian and German Foreign Ministers consulted intensively on a joint strategy to insulate and enhance the benefits of multilateralism, and also to address internal and other strains facing democracies themselves. The Alliance for Multilateralism with France and several other similarly concerned countries ensued.

She cautioned against idealizing our shared commitment to multilateral approaches. Canada, Germany and other committed countries should aim for the immunization of the international order from global shocks such as the pandemic by enhancing and demonstrating its effectiveness in the interests of all, rather than by vaunting the value of multilateral cooperation as a superior value in itself. To be an antidote to cynicism and despondency, multilateralism has to work in the interests of all, as the White Paper documents how it does work for the interests of an internationalist Germany.

Thorsten Benner, in speaking also to the White Paper, and in addressing the analytical challenge of 'where we go from here, identified overlapping multilateral 'circles' in which cooperation takes place and needs to be reformed: 1) a tight circle of organizations/processes that bring like-minded countries together, such as the EU, NATO and G7, where the primary challenge is to keep the organizations credible and adaptable, and to proactively address signs of "illiberalism"; 2) competing arrangements sponsored by states such as China and Russia (e.g. Belt and Road), where the task for states like Canada and Germany is to encourage the development of credible alternatives; 3) universal membership bodies such as the UN, where the task is to work through effective diplomacy and shared Can-German leadership on issues of key concern and to look out for new functional coalitions and partners (i.e., with 'non-usual' states from Africa and Latin America), relinquishing some privileges in the process; and 4) organizations designed to manage 'global public goods' (e.g., climate, health), where everyone must be at the table and where efforts should focus on what kind and what level of cooperation are really possible. At the same time, the need for universal participation on these over-riding global issues should not imply that democracies should trade off basic values, such as human rights, to obtain functional policy consensus outcomes.

Prof. Benner also stressed that democratic countries like Canada and Germany must keep "their own houses in order," for exemplary reasons, and to strengthen defence against any coercive intentions of great powers, and the emergence of competitive groupings of countries led by states like China or Russia that are not likeminded in their support for alternative political systems. We need to share solidarity with each others' positions in defence of human rights in the world, as was less than adequately experienced by Canada in 2018 over the abuse of human rights by Saudi Arabia.

The Panel Discussion

At this point, the Chair turned to former Ambassador Louise Frechette, who was the first Deputy SecretaryGeneral of the United Nations, 1998-2006, responsible for steering systemic coordination of the UN system of agencies and secretariats.

Mme. Frechette stressed that any global issues agenda needs to take into foremost consideration the views and interests of the of the roughly 150 member states of the United Nations who are not primary influencers, but whose support and indeed votes will determine success or failure of initiatives.

She underlined that most of these more vulnerable countries of the UN's "silent majority" wish very much to preserve a rules-based international order because it represents their best protection from coercion from greater powers. But they wish a fairer and more equitable order. Mme. Frechette warned that the ritualistic reference to the need of a "liberal" world order evokes for many the extended domination of Western values and interests.

Moreover, most of these countries do not want to be entangled in super-power rivalries. "Western" countries rightly confront challenges from China and Russia to the positions and values of democracies, but systemic unfairness such as the current inequitable system distribution of anti-Covid vaccines in COVAX continues to undermine the confidence of many countries in the capacity and commitment of democracies – and those organizations that they dominate - to deliver equitable global outcomes.

Western countries must therefore listen to this much broader UN membership and to non-state advocates and NGOs. They should multiply and intensify bilateral state-to-state

consultations across the board, which experience shows is crucial to facilitating multilateral solutions. These bilateral engagements, which must diversify, can enable the emergence of new policy approaches that make balanced demands from all sides and that can be seen to serve the lives and interests of all.

The subsequent panel debate from the assembled group of practitioners, scholars, and advocates took up many of these themes, but was especially open to the need to consult with a broader range of countries as urged by Mme Frechette, and to non-state advocates from civil society and the philanthropic community. (A vivid expression of the importance of this need was offered by the Prime Minister of Barbados in her recent exemplary address to the UN General Assembly. https://www.passblue.com/wpcontent/uploads/2021/09/Barbados-E.pdf)

It was recognized that core challenges to the multilateral system today include intensified geopolitical competition, unilateralism, and sovereignty-first approaches. Additionally, China is seeking to have its growing influence reflected by attempting to reshape multilateral bodies, and the wider order, to accommodate better its national interests and perceived needs.

There was general agreement that Canada and Germany ought not be devoted to multilateralism for its own sake, but primarily because in an increasingly interdependent world only multilateral tools of international cooperation can deliver vital transnational outcomes, as well as demonstrable benefit to our own societies. It was emphasized that the case for multilateralism not only needs to be renewed, but also should be communicated, in better ways, to German and Canadian publics. That case could include the following kinds of arguments:

- Multilateral institutions provide access, vital data, technical expertise, policies and perspectives that serve the interests of Canadians and Germans (and millions of others) every day.

- Multilateralism supports economic growth for open economies and facilitates cooperation on joint security challenges. An agreed system where we all shape and are expected to follow the same rules (and hold one another to account when we do not) advances prosperity and stability.

- Multilateralism builds trust and transparency, reduces misunderstandings, is an extension of bilateral relations, and a means to strengthen collaboration with cross-regional partners.

- Multilateral institutions provide a framework of rules and procedures that can constrain the powerful, while according more influence to committed middle powers like Germany, Canada and the EU itself, which consider that advancing international cooperation is a special challenge and indeed opportunity.

While the EU is the “arch multilateralist” by vocation, it was urged by one panelist to strengthen its capacity to act as more of a global player, and not just as a “global preacher.”

It was noted that multilateralism is suffering not just from external pressures, but also problems of the membership's own making – including the proliferation of institutions, and the default to alternative arrangements. It was argued that coordinated policymaking needs to be brought back into the core multilateral institutions. Additionally, member states need to arrest the ‘drift’ of divisive political judgments and activities into essential technical bodies. The

trend damages the legitimacy of multilateral architecture in the eyes of many, adding to perceptions about multilateralism's 'democratic deficit'.

Participants also stressed that the multilateral landscape is extremely varied. Its complexity of stresses and issues requires a more variable geometry of alliances, solidarity groups, and consultative partners to advance cooperation in specific functional areas and to alter the overall condition of gridlock in the system. Multiple examples were cited, including the "Ottawa Group" for WTO reform, or groups supporting media freedom, or other networks, such as on conflict and state fragility.

It was also emphasized that we need to be more discerning about whether and how the current multilateral system is really decaying. Rather than uncritically accepting the refrain that the 'system is in crisis,' we should begin by identifying specifically where the rules-based order is under pressure, what priorities for diplomatic effort should be established, and who should be 'out in front' leading on necessary reforms (in some cases, it should not necessarily be leading democratic states). In so doing, Western countries should take care not to reinforce notions of 'in-group' and 'out-group', and thereby deepen competitive dynamics. They should also be more acutely aware, as one participant noted, that China and Russia have their own particular vision of multilateralism and argue forcefully that they are the key custodians of international law and order – particularly in light of the recent Western retreat from Afghanistan.

Speakers did acknowledge that Canada and Germany, along with others in the Alliance for Multilateralism, are 'like-minded' in many key respects They face the challenges and opportunities of the international agenda with a mix of 'offensive' purposes, such as the injection of ideas and financing to protect human rights and the rule of law, and also more 'defensive' preoccupations such as cyber-security, and backsliding on core values of inclusive democracy.

At the same time, democracies need to work out in real time when and how to use new, flexible processes to complement (not undermine) the work of existing institutions, thereby rebutting claims such as those of Russian FM Lavrov when he complains that the Alliance for Multilateralism aims to supplant the UN. We should be sure to position it as a complementary mechanism that is aimed at bringing together the majority of states that believe in and want to make universal institutions more effective.

But the core question, '*Whose multilateralism*?' was repeated in different ways.

Panelists echoed the view that we should not privilege only democratic partners when it comes to building support for essential multilateral outcomes. There were concerns about a new global divide emerging between democracies and authoritarian countries deepening global division and consequent gridlock. Most countries, it was noted, do not interpret the 'rule of law' in international activity as being synonymous with domestic democratic governance, and consultation and negotiation should not mingle the two unproductively. A decoupling from these divisions was recognized as essential for issues of existential universal significance, such as global health and climate, and outcomes on chronic debt and migratory pressures, etc.

It was also argued that the eternal debate of values and interests should not lead us to attempt to pursue in universal fora one at the expense of the other, even if the "unique national interests" of individual countries need accommodation. A plurality of models should be

respected in our diverse world community, within common understandings about core values and consequent behaviour. In this respect, many participants saw the more defining competition as being between countries which rely on multilateral cooperation within a rules-based world order (not obligatorily "liberal") and those countries that favour pursuing their interests in the international arena via national competition, and notably such national powers as China, Russia, and the US. A more compelling set of common values could pivot around notions of pluralism and accountability, rather than the specific requirements of advanced liberal democracy.

Crucially, the panel was urged to face up to the needs of a new era in the distribution of global influence and power, following the serial eclipses of 19th century imperial empires, the 20th century's bipolar superpower rivalry of the Cold War, and the ensuant impression of a unipolar hegemonic moment for the US. It was generally agreed that the emergence of newly "risen" powers complicates the likelihood of a new concert of great powers at the top, some of which are backsliding to the supremacy of national sovereignty above all. In this context, "cross-walks" to China are essential, but so is messaging about mutual respect including for respective core values. The hope was expressed that adverse world public opinion could influence leaders of countries abusing universally acknowledged human rights.

Profound concern was expressed, including from an EU perspective, that strategic competition for primacy between China and the US would come to dominate the landscape, forcing the consolidation of rival "teams," the hardening of adversarial strategy, including at NATO, and foreclosing essential cooperative outcomes, with multiple dangers including an accelerated arms race. The enduring dangers of nuclear proliferation also remain grave.

Several panelists therefore urged governments to undertake a new, fresh look at the needs of the multilateral system today, as opposed to an effort just to preserve the one that we inherited from an earlier era. "Strategic foresight" has been lacking. Better forecasting would be supported by more inclusive consultation with all states and non-state actors concerned.

Planning cycles should also take on the challenge of designing a rules-based system for a quarter-century from now, in addition to addressing multiple grievances and defects that have accrued from the post-war system of agencies, institutions, programs, privileges, and mixed purposes that we have today.

In closing the very rich debate, Dr. Welsh emphasized the essential step of Canada and Germany strengthening communications with the "150" countries of the world's "silent majority" in order to prod the multilateral system to undertake wholesale review and reform going forward. She identified five areas of convergence that could help to inform a concrete agenda going forward:

1. First, she urged governments and centres of excellence and research to take seriously the need for long-range planning address the system as we shall need it in years to come, for challenges unaddressed, and for the full global community, to which this panel debate will be a valuable contribution. Such an exercise in strategic foresight needs to engage a broad set of countries, both Western and non-Western, and be coupled with a process that can help to mediate differences. The key question that should motivate this planning: How do we enable effective and results-based multilateral cooperation on issues of the shared global commons into the future? One of the key side benefits of strategic foresight should be to make the political class of core countries ‘multilaterally literate’.

2. Second, a key priority for future multilateralism must be one of 'grievance reduction', whereby advanced democratic states acknowledge and consciously address inequities in the system, and identify specific areas in which to share power and/or relinquish control. This task should be informed by a careful analysis of where, specifically, multilateralism is decaying or failing (and why).

3. Third, Canada and Germany should identify a set of offensive objectives where the goal is to expand the group of states dedicated to particular multilateral institutions or initiatives – and a set of defensive objectives – where the task is to defend particular norms and laws or strengthen particular institutions. One example of a key practical measure to meet these objectives could include collaboration on staffing procedures within key multilateral arrangements, so that they ensure competent representatives from a broad range of states committed to the rules-based order, as well as greater cooperation on voting and procedures. By coordinating on leadership positions and elections in key bodies, Canada and Germany could also help to prevent backsliding (i.e., converging around single candidates where we can so that authoritarian states cannot divide our vote to their advantage). At the board level of UN institutions, we have strong cooperation and could strengthen our joint messaging on efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. To take another example, Canada and Germany share many common priorities, including protecting and promoting human rights and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Reinvigorated leadership and coherent international action to combat and reverse an ongoing anti-human rights backlash – if executed with humility (given each state's historical record) – could help to strengthen multilateral and plurilateral collaboration that enables norm enforcement. (Participants observed dividends on such an approach through Arbitrary Detention.) As a final example, Canada and Germany could collaboratively shape emerging norms of responsible state behaviour with respect to cyberspace and AI, given that both countries have committed to reinforce respect for the application of international law and norms in cyberspace. Both countries have called out malicious behaviour, and Canada supported Germany's recent critique of Russian hacking efforts targeting German officials. With respect to AI, Canada and Germany have been working closely through multiple forums, including the GPAI, UNESCO, and OECD on AI norms. In order to drive inclusive growth and stem the tide of digital authoritarianism, Canada and Germany could use their convening power, strong digital industries and thriving research communities to act in concert in support of the global governance of digital technologies – grounded in international law, including human rights law.

4. Fourth, any offensive/defensive diplomatic efforts should include an agreed-upon division of labour, whereby Canada and Germany – along with other partners – can agree to lead or instigate, in particular forums, or with countries where they have historic relationships. A clear-headed analysis of who has leverage, and where, should inform this kind of effort.

5. Finally, more conscious efforts need to be made to communicate the goals and benefits of multilateralism in a new era, and to signal how it will advance a more equitable world going forward. Without public support, the populist trends that are draining support from the multilateral system could prove even more damaging.

If the ongoing pandemic has taught us anything, it is that global issues require collaboration across many countries, governments, and sectors.

Maintaining the best of the current system, while reforming the components in need of revitalization, will require an increasingly strategic approach, advanced through nimble alliances, new partners and partnerships, and support to the most vital institutions.

The challenge is to broaden the tent, to listen, to recognize concerns around the representativeness and legitimacy of shared institutions, while ensuring that a revitalized rules-based system reflects our core democratic values.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

HOW INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACIES CAN LEARN FROM GERMAN-CANADIAN COOPERATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY

November 16, 2021

Introduction

The panel, chaired by The Honourable Dr. Kevin Lynch, was a departure from previous RODA panels in that it was devoted to bilateral issues and cooperation - as opposed to multilateral - and Atlantic Bruecke Canada which regularly conferences on the relationship played a large part in its organization.

But the global context was still very much top of mind for panelists. The Chair noted the unprecedented degree of uncertainty and volatility in the world today, and the inevitable, seismic changes that will occur. The challenges, risks, and opportunities arising from these dramatic changes – notably the digital revolution and de-carbonization, as well as in geo-politics, the global pandemic, populism and supply chain disruptions – were cited by multiple panelists as reasons to deepen cooperation between Canada and Germany, in business ventures and digital services; in targeted areas of science, technology, research; in culture; in technologies to advance de-carbonization and environmental remediation; and, in people-to-people links.

Previous RODA panels were animated by an affinity of policy purpose and "like-mindedness" of the two countries in their shared commitment to an effective rules-based multilateral system for addressing global issues such as climate change, global health, migration, human rights, and economic equity. Panelists saw a natural extension of this sense of affinity to the regard with which Canadians and Germans view each other as mutually valued and trusted bilateral economic partners. But this well-spring of goodwill and alignment has yielded disappointingly little in the way of a deepening of trade, commercial, innovation, and investment linkages.

At the Chair's urging, discussion in the panel explored concrete initiatives to convert this goodwill and alignment into productive, mutually beneficial realities. Panelists were urged to offer: a) clarity on defining an overall "game plan," which could cover the conceptual framework for partnership activity, especially in advanced digital technologies and transformative green industrial applications; b) a concrete, proactive political and institutional agenda to support closer collaboration; and c) ideas for a concurrent emphasis on communications, the "need to bring the whole society along with elites", and improved people-to-people connectivity.

Report: Scene-Setting

Opening the event, CIC President Ben Rowswell outlined the RODA project as an exploration of untapped potential for contributing together to solutions to international affairs that also engage citizens at a time of challenging structural and environmental changes.

Nik Nanos, Chair of Atlantic Bruecke Canada, and Dr. Norbert Eschborn, Director for Canada of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, also welcomed the opportunity to apply the purposeful spirit of RODA to the untapped but rich bilateral potential before the panel.

The two Ambassadors then urged the panel to look ahead with optimism to opportunities for a much closer relationship, given the synergies that exist between the countries' interests and aptitudes.

Ambassador Dion said the "game plan" will emphasize the extent of transformation taking place in the digital economy and in the development of the clean energy sector, where a partnership between German and Canadian players has strategic interest for both sides.

He greatly welcomed the creation of a joint Germany-Canada committee of Deputy Ministers to oversee and stimulate partnership activity. The intense and extended experience of consultation over the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) has raised German consciousness about the merit of Canada's partnership potential. He and the Embassy have engaged the Green Party which will join the governing coalition, and which evinced a welcoming attitude toward cooperation, particularly on decarbonizing technologies.

Ambassador Sparwasser agreed that the driving force in the relationship will be the transformational impact of new technologies. Recent years of accelerated change, and the pandemic, have exposed constrictions to supply chain reliability amid rising nationalism and protectionism, underlying the need for greater self-sufficiency that can equally be advanced by reliance on trusted partnerships such as Canada's with Germany and the EU. The two countries share outlooks, social values, compatible and often complementary structures, and extensive experience in scientific collaboration. Germany values access to Canadian strategic minerals, appreciates Canada's leading role in artificial intelligence innovation, and assesses that the green transition positions Canada to be a leading source of green hydrogen.

The Ambassador urged the two countries to build up together the regulatory framework (as foreseen by CETA) which would support Canada's advantages as an innovator in key technologies such as artificial intelligence. Political goodwill is optimal but general and needs to be channeled into practical effect and institution-building for the future. The Ambassador sought ideas for this from the panel, given that the two papers had been mainly concerned with documenting the past.

Paper Presentations

Dr. Matthias Diermeier introduced the global tour d'horizon he had co-authored with Prof. Dr. Michael Huether. The patterns of the last decades document the extent to which world trade has slowed in relation to growth, having been from 1980-2000 a bigger driver than financialization. The vexed reputation of globalization that was hastened by public aversion to the 2008 financial crisis abraded the confidence of civil society, animating nationalism, and contributing to the de-coupling of supply chains.

Dr. Diermeier postulated that de-carbonization and developed country "carbon clubs" were risk factors that could further hinder trade that could harm poorer countries. They are additionally apt to be further disadvantaged by the emergence of productive technologies such as additive manufacturing that will re-shore work at their expense and reinforce the value of services over physical trade.

He urged Canada and Germany to take these hazards into account in designing the joint "Industry 4.0" roadmap for development of digitalized and data-driven manufacturing.

Dr. Jack Mintz provided an accounting of Canada-Germany and Canada-EU flows in trade in goods in recent decades which he depicted as being relatively "small" historically though they have increased by 27% since the signing of CETA.

Traditional respective continental pulls of physical proximity have favoured Canadian concentration on the US market (75% of goods) and German on the EU (66% of goods).

On the other hand, there is obvious room for growth, and the risks of over-dependence on adjacency argues for diversification of relationships. The Canada-Germany partnership could well be boosted by the shared interest in cooperating in new technology and carbon abatement technologies, Canada's favourable position in strategic minerals and digital industry, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI). Dr. Mintz urges that attention be paid to the maintenance of competitiveness, and to shrinking labour supply as the two societies age.

Guidance from the Chair

Dr. Lynch thanked the paper writers for the analytic caution they laid down for the panel. He urged the panel now to lift their sight to the opportunities and requirements of building for a future that will depart from past patterns.

The world has entered a period of uncertainty and massive change, presenting abundant opportunity for much, much greater German-Canadian cooperation. How to identify those opportunities and exploit them? How to set concrete milestones for success in deepening the relationship? How to engage business, academic researchers, governments, and the public in establishing such a purpose and plan?

- CETA. The blueprint for 21st Century economic cooperation between Canada and the EU represents a means to support this goal, but it is not an end in itself. Have we invested sufficiently in promoting CETA to our business communities and assisting them in the building of new markets and supply chains to realize its potential?

- Geographic proximity has long shaped trade in goods, but applies much less so to digital commerce and services, which are of increasing prominence as drivers of trade, growth, and prosperity. Does “place” matter as much in a digital world, or are new, technology-intensive partnerships no longer castled in very specific locales like Silicon Valley.

- Supply chains, which evolved to benefit "the US consumer and the Chinese worker", are being rethought because of a lack of resiliency to shocks such as COVID and geopolitics. "On-shoring" is one defensive response, but more likely is a “portfolio approach” that includes several global suppliers. Trusted supply partners and trusted countries that do not intervene in commercial arrangements will be worth a premium over higher costs.

- Diversification of long-standing economic relationships is a logical step for countries like Canada and Germany in the face of worrisome trends in the behaviors, at home and abroad, of both the US and China.

- Technological change is driving change, creating new products and services, and anchoring future success. Canadians are doing well at start-up innovation in areas ranging from AI, quantum, cloud services, etc, but less successful at scaling up these firms to critical size. The potential for synergy with Germany is high, given its vast experience in scaling up industrial transformations and dense manufacturing. In the rapidly growing, and transformational, digital info tech space, both Germany and Canada have great incentives to break out of the current domination of US and China firms.

- Getting to net zero will take many things, but new technologies, new science, new industrial processes, new energy sources such as hydrogen are key elements. Given the urgency and magnitude of the challenge, there is much potential for applied research and commercial partnerships to build on each other's diversity and strengths.

The Panel Debate ("Chatham House" rules that apply to this report protects the anonymity of interventions, so this summary of the debate is an aggregate narrative in which it is hoped each participant will recognize their contribution.) Panelists were unanimously supportive of the Chair's invitation to look forward to chart Canada-Germany cooperation in terms as substantive and concrete as possible.

Three themes wove through the interventions: the need for a) "a game plan" to plot the course of building cooperation, within an agreed framework, with milestones to ascertain progress and supported by better bilateral data; b) a political/institutional/financial/business framework support agenda; and c) a communications agenda and practices to nourish interest and opportunity, including on a person-to-person level.

a) The Game Plan

Panelists rallied to the challenge to identify a course for action.

The assertion that technology leaders are winners in history needs the support of an operating framework for common standards and shared data to succeed.

The two governments need to take "a deep dive" on common standards to facilitate cooperation across the board (as anticipated by CETA) to promote recognition of respective professional credentials and techniques, as appropriate, including fiscal reporting requirements.

The past trade relationship in goods and commodities needs to transit to understanding the evidence-based potential for beneficial partnership in a digital economy of services. A more complete data set of the full scope of the relationship's economic content is vital;

It was pointed out that new technologies are decentralizing in all sectors, such as agri-food, health care, advanced manufacturing (such as fuel cells), and climate adaptation technology. Specialized application developers in such as nano-technologies and phototonics, are proliferating independently of geography.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Canada-Germany Science Agreement that has enabled over 1000 projects. The relationship's vitality is reflected by Canada's preponderance for Max Planck Institute centres (3 in Canada; 1 in the US) and the location in Canada of 7 of 20 of DFG's (German Research Foundation) global partnerships in science with foreign universities.

Canadian funding for science and research lags behind Germany's as a % of GDP (1.5% to 3.2%) and while science collaboration in university venues is flourishing, there are more worthy Canadian policy proposals than scant funding can accommodate.

b) **Political/Institutional Support**

The general perception is that Canadian and German governments acknowledge the "like-mindedness" - as evidenced by then-Foreign Minister Freeland's close collaboration with German political-level colleagues over CETA and the Alliance for Multilateralism. The potential for beneficial enhanced economic cooperation is recognized.

However, follow-up and concrete support languishes because of a paucity of institutional support combined with business and public interest. The federal government in Canada should establish a "hub" for facilitating the trade and other advantages prescribed by CETA, as had been done very successively for NAFTA (Germany might do likewise). Further, there is no supportive federally-funded foundation for non-military trans-Atlantic cooperation as exists with the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

There has been recent closer collaboration on substantive topics. Ministers of the Environment of the two countries joined efforts to lobby internationally prior to COP 26 for developed countries to meet their 2009 pledges on funding for vulnerable and poorer countries for adaptation costs from climate change. There should be close Government-to-Government collaboration on carbon pricing. Together, the two governments could deploy more joint leverage internationally (which is the objective of RODA) on multiple topics of concern.

Parliamentary cooperation is lame because Canadian parliamentarians have been too often unprepared for their occasional encounters. German parliamentarians are generally more internationally interested and literate about the relationship, but the opportunity is seldom developed to build stronger parliamentary ties.

Germany's position as a world leader (along with the EU) on standards and regulatory principles offers abundant relevant collaborative potential.

All of these attributes afford ample opportunity to explore further cooperation on specific projects of mutually benefiting science and technology.

Generally, panelists hoped in principle that CETA would be ratified soon by Germany and all EU states but that it did not impede practical purposes as the treaty's provisions are 95% valid in effect (except for a specific judicial review procedure).

As to whether an eventual US/EU version of CETA (a "TTIP") emerges, judged unlikely with a US Congress adverse to trade agreements, it was disputed this would diminish German interest in Canada. CETA was premised on the expectation that it was setting terms that a TTIP would need to align with rather than the usual order of rule-taking and rule-making that puts Canada in a second position.

c) **Communications**

There were a variety of similar observations that despite abundant evidence of deep mutual relevance, there is less than adequate attention to communicating a sense of this mutual relevance publicly.

Recent decades have grown populist resistance to globalism. It is vital for our two globalist countries that a public aversion to climate change mitigation and adaptation expense does not emerge making climate change "an enemy of the people" as happened with globalization, and in the US, even globalism.

The benefits of Canada-Germany enhanced high-end economic cooperation and of joint support of effective and equitable multilateral action to address essential, even existential, international needs have to be presented as benefits in "real-life" terms to citizens.

More citizen exchange and participation programs are needed - for youth, for specific vocations (e.g., journalism where the economics of foreign coverage have diminished reporting on Germany in Canada and vice-versa), for business and tech incubators, bearing in mind that personal connections generate business partnership opportunities.

In closing remarks, Ambassador Dion urged greater validation of cultural diplomacy. (The presentation of creative cultural content has a cross-over promotional role for a country's image as innovative). He also urged each country to keep awareness of the other's specificities when planning sanctions or compensating regulations meant to counter the offending behaviour of third countries.

Ambassador Sparwasser expressed satisfaction that the discussion had gone beyond trade in goods into our full relationship, allowing the celebration of our rich bilateral collaboration in science.

There are imperatives and opportunities involved that engage the two countries internationalist instincts and vocations. The more productive and outward-looking relationship the panel envisages for Canada and Germany could be a positive signal to others also determined to resist pressures on inclusive democracy and from nationalistic protectionism. In an age of growing uncertainties and volatility, a self-confident partnership between Canada and Germany, two generally admired countries, could be an international nudge in the right direction for others.

Ben Rowswell pointed out, in closing, that this leadership role is the reason the RODA project was created, to engage the advice and support of civil society and experts - that the panel so usefully provided.

Summary by Jeremy Kinsman.

AN AGENDA FOR DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY

ADVANCING A NETWORK FOR DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY

Thorsten Benner, Global Public Policy Institute

Context for idea of Network of Democratic Solidarity

Democratic solidarity is at the core of what drives the response of Europeans, the US, Canada and a number of like-minded states from Asia (chiefly Australia, Japan & South Korea) to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It is driven by empathy with a fellow democracy whose citizens have been brutally assaulted by a war of aggression that seeks to eliminate Ukraine as a sovereign state. Through his eloquent speeches Ukrainian president Zelensky has very effectively appealed to this sentiment of solidarity and captured many hearts and minds of many citizens in fellow democracies. US President Biden has talked about Russia's war using the democracy vs autocracy frame that informs much of his foreign policy rhetoric. Not only have democracies in Europe, North America and partly in Asia supplied Ukraine with weapons. They have also demonstrated they are willing to make (limited but still significant) sacrifices in pursuit of democratic solidarity with Ukraine in terms of implementing sanctions that impose sizeable economic costs also on those doing the sanctioning. In addition, Europeans have been welcoming to Ukrainian refugees. Besides security interests in great power conflict with Russia and the defense of international law democratic solidarity is a key motivating force for the response of the G7 and fellow travelers. Quite a few in the "West" have been in a self-congratulatory mood. A former German foreign minister gave a dinner speech recently in which he praised the revival of the transatlantic alliance and the comeback of the West.

If you step outside the Western bubble, however, things look very different. Nobody has been waiting for a revival of the West. Where Europe and US see democratic solidarity & standing up for international law, many outside the West see double standards. They point to Western breaches of international law in Iraq and Kosovo. They decry the fact that Ukrainian war refugees get preferential treatment because they are white and not Muslims. When they hear "Westerners" wax poetically about defending the "liberal international order" or the "rules-based order" they ask "whose rules? And to whose benefit?" pointing to injustice and inequity inherent in current order that has also been exposed by the pandemic.
Many resent unilateral Western sanctions that have not been approved by the UN Security Council. They point to the fact that sanctions have negative effects on third countries. The Chinese and Russian narrative that it is the West's fueling the conflict

and the effects of the sanctions that are causing havoc in global markets endangering food security for billions and putting affordable energy out of reach of many poorer countries. Few buy into the clean "democracy vs autocracy" lens that Biden is pushing. They see power interests on the part of NATO members at work that are said to be partly responsible for the conflict.

Many outside the West also resent the fact that Europeans expect the whole world to single-mindedly focus on the Ukraine war that they claim will decide on the future of the global order. (At least that is what EU Commission President von der Leyen claimed in a recent speech in Delhi). They find this a rather solipsistic European-centric view of the world. Many other regions have experience major conflicts recently so the single-minded concentration on Russia's war seems out of place in the eyes of many. Even those in the Global South, like Kenya, who have eloquently spoken out against Putin's imperialism quickly got exhausted from the Western envoys trying to get them to make this point over and over again. Kenya made it clear it has other issues to focus on including the fall-out of the war on global food security and energy prices. Many have also made it clear that they wish the West had focused more on their own problems when they needed solidarity.

German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock has been one of the Western politicians to clearly acknowledge this in her speech to the UN General Assembly in early March after the start of Russia's invasion. She said:

'I have heard some of my colleagues say, when I was speaking on the phone around the world in the last days: "You are calling on us to show solidarity for Europe. But where have you been for us in the past?" And frankly speaking, I am telling you: I hear you. We hear you. And I truly believe we should always be willing to critically question our own actions, our past engagements in the world. I am willing to do so'.

Wolfgang Schmidt, head of the German chancellery, argued that there is a risk we end up with a "G7 vs BRICS+ world" which we calls a "stupid" outcome we should work hard to avoid using lots of diplomacy and concrete action on food security and energy prices.

In a similar self-reflective vein, Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau has pointed to the need for democracies to do their homework. In a speech in Berlin in March 2022, Trudeau said that "at its best, democracy is always stronger than authoritarianism. But if we're going to be honest with each other, democracy hasn't exactly been at its best these past few years. Even as we're fighting Putin's invasion, we need to recommit ourselves to the work of strengthening our democracies". Democracies can advance this in a process of mutual learning with pro-democracy actors from around the world. At the same time, they can and should show solidarity with and learn from pro-democracy actors advancing universal rights and the rule of law in often very difficult circumstances globally. Similar to Trudeau's assessment of democracy, it is possible to

state that multilateralism has not been at its best over the past decade. Democratic middle powers have a particular stake in the health of multilateralism for unlike great powers they do not fare well is a "might is right" environment. They have a strong incentive to invest in multilateral institutions since they generally see them as serving their interests. That interest they share with smaller states. On the other hand, middle powers also have significant ability to invest in multilateralism, an ability that is stronger than that of smaller governments. They can do agenda-setting, start new initiatives, defend rules and laws against attacks, mobilize support for global public goods. Middle powers have a particular responsibility to invest in strengthening multilateralism from which they have profited over the past decades. Again, this investment starts at home by among other things defending against domestic nationalist backlash against multilateralism that is gaining ground in many democracies.

It is in this spirit of self-reflection as well as commitment to action that we should advance the idea of creating a Network of Democratic Solidarity. Canada and Germany as two chief champions of multilateralism among the G7 could and should lead the way on this alongside like-minded democratic middle powers from Asia, Africa & Latin America.

Learning from previous initiatives

A Network for Democratic Solidarity would do well to learn from the strengths and weaknesses of comparable initiatives.

The Community of Democracies established in 2000 has pursued laudable goals but has lacked strong impact maybe partly because of its unwieldy bureaucracy-heavy intergovernmental set-up that quickly became "ritualized" according to some of those involved.

The Alliance for Multilateralism is an initiative launched by Germany in 2018 in close cooperation with Canada and France. The alliance pursues a threefold agenda: to protect international institutions and norms where they are under pressure; to pursue a more assertive and proactive agenda in policy areas that lack effective governance and where new challenges require collective action; and to reform and upgrade existing institutions to make them more inclusive and effective. The alliance is one answer for countries committed to multilateralism to safeguard their interests in a new political environment where multilateralism is squeezed in between the reemergence of great power competition and a sovereigntist-nationalist backlash in many countries. The Alliance developed significant traction during the Trump years and early during the Covid pandemic but has since lost momentum somewhat. That may partly be true to the fact that it did not have that much civil society buy-in that would carry the initiative even as participating governments got distracted. The alliance also never

lived up to its promise of serving as democratic solidarity mechanism in the face of authoritarian coercion efforts (such as the Kovrig/Spavor hostage taking by China). Still, the alliance offers a partial basis on which to advance the Network for Democratic Solidarity that would have a stronger non-governmental grounding in addition the governmental track.

The Summit for Democracy is a signature initiative of US President Joe Biden. The first summit took place in December 2011. The strength of the initiative is the strong focus on anti-corruption efforts. A weakness is heads of state format. This has led to impression that the US (itself a highly imperfect democracy in its present state) is in the business of determining which state qualifies as a democracy getting an invite to the summit. The discussion on who is in and who is out dominated much of the public debate in the lead-up to the summit which could have been avoided by simply inviting pro-democracy actors from across the world, also from non-democracies. Another weakness is the fact that this effort is very much tied to Biden's presidency and unlikely to survive a transition to a different president.

The Human Security Network founded by 11 states in 1999 had a strong link to civil society. Some of the lessons learned will be discussed at Tuesday's session by leading Canadian protagonists and should very much inform how we go about a Network for Democratic Solidarity.

Principles

Democratic solidarity as key concept is more meaningful and concrete than a nominal focus on just multilateralism. It is evocative and clearly points to a core of pro-democracy actors supporting one another and learning from one another.

The network should be flexible and pragmatic in terms of its set-up and operations. Unlike the Community of Democracies there should not aspire to be an intergovernmental bureaucracy created for the network. The network should see itself as a generator of ideas, hub for advocacy and catalyst for action. There should be an interlocking of civil society and government actors and tracks. That means government actors as well as civil society actors will be at the heart of the network. The network should also see itself as a complementary "open docking base" pragmatically using other fora and formats to push issue-specific efforts through new initiatives and more coordinated action.

It should be inclusive on all counts including geography which means there should be major participation by pro-democracy actors from the Global South. That also means that in addition to Canadian and German government and civil society actors there have to be a number of core members from outside the "West" to get the network off the ground. Making the network inclusive also means that unlike with Summit for

Democracy there is no exclusive list of participating countries but rather an open invitation to all pro-democracy actors including pro-democracy actors from non-democracies.

Since government attention is fickle especially in times of foreign policy crises like the Ukraine invasion a constant stream of civil society organized work involving government actors in flexible formats is best to get the network off the ground and sustain it. In terms of initial buy-in it would be important to have top level public support from the Canadian and German governments as well as a number of governments from democracies outside the Euro-Atlantic space.

The network should operate on two interlocking tracks advancing ideas and action: the first a steady stream of research, reflection and advocacy by civil society actors, the second interaction by policymakers that involves civil society actors.

Areas for reflection and action

The purpose here is not to compile a comprehensive list of potential policy areas of focus but rather to sketch in which circles a Network for Democratic Solidarity can make a difference.

Activities in a first circle concern fora with like-minded democracies. Here a first goal should be to invest in credibility. Any country to a credible player in terms of working on and with democracies abroad it needs to work on shoring up democracy at home (and to increase support for multilateral action within the public). In the words of Carnegie Endowment scholar Thomas Carothers, "complete humility and serious honesty about our shortcomings" should key prerequisites on Biden's democracy agenda on the international stage. That also applies to other democracies. Countries can also only be credible if they stand up for democracy in organizations in which the domestic rule of law is a key prerequisite for membership such as the European Union or NATO. Another aspect of credibility is for democracies to go after transnational networks of corruption that enable authoritarianism. Financial and property markets in democracies are all too often safe havens for kleptocrats, with bankers, lawyers, PR agencies and other professional elites in democracies profiting. In this context, the Network for Democratic Solidarity can facilitate mutual learning on how different countries and different civil society actors deal with challenges to democracy.

A second key principle should be mutual support. There should be a solidarity mechanism of democratic countries looking out for one another in the face of political and economic coercion from authoritarian countries. Germany for example stood alone when put in the diplomatic freezer by Saudi-Arabia restricting political and economic ties after then foreign minister Sigmar Gabriel criticized Riyadh for its "adventurism". A year later, Canada faced the same after its foreign minister Chrystia

Freeland called out the Saudi government for arresting activists. Both countries would have fared better (and the Saudi government distracted) if there had been mutual solidarity. This mechanism should also apply in the face of Beijing's political and economic coercion. One example is Beijing's hostage diplomacy where there should have been more solidarity with Canadian hostages Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor early on.

A second circle comprises (near) universal membership UN bodies. Democratic middle powers need to lead the effort to strengthen and reform multilateral bodies with (near) universal membership. All democratic middle powers that would lead Network for Democratic Solidarity need to put their money where their mouth is and increase the predictability of funding for the UN system. As champions of multilateralism, democratic middle powers should proudly be the first line to pay their contributions to UN on time while others are often dragging their feet. If you are a champion of multilateralism, you should increase predictability of funding for UN agencies by increasing share of core budget compared to discretionary funding for specific activities. And if you are a champion of multilateralism you should channel more of your funding supporting goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through multilateral rather than bilateral channels. Democratic middle powers could support the Funding Compact as a mechanism that combines commitments on the part of member states for better funding with commitments on the part of UN agencies for better transparency, accountability and effectiveness. The reason for this is simple: UN system can only be an effective forum for diplomacy and effective implementer of commonly agreed goals if it is properly funded and better run. At the same time, democratic middle powers should better coordinate to protect universal human rights, also in UN bodies where human rights abusers stand together & try to win over third countries (such as China trying to shield itself against criticism of its treatment of minorities or Saudi-Arabia seeking to justify its human rights record). Nicole Deitelhoff rightly argues that "a key characteristic of the present crisis is not the lack of multilateral rules but that fewer and fewer states feel bound by them", such as is the case in international humanitarian law (IHL). Pro-democracy actors should reinforce cooperation to push back against violations of IHL. Pro-democracy actors organized in Network for Democratic Solidarity should also push back against efforts by Beijing and others to reinterpret universal human rights norms. The Network for Democratic Solidarity can organize a much needed exchange of lessons learned on how to best go about this. The Network should also advance reconfiguring international bodies to make them more balanced giving candidates from Global South greater voice.

Third circle is global institutions providing global public goods. This is not a primary area for work of Network for Democratic Solidarity. But it is important to stress that on the one hand democracies do need to demonstrate that are at forefront of efforts to provide global public goods (be it on climate or public health). They also need to engage and cooperate with non-democratic players on these issues. A Network for

Democratic Solidarity can work on principles for engagement with authoritarian actors on global public goods.

In a recent piece German chancellor Olaf Scholz has detailed why he believes democracy will prevail in global systems competition with authoritarian state capitalism. A Network for Democratic Solidarity can help to ensure that Scholz' conviction becomes reality.

INITIATIVES FOR DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY: ANTI-CORRUPTION

Jon Allen and Susan Côté-Freeman, Transparency International

I) BACKGROUND

The Renewing our Democratic Alliance (RODA) Project is the product of a collaboration between the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Initiated in 2021, the RODA project focuses on shared Canadian and German foreign policy interests and values that seek the protection and enhancement of inclusive democracy and human rights as well as effective international cooperation.[1]

The project's stated objective is to generate specific policy proposals on four topics, one of which is anticorruption. These policy proposals are intended to create an agenda that will inform the work of government and civil society participants who agree to create a network for democratic solidarity.

This paper summarizes the input of a group of some 20 anti-corruption experts who met during two consultative discussions held on June 10th and August 15th, 2022.

II) CORRUPTION – WHY IT MATTERS

Given the nature of corruption and the fact that a lack of transparency is at the heart of most corrupt transactions, it is difficult to provide precise numbers to quantify the damage and the losses caused by corruption worldwide. That said, qualitative and quantitative estimates on corruption point to a largescale problem.

For example, the Secretary General of the United Nations, António Guterres, has estimated that US$1 trillion is paid in bribes annually, while an additional US$2.6 trillion is stolen through corruption.[2] If accurate, these sums could represent approximately 5% of global GDP.

In a 2020 report, Canada's Criminal Intelligence Service estimated the scale of money-laundering linked to criminal and corrupt activities at between CDN $45 billion and $113 billion annually.[3] The US-based organization, Global Financial Integrity, estimates that between 2015 and 2020 more than US$2.3 billion had been laundered through U.S real estate, plus millions more through alternate assets like art, jewelry, and yachts.[4]

And the damages wrought by corruption go beyond their financial cost. In a 2019 paper on the societal impacts of corruption, Paulo Mauro of the IMF said that "the cost of corruption is greater than the sum of lost money. Distortions in spending priorities undermine the ability of the state to promote sustainable and inclusive growth. They drain public resources away from education, health care, and effective infrastructure—the kinds of investments that can improve economic performance and raise living standards for all."[5]

Anti-corruption activists agree that corruption is a cross-cutting issue that impacts political freedoms and the rule of law, undermines trust in government, contributes to environmental degradation, impedes human rights and acts as a driver of conflict.

III) CORRUPTION AND DEMOCRACY

It is generally agreed that we are witnessing a rise of authoritarianism and democratic backsliding throughout the world. Autocrats not only erode the freedoms of their citizens, manipulate the political system and stifle dissent, they often use their unchecked powers to enrich themselves. Russia is a prime example of such an authoritarian state. Its unprovoked war in Ukraine has given a new impetus to the fight against corruption by highlighting the prominence of Russian and other kleptocrats who have hidden their ill-gotten gains in rule-of-law countries of the Global North. In these countries, dirty cash is put to work with few prying eyes. Indeed, the West provides a great network of "enablers", including financial, legal, accounting and public relations professionals who service kleptocrats. These enablers and their governments often turn a blind eye to the origins of their accumulated wealth.

Furthermore, corruption undermines trust and confidence in democracy and the rule of law by contributing to the growing inequality within states.[6] Such inequality results when corrupt individuals, both inside and out of government, steal public funds, evade taxes, and engage in money laundering. Corruption can also be a driver of civic unrest, acting as a catalyst for a change in government. Some populist leaders have taken up the language and tools of anti-corruption, but once in power, they quickly stifle efforts to fight corruption as they begin to create their own kleptocratic networks.

IV) GAPS IN ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

The key issue confronting our panel of experts was whether the current international framework is sufficient to tackle the grave threats that corruption poses today. Overall, it was agreed that while some progress has been made since the 1990s when corruption was still considered a cost of doing business. At the same time, there was a consensus that the architecture that has been built in the last three decades has not achieved its goals and that much remains to be addressed both at the systems level and in individual countries.

A prevailing view was that anti-corruption efforts often fail to address corruption from a global systems perspective. The battle against corruption is often focused on stopping individual transactions, namely bribes, and taking action against individual perpetrators. While such efforts are important, this approach leaves serious gaps, as it fails to address networks, the global movement of illicit funds, and norms that perpetuate corruption.

While most experts agreed that global initiatives are needed to combat corruption, they suggested that the ability of the current framework has been limited by several factors. Much of the current failure was attributed to weak enforcement by states of the obligations they incur when signing on to international treaties and other measures that they have agreed to. Forty-four states, including Canada and Germany, have signed the OECD anti-bribery convention which criminalizes foreign bribery, and 189 states are party to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). However, most states have failed to follow through with effective enforcement of the domestic foreign bribery laws they enacted as signatories to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. According to a 2020 report by Transparency International assessing the enforcement levels of the OECD Convention, nearly half of world exports come from countries that fail to punish foreign bribery.[7]

Experts noted that even the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) - the money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog whose recommendations are committed to by more than 200 jurisdictions - while making a positive difference, was not as effective as it could be given the lack of economic consequences for those countries that are put on the FATF blacklist.

Participants therefore agreed that the priority at this time should be the consolidation of the international anti-corruption architecture and existing tools. The emphasis should be placed on expanding, strengthening, and most importantly, enforcing existing international instruments and ensuring that these obligations are incorporated into domestic law.

Governments should agree to benchmarks for implementing and enforcing treaties and follow through on other non-binding commitments, e.g., G-7 and G-20 commitments, backed by regularly scheduled peer reviews that include civil society. In a paper on Addressing Corruption and Democratic Decline, Transparency International stated that "one of the lessons from the 2016 London Anti-Corruption Summit was that the majority of country commitments could not be readily tracked, and of those that could be, only one in five have been fully implemented.[8]

This should also include a review of actions taken by countries of the North to monitor their corporations abroad, including in mining, oil and gas and other corruption-prone

sectors and the use of tools such as Magnitsky Act sanctions to help further the anti-corruption fight.

Participants also blamed governmental inaction on the failure to prioritize corruption and to resolve the conflicting interests between trade, foreign relations, security and development policies on the one hand and anti-corruption policy on the other. Others noted that international efforts to tackle corruption are also weakened by the lack of cooperation from key countries such as China, Russia and India.

There was near unanimous agreement among participants that more resources, both financial and human, are needed for anti-corruption institutions, including policing, prosecution and financial intelligence units to operate more effectively.

An area of priority action identified by the participants was the creation and/or strengthening of laws to criminalize enablers of global corruption. Domestic anti-money laundering legislation should be expanded to include the enablers of corruption such as lawyers, the sellers of luxury goods and art as well as company formation agents, while also imposing new or stricter regulations, e.g., beneficial ownership transparency and campaign finance reforms. According to Transparency International, some of these measures should include: "ensuring adequate powers as well as technical, human and financial resources for supervisory authorities, law enforcement and financial intelligence units to carry out their responsibilities; countries that rely on self-regulatory bodies, e.g., professional associations to supervise gatekeepers' adherence to anti-money laundering rules should consider government-led supervision or establish a government agency to oversee self-regulatory bodies' supervision and examination efforts; subject gatekeepers to dissuasive and proportionate sanctions, ranging from license withdrawal to monetary fines for noncompliance with anti-money laundering obligations; sanctions should cover both legal persons and senior management."[9]

While most discussion participants were from the 'Global North,' they recognized that their own countries had failed to fully address their roles in the global system of corruption. Participants felt that their governments and societies often see corruption as an 'over there' problem. When Global North countries do attempt to address corruption as part of their foreign policy, participants noted that there was limited integration between anti-corruption and policy areas such as human rights, environmental degradation, and conflict prevention.

An additional factor mentioned as a possible contributor to the lack of vigor in combating corruption is the popular perception of corruption, especially in the Global North where it is not experienced daily by citizens. Corruption is often seen as a nuisance rather than as a serious crime and does not create the sort of pressure that would stiffen the political resolve to address the problem at home and abroad. As noted earlier, the negative effects of widespread corruption, including money

laundering, bribery of public officials etc., are more damaging to societies and their citizens, and a greater threat to democratic governance than classic street crime which, it is believed, receives far more attention and resources.

Weak enforcement is not simply a problem within state borders, but also between states. In many cases, governments do not share key data, like asset declarations and beneficial ownership information, even though this information could be of great assistance in fighting corruption and would benefit from a systems-based approach. To achieve success at the global level, streamlined cross-border assistance is required in areas of information sharing, including declarations of foreign assets and beneficial ownership information for corporations and trusts. Specific recommendations may include: introducing digital reporting, public disclosure and automated exchange systems for assets and interests of PEPs[10] , and ensuring that relevant institutions have the mandate, capacity and will to conduct verifications and sanction non- compliance. Technology and data standards should be interoperable across countries and across other data sets concerning resource allocation decisions, e.g., public procurement, and political engagement, e.g., campaign finance.[11]

A recent advance in information sharing is the Treaty on Exchange of Data for the Verification of Asset Declarations signed by a few Southeastern European states in 2021. This treaty will enable member countries to exchange data cross-border for the verification of assets disclosed in one country but located in another.

More countries could commit to becoming parties to the International Treaty on Exchange of Data for the Verification of Asset Declarations. Organizations such as Transparency International also promote the provision of more expert technical support for asset declaration systems to be provided by experts, including from civil society and multilateral bodies.

The failure to deal with corruption holistically was also identified as a weakness. Governments, both nationally and collectively, tend to address the effects of corruption in silos, whether it is money laundering, illegal drugs, human trafficking, environmental degradation, real estate market distortions or the stripping of state resources. As a result, law enforcement resources and government actions can be dispersed and unfocused.

In the forums where key international anti-corruption treaties and commitments are negotiated, the focus remains on nation-states as the primary actors. It was felt that civil society is often excluded or is only a minor participant in these forums even though civil society actors are often effective in tracking and investigating corruption and in proposing solutions.

Participants debated the usefulness of 'naming-and-shaming' countries that fail to meet their commitments. While some believe it is necessary to keep countries accountable, others felt the narrative should be more positive and focus on "white-lists" of countries that uphold international commitments and aim for a "virtuous cycle" of integrity.

Some experts suggested that an international Anti-Corruption Court, modelled on the International Criminal Court, would be an important additional tool in the fight against kleptocracy and grand corruption. Proponents see the court as a means of pursuing kleptocrats themselves, seizing their assets in the countries where the funds are being hidden and restricting their movements to avoid prosecution. The court would invoke its jurisdiction only if the country where the kleptocrat resides is unable or unwilling to prosecute. Proponents highlight the potential deterrence effect of such a court and believe that some of the administrative costs could be met by asset seizures and fines. Proponents recognize that an anti-corruption court would not address all systems-level issues of corruption but would be complementary to existing tools.

However, many of the expert participants believed that devoting effort and money to establishing a court at this time would be a distraction from more urgent domestic and systems-based changes. Moreover, some believed that a court was unnecessary given existing extra-territorial agreements. Additionally, there was concern that establishing a court might offer a convenient diversion for countries that have failed to meet their existing obligations. Several were skeptical about the deterrent effect of a small number of high-profile convictions and questioned the ability of the court to gather evidence for a successful prosecution, given the current obstacles to information sharing. Finally, there was a view that key countries including the U.S., China, India and Russia, would not become party to the court, along with other major nations, and that corruption enablers in the Global North would also not be subject to the court.

As an alternative, some participants pointed to more nimble ad hoc structures that can be adapted to a local context, such as the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). CICIG was established by the UN as an independent body to investigate criminal groups that had come to dominate Guatemala. Its mandate was to collaborate with national institutions, such as the police, government ministries, and the existing court system. CICIG was considered a success until it was abolished by a new Guatemalan government, supported by the Trump administration. The same model was adopted without success in Honduras, but other models are available such as the judicial review process in Ukraine, or truth and reconciliation commissions. Similar efforts to combine both international and domestic expertise have had some success in Ukraine and Moldova.

Some participants expressed the hope that lessons learned in Afghanistan would be applied to the future reconstruction of Ukraine to prevent the risk of corrupt practices in that process.

V) PRIORITY ADVICE TO CANADIAN AND GERMAN MINISTERS

In proposing solutions, participants agreed that the priority should be the consolidation of both the domestic and international anti-corruption architecture and existing tools. The emphasis should be placed on expanding, strengthening, and most importantly, enforcing domestic laws that to curb corruption as well as obligations under treaties and conventions already in place. It was also felt that societies need to change their approaches to understanding and discussing corruption to tackle its systemic nature and combat this scourge sustainably.

The recommendations that follow reflect the inputs of the two groups engaged in the consultations. They are presented as guidance for the setting of priorities by the Canadian and German governments in furthering the fight against corruption at home and abroad.

1. Address the weaknesses in the implementation and enforcement of your country's existing anti-corruption commitments by:

- Setting benchmarks, transparent goals, and reviews of progress.
- Increasing human and financial resources for anti-corruption law enforcement, prosecution and financial intelligence units.
- Expanding the formal inclusion of civil society organizations in the development and monitoring of anti-corruption instruments.

2. Create and/or strengthen laws to criminalize the enablers of global corruption and establish publicly accessible corporate and trust beneficial ownership registries.

3. Work with like-minded countries for a more systems-based approach to tackling corruption, including more information sharing, e.g., asset declarations, mainstreaming anti-corruption through foreign, trade, security, and development policies, viewing corruption in all its aspects as part of global phenomenon, and cutting off the global movement of illicit financial flows and kleptocrats.

4. Address impunity by promoting and using existing legal mechanisms, e.g., Magnitsky-type legislation, universal jurisdiction, ad hoc supra-national judicial models, and national models such as truth and reconciliation tribunals rather than focusing limited resources on establishing a new international anti-corruption court at this time.

Footnotes

[1] https://rodanet.org/
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TOWARDS GENUINE RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING IN THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE REGIME:

SOLIDARITY AND RESETTLEMENT AS A RESPONSE TO UNEQUAL BURDENS AND DEMOCRATIC SPOILERS

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Introduction

This contribution to the RODA program is an exercise in considering the intersections between the international community's response to global displacement crises, the renewal of commitments to multilateral institutions, and solidarity with Global South host states in the interest of supporting democratic norms and protection standards. It argues that like-minded democratic states can and should commit to predictable targets for responsibility-sharing around resettling refugees and funding the international refugee regime, towards the triple goals of decreasing the number of people displaced internationally, alleviating burdens on Global South host states, and providing an exemplar of how international cooperation can reinvigorate the international refugee regime.

The first, brief section offers an overview of historical and political processes that have eroded principles of solidarity and commitments to international humanitarian and human rights law, which underpin state obligations to displaced people and to other states. It examines the narrowing of durable solutions for refugees, increased reliance on containment and externalized controls to keep refugees in regions of origin, offshoring asylum procedures, and how democratic states burden-shift, free-ride, and act as spoilers to equitable responses to displacement crises.

The second section focuses on core norms of the international refugee regime, particularly the norm of responsibility-sharing. After explaining the roots and contemporary practice of responsibility-sharing, the paper then problematizes "common but differentiated responsibilities" which essentially means that rich democratic states fund long-term refugee populations in regions of origin, while Global South states bear the burdens of hosting. It highlights missed opportunities for developing clear benchmarks for responsibility-sharing through the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees through additionality in international resettlement.

The final section argues that a club of dedicated states can reinvigorate the refugee regime by committing to predictable responsibility-sharing. It suggests that reconceptualizing dividends of responsibility-sharing as club goods and pre-emptively sidelining spoilers to global solidarity will allow for necessarily bold action. It presents practical opportunities for solidarity to alleviate acute displacement crises, in concert with host states. It concludes with priorities for stable funding for the refugee regime and associated humanitarian agencies. These proposals carry political risk, particularly by incentivizing free-riding and offering host states opportunities to coerce instrumentalize refugee populations for concessions. But the trajectories towards control, erosion of protection standards, and radically unequal burdens mean that bold action is necessary to show that genuine responsibility-sharing can work in practice.

1. International Displacement and Global Solidarity

It has become something of a platitude to note that the world is facing unprecedented displacement, yet the numbers bear repeating in the context of calls for reinvigorating global solidarity. As of 2022, almost 90 million people were displaced globally, including 27.1 million refugees and 4.6 million asylum seekers.[1] The total stock of displaced people has accelerated rapidly over the last decade, and statistics do not include the 6.9 million displaced from Ukraine, making it the largest and most rapid displacement crisis in the post-WWII era. As noted below, the international response to Ukraine stands in stark contrast to displacement from Global South states. 7.1 million remain displaced twelve years after the start of the Syrian civil war – the majority of whom are hosted in neighbouring states. An additional 6.5 million people have fled Venezuela, and reside under various forms of protection and legal status throughout Latin America.

Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East host the vast majority of the world's refugees. 72% are hosted in neighbouring states, and 83% are hosted in low and middle-income countries. The world's Least Developed Countries host 27% of displaced people. While the duration of displacement remains staggeringly high, global averages are skewed by dynamic conflict situations. For example, two million Afghans have been in exile for up to 40 years, while the majority of Syrians have been in exile for ten years or less.[2] Suffice it to say that most remain in regions of origin, with slim chances of returning home or being resettled to Global North states.

1.1. The Post-Cold War Era: Global Mobility Divides and Narrowing Durable Solutions

During the Cold War, the UN in general and the refugee regime specifically were politicized along East / West lines, and the UNHCR was largely a Eurocentric organization.[3] Refugees from communist states were seen as a political victory for

liberal democracies, and seen as "voting with their feet." The refugee regime often served as a "Cold War sideshow."[4] Global mobility dynamics underwent significant changes in the immediate post-Cold War period. New civil wars meant the majority of refugees originated in Global South states, and ensuing asylum crises in Europe influenced public sentiment; narratives of "bogus" asylum seekers and "queue jumpers" gained traction. Changing conflict dynamics and pressure from donor states meant UNHCR moved away from its "exilic bias" which favoured resettlement and host state naturalization, to return to countries of origin as the preferred durable solution to displacement, calling the 1990s the "decade of returnees".[5] The change in durable solutions and nature of conflict meant growing refugee populations in the Global South, increased "irregular secondary movement" for recognized refugees to claim asylum in safe countries, and increased demand to circumvent migration controls.[6]

Likewise, while global visa-free mobility increased at the aggregate level throughout the 1990s and 2000s, migration options became increasingly unequal. Tightened labour mobility and the effective closure of pre-existing circular migration systems, particularly in Europe and the United States, contributed to "categorical substitution"[7] from regular mobility to asylum, and "deflections into irregularity"[8] for those who would otherwise travelled regularly. The result was a (still ongoing) "global mobility divide" wherein visa free-travel has increased for rich, Global North states, and restricted for Global South states.[9] Restrictions on temporary visas are particularly targeted at, and responsive to, states with high numbers of asylum seekers.[10]

1.2. Third Countries, Containment, and Externalized Controls

One upshot was a reactionary and iterative cycle between irregular migration and control policies. Rich democracies have developed ever-more comprehensive mobility controls, with a focus on containing migrants and refugees in third countries and externalizing controls to "prevent migrants, including asylum seekers, from entering the legal jurisdictions or territories or destination countries or regions or making them legally inadmissible without individually considering the merits of their protection claims."[11] Externalized controls include tactics like fortified borders and interdictions at sea and land, but are more often technical controls including carrier sanctions and liabilities, and above all visa controls and migration cooperation agreements. As Prof. Ayelet Shachar noted in her contribution to RODA, borders "no longer stand fixed at the country's territorial edges."[12] Politicians in liberal democracies routinely obfuscate the structural determinants of irregular migration, blaming criminal organizations and vowing to "smash" or "break" smuggling and trafficking rings, instead of recognizing the need for safe and legal pathways for mobility, much less their culpability.

1.3. Offshoring Asylum

Some of the architects of the international refugee regime, and leaders in democratic alliance structures, were also policy entrepreneurs around offshoring international protection obligations through safe third country and safe country of origin designations. Referred to as "new approaches" to managing asylum, they were born of the desire to arrest irregular migration around Europe's peripheries and respond to what policymakers referred to as "asylum shopping" between European states. Domestic safe country instruments were first used by Denmark in 1986 as a means of restricting entry for East German citizens. They were quickly copied by the UK, Germany, Austria and other European states, while simultaneously being directly transferred through EU candidacy criteria, and emulated further abroad by states including Canada, the US, and Australia.

Safe country designations rely on the doctrine of "effective protection", implying that a state to which a removed or rejected asylum seeker is returned meets the requirement for *non-réfoulement* – the regime's peremptory norm and a binding legal duty.[13] The notion that asylum seekers should have sought protection at an earlier point in their journey has been broadened to the point where states push back asylum seekers to transit countries where the likelihood of meaningful protection comparable to Global North states is deeply suspect. These policies have resurfaced and gained ground in recent years, for example the UK's policy to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda (which emulated a previous Israeli policy to deport East African asylum seekers there), Italian pushbacks to Libya, Spanish pushbacks to Morocco, Croatian and Polish border policies to contain asylum seekers in Bosnia and Belarus respectively, the EU's 2016 deal with Turkey, and the Trump Administration's unilateral declaration of Central American states as safe third countries, to name but a few stark examples.

1.4. Burden-Shifting and Spoilers

The cumulative effect is a global system of burden-shifting, even among democratic allies. For example, during the 2015-16 migration crisis in Europe, Western Balkan and Central European states waived through hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers *en route* to countries like Germany and Sweden. In response, Germany took the initiative to receive a disproportionate number of asylum seekers by suspending transfers to first countries under the Dublin regulations. The ensuing cascade of border closures threatened the very core of the European common market, and led to a doubling-down on deals to contain migrants in autocratic, dangerous, and weak states around Europe's peripheries.

The absence of solidarity mechanisms contributes to free-riding and burden-shifting, since hosting refugees is considered a zero-sum proposition.[14] For example, the EU's Dublin Regulations arguably incentivize states to either allow asylum seekers to pass through their territory, or offer less effective protection in a race-to-the-bottom for domestic asylum systems. As discussed below, attempts to create regional `distribution systems in Europe have fallen afoul of spoilers since implementation

would rely on consensus, and governments reap domestic gains of scuttling negotiations rather than contributing to solidarity mechanisms. In the worst cases, spoilers operate from logics of nativist "cultural purity" and are thus intractable negotiators, even when offered financial benefits or face-saving alternatives. Narratives of "queue jumpers" and "bogus" asylum seekers have evolved into more pernicious epithets like "invaders", "parasites", or "rapists" from incumbents and opposition parties.[15] Spoilers likewise erode democracy at home by politicizing asylum systems, attacking civil society and press, and undermining rule of law.

2. Responsibility-Sharing in the International Refugee Regime

The international refugee regime is comprised of laws, norms, and institutions to address collective action problems of international displacement. This section focuses specifically on burden-sharing, which stands alongside non-discrimination, non-criminalization, and the peremptory norm of *non-réfoulement* as the regime's core norms. Originally conceived of as "burden-sharing", and later referred to as "responsibility-sharing" in the interest of not casting displaced people as burdensome, the 1951 Refugee Convention's preamble states: "Considering that the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries, and that a satisfactory solution of a problem of which the UN has recognized the international scope and nature cannot therefore be achieved without international co-operation."[16] The General Assembly tasked UNHCR with "seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees." The regime's core norms are intertwined given that disproportionate burdens may compel states to abrogate their duties, and thus undermine the purpose of the Convention.

2.1. The Norm and Practice of Burden / Responsibility-Sharing

Responsibility-sharing entails that the financial costs of hosting refugees and providing durable solutions through resettlement, naturalization, and return to countries of origin should be equitably distributed.[17] Yet unlike *non-réfoulement*, responsibility-sharing remains discretionary, with no binding obligations enshrined in treaties or international law. However, as described below, some legal scholars argue that it is developing towards a soft-law instrument, and potentially a norm of customary international law. Burden and responsibility-sharing was the central topic of discussion at the first Global Refugee Forum in 2019. In its conclusion, High Commissioner Grandi noted that "Without meaningful responsibility-sharing, we will not achieve solidarity."[18]

The absence of meaningful solidarity has had significant political consequences, particularly by offering autocratic or authoritarian states opportunities to extract financial, political, and security concessions from Global North states. The cases of Libya under Ghadaffi and Turkey during the 2015-16 migration crisis offer the clearest

contemporary examples where autocratic leaders threaten migration emergencies to extract concession.[19]

Global South states which host large numbers of refugees cite the lack of responsibility-sharing as grounds for forcibly repatriating refugees, and Global North practices as moral precedent.[20] To offer but one example, in 2016 the Kenyan Interior Minister drew on the European response to its migration crisis in announcing the shuttering of Kenya's Department of Refugee Affairs, the closure of the Dadaab refugee camp, and plans to expel almost 300,000 refugees to Somalia. While the decision was ostensibly based on security threats, a statement from the Minister pushed back against human rights criticisms by arguing: "We will not be the first to do so; this is the standard practice worldwide. For example in Europe, rich, prosperous, and democratic countries are turning away refugees from Syria, one of the worst war zones since World War Two."[21]

The lack of solidarity through financial appeals for refugee emergencies likewise comes home to roost for Global North states. Indeed, Europe's migration crisis in 2015-16 was partially triggered by a decline in support for Syrian refugees, particularly in Lebanon and Turkey. And while hosting refugees is statistically unlikely to generate armed conflict, research shows quite clearly that refugee flows to weak states and neighbouring states with existing interethnic tensions can result in the spread of civil conflict across borders, incidents of terrorism, and intercommunal conflict.[22] Regional instability means yet more displacement risk. The upshot is that responsibility-sharing is thus not only a humanitarian imperative, but generates collective goods around regional security, protecting states from democratic backsliding, and preventing nativist, anti-refugee sentiment.

2.2. The Problem with Common but Differentiated Responsibilities

Practically, responsibility-sharing takes the form of either financial contributions to the UN system and associated humanitarian operations and development programming, or the physical responsibility of hosting refugees. Financial contributions to UNHCR remain discretionary and voluntary, while states in regions of origin are bound by international to offer asylum. Yet the global distribution of refugees means host states are also some of the least capable to integrate them.

UN instruments and the rationale underlying global responses operate on the logic of "common but differentiated responsibilities," first articulated as such in international environmental law in the 1990s, and operating in practice in the international refugee regime. In a word, Global North states pay, while Global South states shoulder the political and social burdens for hosting, and "resources are presently inversely correlated with protection responsibilities."[23] Or, as Peter Sutherland often noted, the current system ultimately shows that responsibility is defined by proximity. The reality, like much of the distribution of privilege, burden, and hazard in the international

system is unfair and regressive, which was recognized at the drafting of the 1951 Refugee Convention.[24]

The vast majority of states are parties to the Convention and / or its additional protocols, as well as relevant international humanitarian and human rights treaties. In addition, most democratic states have functioning domestic asylum systems, and engage in some degree of refugee resettlement. Global North states contribute the bulk of funding to multilateral agencies that address displacement crises, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Program (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO).

Yet the number of refugees they resettle remains staggeringly low compared to demand for durable solutions. From 2012 to 2021 just under 1 million refugees were resettled to third countries, at an average of 96, 682 per year. 2020 and 2021 were the lowest years of resettlement in the last decade at 34,383 and 57,436 respectively, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Trump Administration's defection from multilateral institutions, "extreme vetting" of refugees in the resettlement pipeline, and anti-Muslim immigration policies. Just under 3.7 million returned to countries of origin over that period, with numbers varying widely year on year.[25] To summarize, common but differentiated responsibilities maintain the status quo and privilege rich states' containment policies.

2.3. The Global Compact on Refugees: A Missed Opportunity or a Path Forward?

The period of negotiation for the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was one of significant turmoil for multilateral institutions and international solidarity. It came in the wake of Europe's migration crisis when EU member states were actively shifting the burden among allies and doubling down on externalized migration controls, and the US was defecting from international institutions and treaty obligations, and actively threatening to cut funding to UNHCR over its perceived impacts on US sovereignty.[26] Neither states nor the UNHCR could risk re-opening the Convention to consider new modes of binding solidarity.[27]

The GCR was originally considered as an opportunity to put responsibility-sharing norms into practice. Indeed, the 2016 New York Declaration, signed by all 193 UN Member States, and which launched the compact negotiations, called for "a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world's refugees." And while it is framed as providing "a basis for predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing among all UN Member States" and relevant IOs,[28] any notion of binding quotas was discarded after state reactions to the GCR's zero draft, originally titled a *Global Compact on Responsibility Sharing for Refugees*.[29] States balked at obligations to meet UNHCR's identified resettlement

needs.[30] Subsequent drafts and the final document did not include benchmarks or oversight, leading noted refugee law scholar James Hathaway to call it a "global cop-out."[31] States insisted that the renamed GCR would be entirely non-binding, and it ultimately served as an affirmation of existing norms rather than a bold step to reinvigorate or broaden commitments.[32]

The political context of the GCR's negotiation cannot be understated. Its focus on development aid for host communities and local integration of refugees reflects the long-term *realpolitik* of common but differentiated responsibilities and containment. However, that particular historical and political moment need not define the future of cooperation, particularly given that the GCR was adopted as a non-binding UNGA resolution. Alex Aleinikoff, for example, offered the metaphor of the GCR as a ratchet geared towards "preventing backward slippage *and creating opportunities for forward movement*."[33]

2.4. The Key Role of Additionality in International Resettlement

Additionality is key to responsibility-sharing and solidarity through international resettlement. In essence, additionality means a larger aggregate number of resettlement quotas by current receiving states, new additions to the number of resettlement countries, and new pathways including private sponsorship or community support models, and complementary labour and family reunification visas for refugees over and above existing commitments.

The GCR includes the goal of expanding resettlement through the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI). Based on Canada's private sponsorship model, it has successfully seeded or supported community sponsorship programs in Europe, Australia, and Latin America.[34] Most recently and perhaps most significantly, the Biden Administration announced that the US would launch a large-scale private sponsorship pilot to begin in the Autumn of 2023. Importantly, additionality means new resettlement pathways should not replace current programs, and avoid offloading responsibility to citizens or private actors. While promising, global uptake has been slow. The 2019 Global Refugee Forum resulted in a total of only 60,860 additional resettlement places globally, with 75% coming from Canada and the whole of the EU.[35] In 2021, the UNHCR identified 1,445,383 persons with varying levels of urgent need of protection through international resettlement.[36] Only 57,436 (4%) were actually resettled. Clearly, more needs to be done.

3. Ways Forward: Additionality, Solidarity, and Political Will

Original drafts of the 1951 Convention stipulated burden-sharing as including the global redistribution of refugees, but was eventually watered down and replaced with the term "cooperation". However, legal scholars have argued that the iterated

reference to principles of responsibility-sharing could comprise an emerging norm in customary international law, particularly through its inclusion in the GCR and in European law.[37] And while oversight and binding criteria for responsibility-sharing were discarded from the GCR, it remained a guiding principle in the document and has historical precedent, for example in resettling refugees from the "Indochina" refugee crisis, which revitalized and significantly expanded private refugee sponsorship in Canada. The norm can and should be put into practice.

3.1. Building Solidarity while Sidelining Spoilers: A Club Goods Approach

The refugee regime was partly designed to solve the collective action problems around international displacement to provide public international goods, which are defined as being *non-excludable* and *non-rivalrous*. For example, clean air and water through commitments to environmental regulations or international security through alliances are enjoyed by all, and their enjoyment by one actor does not inhibit the enjoyment of another. But public goods also inherently incentivize free-riding – i.e., actors enjoy their benefit without efforts or costs to create and maintain them.

While the provision of humanitarian protection is not a public good per se, expanding the scope of analysis beyond individual refugees is fruitful given that "enhanced stability and security provided by one country's refugee protection efforts will not only benefit [that country, but] all countries in the region, no matter whether those other countries have themselves engaged in costly protection efforts or not. Stability and security benefits produced by refugee protection efforts are in this sense indivisible and non-excludable."[38] At the global level, providing international protection can help prevent spillovers through conflict or mass influxes of asylum seekers.[39] Commitments to predictable and stable responsibility-sharing would also help foster democracy and rule of law, and as such would enhance global security and prevent democratic backsliding. Global security and democracy are non-excludable public goods, and the incentive to provide them ought to override concerns over free-riding.

To return to the GCR's *Zero Draft*, a group of the most prominent international NGOs called for an agreement which would monitor and mitigate underperformance, and a "truly global agreement with concrete contingency plans, specific targets and time-bound benchmarks that keep States on track and progressing toward the ultimate goal of equitable responsibility sharing."[40] Yet the most robust mobility arrangements are geographically limited, and provide excludable club goods to member states. Examples include MERCOSUR in South America, the EU's Schengen Area, and ECOWAS in West Africa. Regional agreements work because they are delimited, and accrue benefits to self-interested members willing to cede some sovereignty in order to reap dividends.

I suggest that a group of democratic states can embark on a bold experiment in genuine responsibility-sharing by creating a solidarity club, which would commit to

responsibility-sharing based on objective and predictable resettlement additionality and financial contributions to host states. This solidarity club would include Global South host states who would, in turn, commit to the rule of law and fair treatment of refugees.

Promising theoretical and real-world models exist. For example, Matthias Czaika's Refugee Burden Index is based on the number of refugees hosted in proportion to population, employment levels, and GDP per capita, in addition to less readily quantifiable metrics including population absorbance capacity and societal and political stability issues.[41] Germany distributes asylum seekers to Länder based on per capita income and population. An EU-wide distribution system was proposed in 2015, and would have used GDP per capita (40% weight), population (40%), per capita number of asylum applications over the previous five years (10%), and unemployment (10%). Tellingly, it was scuttled by several member states acting as spoilers in the negotiations, particularly Višegrad states.[42]

Crucially, establishing a solidarity club would pre-emptively exclude spoilers. States, and only states, have the prerogative to commit themselves to international agreements. In addition to recognizing the principle of solidarity, the preamble to the 1951 Convention expressed "the wish that all States, recognizing the social and humanitarian nature of the problem of refugees, will do everything within their power to prevent this problem from becoming a cause of tension between states." While a club goods approach would not solve the problem of free-riding, it would limit interstate tensions because it would start from common principles.

Far-right xenophobic voting patterns are inversely correlated with the number of refugees and foreigners present at the local level.[43] It is thus unlikely that potential spoilers would join the club in the short or medium term, and nor should they be expected to. To put a fine point on the matter: states like Hungary or Poland should not be invited to the club under current conditions, but membership should be left open. The latter point is crucial. The US under the Trump Administration would not have been expected to commit to binding commitments, but the Biden Administration could take a lead role, and commit subsequent administrations.

The proposal also accounts for the short- and medium-term interests of club members. Resettlement formulas should consider labour market complementarity for a pre-determined proportion of those being resettled, which comports with emerging state practice to develop complementary, labour-based, education, or family reunification resettlement pathways,[44] and for which the academic legwork is well underway.[45] Doing so would mean that states would immediately address the vital need for workers at all skill levels, while still offering pathways to safety for vulnerable people who are currently prioritized for resettlement.

The greater the number of additional resettlement spots allocated, the larger the number of new immigrants who could immediately contribute to receiving states' labour markets, which would also mitigate the risk of xenophobic reactions. Resettlement formulas could readily include a distribution among those who have been displaced for a short period of time and are thus in closer temporal proximity to their field of training, and those who have been displaced long-term and are not employed or integrated in host states.

Of course, the risk of defection after elections would be a perennial problem – but those dynamics already characterize multilateralism in general and are not a compelling argument against action, and could be mitigated in any case. Club membership might include pooled financial resources. Defection might then mean deposits are reallocated to make up for lost resettlement spots, which would then be transferred to maintain aggregate commitments, or to host state members for social welfare provision. Binding and predictable resettlement commitments should likewise be contingent on host state commitments to civil and political rights, and providing meaningful protection for refugees who remain.

In order to be impactful, resettlement numbers would have to be significant and appreciable by host states, and should likely focus on acute situations. Longer-term benefits would accrue to all members, and potentially generate public goods by alleviating security risks in host states and their neighbours. Likewise, engaging in meaningful solidarity signals "a willingness to assist and accept and integrate refugees helps to promote liberal, democratic values in the global arena, and counters extremist voices."[46]

3.2. Opportunities for Solidarity in Practice

The four years since the GCR's adoption have seen some signs for hope for greater international solidarity. The world's response to displacement from Russia's invasion of Ukraine offers both positive examples, though also selective solidarity. For example, the EU's Temporary Protection Directive offers immediate residency, employment, healthcare, and education rights, with the added purpose of not over-burdening member states' asylum systems.[47] Humanitarian parole in the US offers residency rights, healthcare, housing, food, and education assistance.[48] Canada has committed to priority processing of Ukrainian travel authorizations and offered immediate permanent residency, as well as waiving all visa fees, offering support for flight costs, and offering additional settlement services akin to those offered to resettled refugees.[49] While these responses represent a clear double-standard when compared to other displacement crises, they also illustrate how states can drop barriers to, and facilitate mobility for, displaced people when the response is motivated by the defence of liberal democracy.

The opportunities for solidarity suggested below are not without political risk. Resettlement of this nature might incentivize autocratic or weak states to decrease services or threaten forced repatriation, but the absence of meaningful responsibility-sharing already contributes to the politicization of displacement and opportunities for coercion. Plans to offer predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing could start to turn that tide. Nonetheless, public messaging should highlight security and democracy dividends, economic gains to receiving states, and humanitarian gains for resettled refugees. It would thus provide an oft-touted "triple-win".

The opportunities described below are meant as examples, and are only a small part of the global puzzle. For example, the exodus from Afghanistan over the last decades and since the Taliban's victory in 2021 has meant a significant and long-term burden on neighbouring states. Of the 2.6 million Afghan refugees globally, 2.2 million are hosted in Pakistan and Iran. Global North states have faltered in their resettlement commitments, and neither state offers robust integration. Importantly, others have argued for a similar alliance structure to help address that crisis.[50] The plight of Rohingya refugees is largely ignored by global resettlement. Roughly 920,000 reside in unsafe camps in Bangladesh, the majority of whom have arrived since fleeing ethnic cleansing in Myanmar in 2017. The exodus from Venezuela matches the Syrian refugee crisis in scope – 6.8 million people have left the country. 5.75 million reside in Latin America and the Caribbean under various forms of legal protection, with Colombia hosting over 2.5 million alone, and Peru another 1.3 million. There is virtually no resettlement of Venezuelans; Canada and the U.S., the world's top resettlement countries, resettled fifteen and twenty Venezuelans respectively from 2015 to 2020. The international response is almost entirely financial support to host states, which are struggling with upswings of anti-migrant sentiment among a remarkable trend of hospitality and inclusion.

Opportunity 1: Lebanon and Syrian Refugees

Lebanon currently hosts 1.5 million refugees, and including long-term Palestinian and Iraqi refugees, hosts the highest number of refugees per capita globally at almost 20% of the total population. More than 80% of Syrians live in extreme poverty. While positive attitudes towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon are correlated with direct and meaningful contact, public support for long-term hosting has declined significantly in recent years as the country faces a rolling series of fiscal, economic, and political crises.[51]

In June of 2022 Lebanon's caretaker government announced plans to forcibly repatriate 15,000 Syrians per month starting in the Autumn of 2022, with the cooperation of the Assad regime in Syria, ignoring calls from UNHCR to protect refugees' human rights. Credible reports by rights organizations have cited systematic abuse and reprisals of returning refugees.[52]

A bold experiment in responsibility-sharing through additional resettlement could help immediately alleviate the impending crisis. For example, a small club of states could commit to a one-year pilot program to resettle 15,000 Syrians per month from Lebanon, on the grounds that Lebanon immediately drops its forced repatriation scheme. A rudimentary distribution formula based on a 50/50 weighting of GDP per capita and population, which included only Canada, the US, and Germany, would resettle a total of 180,000 Syrian refugees from Lebanon over a one-year pilot program. Admittedly, the numbers of refugees resettled would significantly increase total resettlement quotas, but each of these states currently have various forms of private or community sponsorship and complementary pathways which could help address the burden.

Proposed Distribution
Small Solidarity Club

Country	Population (mil)	Pop share	GDP/capita (USD)	GDP Share	Refugee Share	Monthly Relocation	1 Year Pilot Total
USA	329.5	0.731	64543	0.420	0.576	**8,636**	**103,633**
Germany	83.24	0.185	45723	0.298	0.241	**3,619**	**43,428**
Canada	38	0.084	43241	0.282	0.183	**2,745**	**32,939**
Totals	450.74	1.000	153,507	1	1.000	**15,000**	**180,000**

Expanding the club to include the top ten resettlement countries from 2015 to 2021 (only including government-sponsored refugees – i.e., without existing additional pathways including private sponsorship or complementary labour schemes) illustrates how broader solidarity more equitably distributes the burden, while maintaining the aggregate impact on Lebanon's carrying capacity and the human rights of displaced people. For example, a one-year pilot through a larger club would increase Canada's overall resettlement (including private sponsorship and additional pathways) by just over 50% against 2019 resettlement numbers. While significant, the number is far lower than Canada's response to the Syrian refugee crisis, which opened an additional 25,000 resettlement spots between 2015 and 2016, and which fell below demand from private sponsorship groups.

Proposed Distribution
Top Ten Resettlement States 2015-2021

Country	Population (mil)	Pop share	GDP/capita (USD)	GDP Share	Refugee Share	Monthly Relocation	1 Year Pilot Total
USA	329.5	0.561	64,543	0.118	0.339	**5,089**	**61,065**
Germany	83.24	0.142	45,723	0.083	0.113	**1,688**	**20,255**
France	67.39	0.115	38,625	0.070	0.093	**1,389**	**16,662**
Ireland	5.05	0.009	83,812	0.153	0.081	**1,211**	**14,530**
Canada	38	0.065	43,241	0.079	0.072	**1,077**	**12,918**
Australia	25.69	0.044	51,812	0.094	0.069	**1,037**	**12,439**
Norway	5.38	0.009	67,294	0.123	0.066	**989**	**11,870**
Netherlands	17.44	0.030	52,304	0.095	0.063	**938**	**11,256**
Sweden	10.35	0.018	51,926	0.095	0.056	**842**	**10,108**
Finland	5.53	0.009	49,041	0.089	0.049	**741**	**8,897**
Totals	587.57	1.000	548,321	1.000	1.000	**15,000**	**180,000**

The pilot should be predicated on commitments from Lebanon to halt plans to forcibly repatriate Syrians, and to more equitable access to social services and labour markets. Importantly, it would also mean that existing humanitarian programming to remaining refugees would increase by 12% per displaced person, and significantly more at the household level. Alleviating the burden of hosting also means that existing financial commitments go much further.

Opportunity 2: Displacement in Central America

More than 550,00 people are displaced the Northern Central America (NCA) – El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. Most reside in Belize, Costa Rica, and Panama. The majority, more than 400,000, were displaced over the last decade. The region has the world's most urbanized refugee population at 95%, making traditional humanitarian aid challenging. An additional half a million are displaced further abroad, predominantly in Mexico, the US, and Canada. The US and Canada, which together resettle the largest number of refugees annually, largely ignore resettlement from the hemisphere. Of the 155,000 refugees resettled to Canada between 2015 and 2020, only 160, or 0.1%, were from NCA countries. Less than three percent of roughly 270,000 refugees resettled to the US were from Latin America. 3,766, or 1.4%, were from NCA countries.[53]

The GCR's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework is implemented in Central America as a regional program under the Spanish acronym MIRPS (*Marco Integral Regional de Protección y Soluciones*). Six countries in Central America signed on to MIRPS in 2016 (Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama) signed on to MIRPS. El Salvador joined in 2019), which built on previous solidarity mechanisms including. MIRPS includes a novel (and manageable) resettlement mechanism through the Protection Transfer Arrangement in Central America (PTA), designed to protect vulnerable people requiring urgent resettlement.

MIRPS is framed as a means of forestalling irregular movement from the regions, which is a major issue in Mexico and at the US / Mexico border. UNHCR recommended 785 people for resettlement in 2016 through the PTA; 150 were resettled to the US. Since then, an additional 3,100 people were identified. Canada accepted 11 people in 2017, zero in 2018, and zero in 2019, and ended engagement with the PTA in 2020. It also ignored appeals from UNHCR in Mexico to resettle vulnerable refugees, particularly LGBTQ+ asylum seekers. This is despite the fact that Canada has driven the process of seeding additionality through the GRSI. By 2021, the PTA was all but a dead-letter aspect of MIRPS.

Assuming that refugees from the regional would prefer to stay in the hemisphere, Canada and the US could immediately clear the backlog of refugees from NCA states proposed by UNHCR under the PTA. The number is exceedingly modest, yet the impacts on the region could be profound, and extended over subsequent years to take advantage of complementary labour migration pathways, which are already being piloted by Canada.[54]

3.3. Funding the International Refugee Regime

Finally, a club of democratic states must also consider funding structures for UN agencies to address major financial gaps and operational coverage. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted that 2022 will see a record funding gap. Current pledges sit at roughly $15.2bn USD, or less than one third, of the required $48.7bn USD. Likewise, ten of UNHCR's operations around the world, ranging across Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America are underfunded by 50-76% as of 2021,[55] which has forced it to cut a range of vital programs from food aid, to protection for women and children, to cash transfers to families. The UNHCR's needs-based budget is roughly twice its annual expenditure. For example, the 2022 emergency appeal for Syrians and vulnerable host communities requested a total of $10.5 billion USD, which is currently only around 10% funded.[56]

A major part of the problem is that UNHCR relies on voluntary operational and situation-based contributions from donor states, which inherently mean they exercise a significant amount of control over operations, often funding those initiatives which they think most deserving or politically important. These issues have long-been recognized, with myriad policy proposals for addressing funding gaps.[57] Fundamentally, addressing shortfalls will mean that rich states should fund UNHCR and associated humanitarian and development agencies by moving from discretionary funding allocations to automatic budget transfers to UNHCR and humanitarian and development agencies serving refugees in the Global South.

There have been some noteworthy developments to alternative funding sources in recent years. The World Migration and Refugee Council have called for seized foreign

assets under Canada's 2017 Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (also referred to as the Magnitsky Law) to be specifically allocated to funding refugee responses. Canada's 2022 Budget Implementation Act specifically takes up that call and allows seized assets to be allocated for "the reconstruction of a foreign state adversely affected by a grave breach of international security; the restoration of international peace and security; and the compensation of victims of a grave breach of international peace and security, gross and systematic human rights violations or acts of significant corruption."[58] Similar bills are currently under discussion in the US, specifically to seize Russian assets for Ukraine.

Yet seized foreign assets alone will not address the major funding shortfalls or provide adequate funding, and are politically fraught. It would readily become apparent that Global North states rely on autocratic and authoritarian governments for migration control deals, and so asset seizures from states culpable in global displacement would run afoul with those deals. All of which to say that a solidarity club would also have to fundamentally reconsider the intersections of policy development. As with resettlement, financial commitments should be predictable and stable, and should likely come in the form of a commitment to increased foreign aid budgets directly to operations for underfunded UN agencies. Crucially, commitments to additional resettlement and complementary pathways will also narrow overall funding gaps by decreasing the global population of displaced people year on year, stretching the impacts of financial contributions.

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COVID SCARING AMID A POLYCRISIS: THE ACID TEST OF DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY?

Robert Greenhill and Jean-François Tardif

Note: This paper is focused on low-income and fragile countries. These countries are the most vulnerable, the most aiddependent and, in many ways, the least able to have their voices heard during this time of intense geopolitical crisis.

Abstract:

The pandemic has created ripple effects that have seriously affected health and education systems, as well as the economy in general, when the world was already late in its efforts to attain the SDGs.

These effects, that could have lasting consequences and that we call scarring, are now compounded by other crises, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine: food, fuel, fertilizer crises, as well as generalized inflation, high interest rates and disrupted supply chains. The international community, in the 30 months that have followed the onset of COVID-19, has shown creativity and commitment to address the crises (front-end loading World Bank financing, setting up COVAX, making more special drawing rights available) but this has not been sufficient to bring back health systems to pre-pandemic levels or to offset learning gaps. With significant donor funding going to supporting Ukraine and higher interest rates crippling highly indebted low-income countries (LICs), the combined effect of other crises can send many LICs down a spiral of dysfunctionality and social tensions that could lead to catastrophic unrest and disruptions.

Donor and implementing nations must make addressing COVID scarring a priority over the next two or three years, to stop slippage and address the gaps created by the pandemic. First, donor countries must commit to making aid to Ukraine additive so that it does not displace aid to low-income countries. Second, they must also adopt a surge package to address the scarring over 2/3 years. At roughly 30 dollars per person/year if spread evenly across donor nations, this package would be affordable and leave room for addressing the other crises: Ukraine-related, climate-related and the more generalized lack of momentum to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

I) The Orphan Crisis

A) A Serious Challenge

When COVID-19 wreaked havoc on the planet, many low-income countries were already in difficult straits. In addition to suffering the effects of climate change, they were seeing hunger rising while refugees and internally displaced people increased to record numbers. Already in 2018, Homi Khoras estimated that 31 low-income countries were severely off-track to meet the SDGs[1] . Official Development Assistance (ODA) for secondary education, a critical component for building gender equality and spurring economic growth had plateaued at $2 billion per year, and aid for Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (RMNCH) as a whole fell by 6% between 2017 and 2018 and only increased by 2% in 2019; over the same 2-year period, aid for the reproductive health of non-pregnant women fell by 25%. [2]

While direct morbidity from COVID-19 seems to have struck low-income countries (LICs) less than middle income and high-income countries (health systems are weak in LICs, so the data is imprecise and not necessarily conclusive), the other - indirect - consequences of the pandemic have hit LICs harder than other countries:

- **Economic**: Before the onset of the Ukraine crisis, emerging market and developing economies were expected to still be 6% below pre-pandemic trend in 2023. Not only had they suffered a deeper reduction in GDP but they were taking more time to recover from it.[3] The drop in GDP has resulted in unparalleled upsurges in extreme poverty headcount as well as seriously weakened domestic business ecosystems and increased indebtedness.

- **Social**: Impacts in health and education have been far reaching. As of the end of 2021, 200 days of schooling/child had been lost due to the pandemic. Tens of millions of children are at risk of never returning to school. In a report earlier this year, the IMF estimates that within countries, the impact was more severe among students from more vulnerable households. [4] In the summer of 2022, the World Health Organization released its vaccine coverage statistics which showed that in 2021, six million more children had received no vaccinations at all, compared to 2019.[5] Access to reproductive and maternal health services was reduced by 50% in South Asia and maternal deaths are estimated to have increased by 16%.[6]

- **Increases in inequality**: In addition to having more devastating nutritional and educational effects on the poorest households, the pandemic has taken a toll on the agency of women: as a simple illustration, the number of pregnancies among minors rose by nearly half a million in South Asia alone during the pandemic, limiting life options for most of these teen mothers.[7]

For a more complete list of impacts, please refer to Annex A, prepared in April 2022.

The combined effect of the above impacts is a reduction in ability to adapt to shocks in many LICs. With many governments hitting a fiscal wall [8] and because of the minimal footprint of the State, the greatest fiscal burden is borne at the firm and household level. With savings drawn down to get through lockdowns and depressed economic activity, households could lose all capital goods and fall prey to money lenders, while firms could go bankrupt.

We call these impacts (economic, social, increased inequality, and the resulting vulnerability and loss of resilience) the scarring of COVID-19.

This scarring must be addressed:

- because it is causing unnecessary child and maternal morbidity and mortality, and a reduction in child literacy and as well as setting back attainment of the SDGs

- just as importantly, scarring is undermining the credibility of the solidarity our countries require to address urgent joint crises, indeed undermining our very ability to effect change at the global level

B) A crisis being displaced and buried by other crises

While the COVID-19 crisis is far from over and is just one variant away from creating additional havoc, the Russian aggression in Ukraine and other crises have become top of mind.

i) ***Record increases in inflation and, in particular, the generalized food, fertilizer and fuel price crise***s: Because so much food-related and energy products were dependent on Russian and Ukrainian exports, global prices for food, fertilizer and fuel, which had already been increasing since 2021, have surged since the Russian aggression[9]. Increased fertilizer costs lead to reduced use in LICs, further reducing food production. Unlike COVID scarring, which has now been largely addressed in MICs and HICs, fuel and food crises remain relatable issues for all countries, rich and poor alike. While governments of poor countries may not get defeated and replaced because routine immunization campaigns are cancelled, riots may take place if food is unavailable or unaffordable, which means governments of LICs will give priority to these crises. Even if a LIC was not dependent on food or fuel imports (in reality, very few are self-sufficient in these sectors), it would still be affected by the price increases because other imports are likely to be dependent on the food or fuel sectors for their inputs. Indeed, while the FAO food price index has started to go down slightly in the Summer of 2022 (but still remained 10% higher than the 12 months earlier), the food crisis seems to have spread into a more generalized cost of living crisis. All of the above explains why the food, fuel and cost of living crises are so much in the spotlight. Agendas for the G7 and the G20

and priorities of IDA 20 are being amended to give priority to these crises, positioning them to receive a growing share of both domestic and foreign aid funding.

ii) ***Major increases in financing costs due to interest rate hikes and appreciation of the US dollar***. With inflation at a 40-year high and additional cost pressures from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, central banks have been implementing massive hikes in short-term interest rates, and reversing quantitative easing (leading to increased medium term interest costs). At the same time, the US dollar (in which much LIC debt, particularly commercial debt, is denominated) has appreciated. Local currency interest rates are also rising due to inflation and global interest rate hikes. As a result, borrowing costs for nations, firms and families are increasing sharply at the worst possible time. Already the IMF, in 2022, has observed over 40 issuances of loans at more than 10% (30 with a spread of more than 10%).[10] This means that governments which, due to the pandemic, had seen a prior reduction in their tax bases as well as pressures for additional spending now face a double constraint: program costs are increasing and borrowing has become unaffordable. The proportion of countries is debt distress or at high risk of debt distress has increased to 56% from 49% in 2019 prior to the pandemic and increased interest rates are likely to push this trend further into the decade.[11] Obviously, increased interest rates also affect the private sector and are likely to a have recessionary impact, which, among other things, will further depress the treasuries of LICs.

iii) ***The Ukrainian crisis is displacing significant volumes of ODA in many ways***. First, aid is being diverted to support the Ukrainian or Moldavian governments (both countries are on the OECD list of eligible countries for development assistance; one billion dollars in IDA lending for lowincome countries has already been allocated to more affluent Ukraine and Moldova by the World Bank). The exact new grant amounts are difficult to assess, but Devex assesses that in the first five months following the Russian invasion, Ukraine received $8.5 billion in grants, mainly of a humanitarian nature, and that additional pledges of $30 billion, which include an unspecified proportion of loans, were made by donor countries.[12] Second, to finance the World Bank's 15-month strategy (April 2022 to June 2023) for dealing with the Ukrainian crisis, "IDA will support surge financing of up to $36.2 billion, delivering over a third of the IDA20 envelope in FY23. Countries will be encouraged to frontload some of their country allocations (in general up to 30 percent of allocations from FY24)."[13] While the World Bank strategy does mention addressing COVID scarring, it is likely the food and fertilizer crisis will receive the lion's share of resources and attention. Just as importantly, in fiscal years 2023- 24 and 2024-25, will only have 28% of their allocation left instead of 33% to deal with IDA priorities and COVID-19 scarring, in addition to any unforeseen consequences of the Ukraine crisis. Third, any country who assists with the settlement of refugees can include its refugee resettlement costs for the first twelve months as part of its ODA. In countries where ODA levels are legislated like the UK, Sweden and Norway,

this results in an automatic reduction in "traditional" ODA (i.e. assistance to non-European countries). Donor countries are also subjected to various pressures like increased military spending, social transfers to reduce energy costs to their own citizens, tax incentives to support the fight against climate change, which reduce their flexibility to address emerging international development priorities. In addition to the displacement of official aid to Ukraine, there is the risk that private foundations—that stepped up with accelerated disbursements during COVID – may be stretched too, and, witnessing major reductions in the value of their investments, may be inclined to freeze/reduce spending at this critical time.

C) The intensity of the Ukraine and food crises makes it difficult for leaders to address the simultaneous challenge of COVID-19 scarring and the other crises in a holistic and timely way.

The world has had to deal with parallel crises in the past. However, the massive, inter-related and overwhelming nature of the crises today, leads us to use the term "polycrisis". [14] Not only are the media making no room to highlight the unaddressed disruptions caused by COVID-19, but, because of the immediacy of the food crisis, politicians and technocrats have difficulty finding the time or attention span to develop and debate potential solutions, leaving a void in policy leadership. As a result, COVID scarring is very far from the top of the G7 and G20 agendas. While the World Bank did release a massive strategy ($170 billion over 15 months) to address both COVID scarring and the crises related to the Ukraine war (see above), whether it is a function of limited demand from implementing countries or limited marketing by Bank management, it is clear that COVID scarring has not been the priority (for instance, in the first 5 months of the strategy, only two significant education projects were approved in IDA countries).[15]

Fortunately, at the technical level, the solutions can be designed in parallel, as the health, fuel, financial, and food crises all mobilize different experts.

II) The Necessity of Solidarity

A) A Looming Catastrophe Despite Honest Efforts

i) A very diversified panorama: Before even exploring the likelihood of catastrophic developments on the world scene, it is important to emphasize that among the Low Income Countries, the situation is quite variable.[16] While some of the actual scarring is comparable (for instance, the level of literacy of children after the pandemic[17]), government responses to COVID differed significantly: several countries increased social transfers during the COVID crisis and have very little

fiscal space; others were more frugal and did not increase their indebtedness. Some produce energy, and are less affected by the fuel crisis.

Many countries are severely affected by the wheat price crisis, but those in Asia with a ricebased nutrition have not had such problems (food can be at least partly substituted, however, so future increases in the price of rice are not unlikely, as illustrated the possible increase of 15% in the Philippines). [18]

Fiscal health varies from one low-income country to the next. First, the IMF itself recognizes that the analysis of the fiscal sustainability can be complex and fraught with errors. [19] And even if one sticks with simpler classifications like the debt sustainability analysis table published by the IMF and combines that information with population data, 54% of the population of LICs live in countries with a low or moderate risk of debt distress.[20] The proportion of low-income developing countries at high risk or already in debt distress has however doubled since 2015 and the overall trends are very preoccupying: "Over the medium term, low-income developing countries will face increasing debt vulnerabilities amid rising borrowing costs... the average debt is projected ...to remain above the prepandemic level in almost two-thirds of countries. The median debt service to tax ratio is expected to remain above the prepandemic level and exceed 40 percent in several highly indebted countries (Ghana, Myanmar, Nigeria).[21] So while there is variability, vulnerability is spreading to low-income countries.

ii) In reaction to the challenge of COVID scarring and then of the polycrisis, the international community has responded in important ways over the last several months: While equity in vaccine distribution has been lacking, countries such as Canada have shown sustained commitment to broader international mechanisms such as COVAX and to the global COVID response. The World Bank and its donors increased IDA payments by 50%, and now that other 16 crises have emerged in the wake of the Ukrainian conflict, they have front-end loaded IDA20 as part of a 15-month surge strategy.

The IMF organized a new issuance of $650 billion in Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) in August of 2021 to respond to the fiscal and balance-of-payment pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the additional crises that appeared at the beginning of 2022, it accelerated the set up of a Resilience and Sustainability Trust destined to facilitate the recycling of SDRs from advanced economies to lower and middle-income countries.

Moreover, in recent months, thanks to the Black Sea Grain Initiative, 3 million metric tons of Ukrainian grain were able to sent to markets around the world, which has eased price of grain.

iii) Some important scarring has been left unaddressed: Despite the efforts deployed by national and donor governments, some critical areas of COVID-19 scarring have not been addressed and are even experiencing a deterioration.

As mentioned in the opening section of this document, six million more children did not receive any vaccine at all in 2021, compared to 2019. What is troubling is that the situation worsened between 2020 and 2021; in other words, instead of stabilizing after the first year of the pandemic, the health system showed increasing signs of vulnerability. A quick review of maternal mortality trends also shows a similar progressive deterioration.[22]

As for education, the most recent data shows distressing learning poverty results: the proportion of ten-year-old children unable to read and understand a simple text nearly increased by half during the pandemic in Latin America and South Asia, and now surpasses 70%. Unless drastic action is taken, this literacy gap will stay with an entire school-age cohort.

Finally, the most recent survey of informal workers also shows that by mid-2021, the typical (informal) worker was still only earning 64% of her/his pre-COVID-19 earnings. [23]

iv) Failing to successfully meet the solidarity challenge could have catastrophic, irreversible consequences over the short-to-medium term: A diversion of aid away from low-income countries and away from services for the very poor, combined with domestic fiscal powerlessness could lead to sustained scarring. As illustrated by Dr. Zulfiqar Bhutta, reductions in "community healthcare worker visits, disrupted community screening and management of acute malnutrition, and diversion of available health workers to COVID19-related activities, have led to lower coverage of nutrition counselling, including for breastfeeding promotion and infant and young child feeding support. Drops in the provision and uptake of vitamin-A supplementation and immunization programmes, and services for the prevention and treatment of infections and severe acute malnutrition, could precipitate dramatic increases in child mortality".[24] Continued service deprivations over time may not only halt progress on child health, at a time when global infant mortality was slowly coalescing toward the levels of 8 advanced economies, but could set a new, lower baseline, a new normal[25]. Health workers are leaving the profession, and this will be difficult to deal with if left unaddressed for much longer.

In similar fashion, "untreated" scarring can progressively lead to:

- Missing key milestones such as: progress toward malaria-free regions[26], gender parity in literacy and numeracy, neglected tropical disease control etc.

- Producing downward quantum leaps as the business fabric disintegrates. Highly leveraged and elevated balance sheet vulnerabilities tend to result in lower investment[27] as businesses are unable to access affordable capital; holes then appear in supply chains and the effects start compounding and stop being linear. Entire sectors of the economy can be affected, generating layoffs, lower aggregate demand and a reduction in the tax base. As for the selfemployed, their average number of days worked per week was only four in mid-2021, still considerably lower than the 5.5-day average in the pre-pandemic period, pointing to the very tenuous ability of households to sustain themselves.

  Rising US interest rates are going to make the situation difficult for countries, firms and households, and the more indebted countries will have to freeze their programs, if not make cuts to them. While for most countries, this will be a "slow burn" with no imminent risk of collapse, until such time as interest rates are projected to go down, investor confidence will be low and this in turn, can lead to a quick deterioration of the economy.

  Compounding the problem is the fact that current trends show that diversion of funding to Ukraine has started and is likely to increase as the humanitarian/ reconstruction needs of a sustained conflict rise (not to mention the additional potential fiscal pressure of having to convert loans to Ukraine to non-repayable assistance due to Ukraine's possible inability to reimburse). Additionally, the increased defence spending in donor countries due to the implications of the Ukraine/Russia conflict and the rising tensions with China/Taiwan could constrain overall ODA.

  Over the longer term, children exposed to higher poverty begin to have less favourable socio-economic outcomes and the human capital of tomorrow becomes in jeopardy as children (and their parents) get discouraged by the absence of remedial measures to address two years and more without regular schooling, and drop out[28]; and the situation worsens when teachers cease to be paid by insolvent governments and subsequent cohorts leave school without foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Schooling scars are predicted to be twice as high in emerging markets and developing economies as in advanced economies.Their cost could amount to $17 trillion, roughly $17,000 per student (or roughly 17 years of earnings for a child in the lower global quintile!).[29]

  While determining the ability of states to take remedial policy actions requires a sophisticated analysis, as mentioned earlier, with losses of productivity and reductions in their tax base, states can soon become unable to perform anything other the most basic of governance functions.[30]

  It is worth underscoring that one particular category of countries is particularly vulnerable in this respect: islands and small economies. Many of these countries

were dependent on very few sources of income (often including tourism), and with the COVID-19 pandemic, in many cases their economies took a significant blow. And as they can be prone to adverse climactic events in addition to serious logistical problems and diseconomies of scale, the potential for collapse, away from media attention, is never very far away.

The governments' inability to fully exercise their roles also feeds a rampant and growing distrust of institutions. Between 1995 and 2021, the top one percent captured 38% of the global increment in wealth, while the bottom 50% captured a paltry two percent. [31] Economic inequality chips away at the kind of social contract necessary to generate inclusive and sustainable outcomes. With the imposition of sometimes arbitrary measures during the pandemic and the ability of a privileged minority to maintain its lifestyle thanks to digital technologies, many citizens got the impression that the system was rigged and only worked for those at the top. In a context where States function increasingly poorly, this perception might be amplified.

Overall, between the combined fiscal incapacity of states to operate and a lack of social cohesion where households in extreme poverty are systematically left behind, serious risks of instability to the global order emerge. These include the possible demise of emerging democracies while simplistic authoritarian solutions appear more promising, failed states, possibly on a regional basis (Sahel perhaps) with massive consequences, tensions between emerging economies and Western democracies, increased migration of refugees toward the Global North. Also emerges a lack of trust that could undermine big global efforts such as fighting against climate change. It is well documented that increases in food and fuel prices are triggers for social unrest.[32] For example, "protests over (planned) fuel price increases have occurred often, including in the recent past (for example, Ecuador, France, Haiti, Iran, and Kazakhstan). Such protests have the potential to spark widespread discontent with government policies. Some conditions, such as high poverty, inequality, and the electoral cycle, may increase the risk of social unrest. "[33]

Ultimately, with successive negative feedback loops and episodes of unrest, various countries will be at risk of collapse or of systemic failure (using the medical analogy scarring could turn into generalized sepsis). If critical funding gaps lead to collapse, corrective funding cannot easily reverse the situation in the future, because there will be very limited governance structures, scarce bureaucratic know how, run-down physical capital, in short, little absorptive capacity. Fiscal collapse can set back a country for a decade, and political collapse can have lasting effects for a generation. Prevention and pre-emption are much less expensive and more effective than trying to pick-up the pieces.

B) Time to choose

The issue of addressing COVID-19 scarring could benefit from being placed in a broader framework. It could be said that, in 2022, the world order is being submitted to three struggles or stress tests:

- The Ukraine invasion is a challenge to the very foundations of the world order and a struggle to determine the consequences for violating them
- Within the existing world order, there is a struggle between autocratic states and Democracies to see which norms will prevail the world order
- Within democratic states, many doubt the relevance of these norms as populist, authoritarian political actors test domestic institutions and threaten to cut ODA abroad

The three stress tests are simultaneous, and intertwined and it is difficult, for instance, to imagine passing stress test 1 or 2 without being seen as addressing stress test 3.

In 2021, the world failed the COVID global vaccine distribution solidarity test. While COVAX was created in record time, its lack of timely funding eroded both its credibility with pharmaceutical companies and with low-income countries. The inability of the world to coalesce around a TRIPS waiver at a time of unparalleled crisis appeared as a symbol and confirmation of the divide. The present inability to substantially fund the Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Preparedness and Response and the inability to find any resources for it other than through existing official development assistance speaks loudly about the denial of our interdependence. As an international community, it would appear that we hesitate to invest in each other even when self-interest would compel us to do so.

The present polycrisis, and the food, fertilizer and seed crisis within it, present a new test which we are in danger of failing. It is unfortunately hard to conceive that the current solidarity drive of the G7, the UN and the International Financial Institutions to address these crises will be very fruitful considering that food-related commodities are in limited supply and that democracies of the global North and global South have competing interests. The same could be said about the energy crisis. In this context, Russia, as a supplier, and China, as a potential financier, may start to appear as valuable allies to resource-poor countries. [34] Already, the September 2022 cost-of-living demonstrations in Niger appear to be a case in point.

Seen through this lens, COVID scarring then offers a redeeming opportunity for democracies of the global North to reinvigorate international solidarity and

demonstrate both its cogency and its relevance. By deciding not to seize this opportunity, the credibility of democracies of the Global North would probably suffer irreparable damage.

The opportunity, however, is time-limited: it has to be addressed, with resources flowing, in a matter of months, not years, especially in a polycrisis context involving food and fertilizer shortages and predictable political turmoil. The trickle of emergency funding requests for the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust could indicate that there is still time to design the intervention plan adequately (but this may also simply be a reflection of the rigidities associated with IMF programs).

Transparency will have to be a keystone of any intervention plan. Many elements are pointing for instance to a danger of obfuscation and overestimation of the resources truly available for supporting socio-economic development of LICs: commitments to Ukraine are diverting funds from existing budgets in an opaque way and one-time COVID-related expenditures may artificially give a healthy appearance to development assistance. Supporting civil society in LICs will enhance transparency and provide a better picture of the reality on the ground.

III) Imagining and Committing to a way forward

A) A commitment which goes beyond rhetoric

In a way, COVID-19 scarring could not happen at a worse time: domestic budgets in the Global South are tapped out, and in the Global North, deficits created by generous internally focused COVID responses and now by increased military spending, leave little fiscal space for international solidarity.

Seen from a different perspective, however, COVID-19 scarring needs to be addressed in circumstances that are similar to past challenges: the Marshall Plan at the beginning of the Cold War and the Colombo Plan at the beginning of the Korean War, were implemented at a time when solidarity needed to be demonstrated concretely despite the fact that donor finances were recovering from, or preparing for, an important war effort.

Already leading thinkers are calling for concrete actions: Homi Kharas from the Brookings Institute is calling for a Marshall Plan to fund a Global Sustainability Program[35] and Dr. Bhutta is calling for a new Summit for Children.[36]

Likewise, leading international agencies and philanthropies are highlighting the need to address sharply decreased literacy among children and to vaccinate an increasing number of "no-dose" toddlers. Appeals and pledges are proposed.[37]

What is missing is action and funded commitments to get us through the next 2-3 years and buttress the most vulnerable countries against falling back and falling down.

The very first step must be a commitment to "do no harm" with the support for Ukraine, we must ensure that no funding is taken from support of low-income countries, and that the already-displaced funds are returned to these countries. While this is essential, it is obviously not sufficient. More focused effort is required.

B) Addressing COVID-19 Scarring requires the definition of a maxi-min approach by democracies of the Global North and South

The idea is for donor and implementing nations to be guided by a maxi-min approach, an approach that maximizes the chances of obtaining the minimal, incompressible outcomes required in healing COVID scarring.

"Maximizing the chances" refers to the inherent challenge of addressing COVID scarring at this crowded time: the risk of having little political visibility during a time of polycrisis, the risk of being unsuccessful at generating the funding required from implementing countries and from donors, and the risk of stumbling blocks in the implementation process (infrastructure, human resources etc.). This suggests that the package should be sufficiently small and focused as to be affordable and manageable, yet sufficiently compelling to generate buy-in and commitment.

"Minimal outcomes required" means reducing socio-economic scarring, including the risk of firm and household-level failures, and significantly reducing the probability of fiscal or socio-political collapse over the critical next few years so as to put countries back onto a path for attaining key SDGs, even it is a few years after 2030.

The elements within "minimal outcomes required" are still a matter for discussion (and may vary considerably by country), but to guide one's analysis on this matter, it may be useful to consider an admittedly oversimplified, bare-bones welfare model based on the following foundations:

- Key basic social services are available to all citizens
- Failures at family, firm and national level are minimized such that citizens have access to enough income to feed and house their families
- The latter objective can only be addressed in a dynamic model where the income can serve to fund part of the key basic social services, and citizens with healthy families can participate productively in the economy and generate some income.

The following minimum basic social services could be included, in a minimalist package similar to G7 commitments made at the Muskoka Summit in 2010, as they represent pandemic-created gaps that have not been addressed and that the international community has expressed support for[38]:

- Primary health care for children including routine immunization
- Access to safe contraception and deliveries, including antenatal and post-natal care
- Foundational literacy and numeracy for all, and secondary school enrolments back to prepandemic levels
- Let's remember this is not charity: investment in Africa is investment in one third of the world's new human resources)

The identification of measures to minimize failure and allow sufficient generation of minimal income is more challenging, as some of the problems, such as the affordability of capital for businesses to continue to operate and provide employment, do not have easy solutions. One key intervention (or some equivalent measures) should however be given consideration in our minimal package:

- Providing liquidity to ensure key business sectors do not collapse, especially working capital to micro-enterprises, who are the source of income to more than 80% of households in SubSaharan Africa and South Asia (aid for micro-enterprises could also, as an added advantage, be an incentive to make them part of the formal economy).

It is worth mentioning that support for primary health care and reproductive services as well as countering learning losses and private sector liquidity issues are a minimalist version of what the World Bank proposes to do over the next year to protect people and jobs (but is precisely at risk of being displaced by the urgency of the food and fertilizer crisis).[39] Our 2–3 year proposed time horizon would allow to more completely address the pandemic scarring.

Depending on the contexts, subsidies may be required, for food, fuel or electricity costs. It will be very important to make sure the subsidies benefit disproportionately the poorest. As an illustration, a report[40] supported by Germany's GIZ and Canada's IISD, reminds us how regressive some large-scale subsidies can be.

The important thing is not so much to get the programme right (one cannot go wrong funding health and education in Low Income Countries, after all) as to get it going. In the words of Dr. Michael Ryan:[41] "Perfection is the enemy of the good when it comes to emergency management. Speed trumps perfection (...). The

greatest error is not to move. The greatest error is to be paralysed by the fear of error".

As the anti-scarring package gets developed, it will be important not to contribute to the fragmentation of global health, education, or economic efforts. The idea is just to be returning to the path that existed prior to the pandemic (with the hope that proper acceleration will then take place), and empowering country-led systems.

C) The amounts at stake are time-limited and manageable

i) A Time-Limited Endeavour that complements and supports the international community's agenda:

Four critical initiatives are under way at the global level, each of vital importance:

• A long-term drive to reach the SDGs: this effort is going mostly in the right direction, but mostly off-track, because slope of the curve of progress must be increased

• A long-term investment in climate mitigation and adaptation: very important financially, this post-Glasgow effort still needs to be fully costed; it is a marathon with a time horizon beyond 2030

• A pandemic preparedness and response planning effort, to avoid the disruptions that the next pandemic could cause. This is already starting with CEPI being replenished and a Financial Intermediary Fund housed at the World Bank being operationalized.

• Addressing the fallout of Ukraine Crisis: dealing with fuel, food insecurity, inflation, and potential reduced demand from Advanced Economies - This multi-stakeholder effort involves the IFIs, the EU, and the G7 and should be resolved in part by market adjustments and adaption.

The proposed short-term intervention to address COVID Scarring represents a fifth endeavour that, in addition to avoiding the risks of societal collapse, would give a boost to a few key SDGs. All five initiatives are interconnected, all are necessary and there can be no real trade-offs between them. But it is important to note that the longer terms ones are directly dependent on the two immediate ones: in countries where there is no access to food, schools, or health, and no one will care about the more general SDGs, no one will focus on climate change, or prepare for the next pandemic.

The approach suggested here is to implement a short-term intervention, modest but meaningful, so LICs can reverse the losses due to COVID-19 and put their

societies back on a sustainable development track. Like a post-"viral war" Marshall Plan of sorts, it would accelerate the rebuilding of pre-existing human and economic capacity — and thus reduce risks of collapse—rather than expanding "traditional", ongoing international assistance. As such, it would be time-limited, with disbursements over two to three years, starting immediately. This time frame corresponds to the expected period for a rebalancing of global food stocks, a reduction of inflation and interest rates and, one hopes, a resolution of the Ukraine crisis. It would also conclude in time to ramp up a much-needed post-Glasgow major push on climate finance, the parameters of which are still under analysis.

We also need to increase the speed of the health and education development efforts (once the setbacks due to COVID are addressed) so the SDGs can be addressed by 2030; Indeed the initial 2/3 years are an investment in not falling back and ensuring we are not falling down, after which the question needs to be answered as to how fast we want to drive progress toward the SDGs. This required acceleration is not factored in, in this document's financial calculations.

ii) An Affordable Endeavour: Considering that the Ukrainian crisis is already reducing the amounts available for LICs, and that what is left must address additional food, fuel and inflation challenges, the international community must come to terms with the fact that tinkering with a business as usual approach will not be sufficient to implement even the most minimalist of antiscarring packages. On the other hand, however, a summary analysis shows that it would be a mistake to believe that an anti-scarring package would be unaffordable for Global North donors.

A very preliminary assessment (found in the Appendix that concludes this document) suggests its cost might be in the order of $30 B per year, barely more than 30 dollars per citizen in the Global North. This cost is time-limited (two to three years), much more economical than taking 15 the risk of collapses we cannot afford, and would contribute to putting countries of the Global South on a path toward self-reliance.

This is a modest but meaningful package, based on rough assumptions that will not apply to every country (indeed the measures will have to be tailored to the circumstances of each country). A more detailed analysis of COVID-scarred countries would probably point to three categories of countries:

- Category 1: Resource producing countries who need minimal assistance to be back on track and pursue their paths toward the SDGs

- Category 2: Countries with strong fundamentals, who have a positive medium-term outlook, but who need support in the short term to return to full functionality

- Category 3: Countries at high risk of debt distress or in debt distress. These are likely to be more that half of the total number of LICs who will need sustained support

Countries of the first category and the most credit-worthy of the second category could receive low-interest or no-interest loans because their needs are short term and the maturity could be long enough to appeal to them. This would reduce the fiscal pressure on donors so they can focus on major setbacks and potential risks of failure.

It is worth, for the sake of transparency, to note that there will be Category 3 countries that may be unable to continue fully funding some of their programming, say maternal and child health programs, because of ever diminishing fiscal space due to interest on their debt. These countries will likely need some multi-year debt restructuring.

It is important to remind the reader, that overall, donors are at less than half the recommended 0.7% of GNI target for aid. Even if their anti-scarring contribution was entirely in the form of additional grants, it would represent only a small portion of the shortfall.

iii) High Returns on Investment: It is impossible to conclude this section on financial parameters without underscoring what benefits this investment would yield. First, it would minimize the risk of system collapse in numerous low-income countries, and avoid prohibitive costs for restarting social services later. In addition, according to UNICEF "investments in children are consistently shown to be the highest returning public investments. Returns range from $5 per $1 invested in girls' education, to up to $60 per $1 invested in routine immunization programmes."[42] And mathematically, the return on investment increases due to scarring ("because ... of the ongoing negative impact of COVID-19 on the fight against HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria, the returns on our investments have an even larger impact"[43]). The Global Fund also reminds us that the returns are also measured in terms of economic productivity: "When restricting estimates to the direct effects of economic productivity gains, the cost-benefit ratio for the Investment Case is 1:2.5".

iv) We must, in addition, start looking now at new sources of funding to support reinvigorated solidarity.

a) We should first and foremost support domestic resource mobilization in LICs by way of technical assistance. Before the pandemic, most States had barely enough revenue to provide basic services and the constellation of new challenges now requires that governments find responsible ways to spend more.[44]

b) We should look at involving new donors (especially oil producers, middle-income countries, etc.) as this could provide additional outside funding the fastest. China should be invited to play a key role, particularly where debt-restructuring is involved (category 3 countries). The privatesector will eventually have to be a partner/agree to payment freezes/and possibly take a haircut (also particularly in category 3 countries).

c) We should, in parallel, look specifically at new sources of financing, to increase the offer of affordable loans for credit-worthy countries. Various sources of affordable lending could be explored: Special Drawing Rights, Guaranteed Lending, MDB Capital Increases, Liquidity Mechanisms and Balance Sheet Optimization. As indicated by Prime Minister Trudeau in May 2022 , more Special Drawing Rights can be recycled, perhaps up to 30% of the August 2021 allocation to follow President Macron's September 2022 UNGA proposal; a strong case could be made to use this recycling to support food-related investments, as this represents a crisis unforeseen at the time of the initial 20% recycling. International financial facilities with donor guarantees as proposed by Gordon Brown for education and health are also worth exploring. One- time multilateral development bank (MDB) capital increases equal to say, 50% of one year's ODA, could increase lending by hundreds of billions of dollars. Another initiative, by UNECA, would reduce African Governments borrowing costs through a Liquidity and Sustainability Facility.[45] Finally, as a longer term objective, balance sheet optimization (leveraging donor capital beyond current practices) could yield hundreds of billions of dollars in additional affordable lending by multilateral development banks and should therefore not be overlooked.[46]
d) At the same time, even if the all the above initiatives are successful, it should be clear that a meaningful 2-3 year increase in ODA grants by traditional OECD donors will be required. Indeed, putting in place new tax systems, cultivating new donors, balance sheet optimizations are initiatives which are unlikely to yield additional funding in the next few months. They need to be pursued so they can generate funding in one year or two in order to supplement the contributions of traditional OECD donors.

v) It is time to reimagine democratic solidarity.

Why should we make it a priority to address COVID-19 scarring?
Of course, because it is immoral to live in a world where the right to basic education and basic health is denied to hundreds of millions of people, who just happen to be born in the wrong place. Because also of the unworkability of a world where the necessities of life are not fulfilled, where generations are hopeless, where entire nations cannot participate in the global economic fabric, and where frustrations inevitably lead to major instability. But just as importantly, because a scarred world does not represent the kind of world we want for our children.

This last answer might also help address another, more fundamental question, raised in the wake of COVID-19 scarring: can markets and market-based democracies secure access to the basics of life for everyone: food, energy, education, access to basic health care etc.? The COVID crisis, with an abject failure to provide vaccines in a timely fashion to LICs, seems to have provided a negative initial answer to this question. A timely solution to COVID scarring amid the polycrisis can provide an emphatic positive response.

We have perhaps arrived at the point where democracies are ready to consider some of these basics as global public investments[47] where everyone gains because they represent the minimum we find acceptable for our children: this minimum could include, among others, biodiversity preservation, greenhouse gas reductions, pandemic prevention and preparedness, ending legacy pandemics (HIV-AIDS, TB and Malaria) and controlling legacy vaccine-preventable diseases. It could even include ensuring universal literacy and numeracy, as a global public good. This global public investment approach would already address various facets of COVID-19 scarring and would free up considerable official development assistance, as well as domestic resources, to allow addressing a good portion of the remaining aspects of scarring.

Already, the Board of Directors of the World Bank has endorsed such an approach for the new Financial Intermediary Fund on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, encouraging donors to consider making the initial $10 billion endowment by way of non-ODA funds. This has not been followed by concrete commitments so far, but offers an interesting point of reference.

Twice since World War II, liberal democracies were called to show imagination and boldness in addressing critical socio-economic risks during a time of increased military tension. They stepped up because they cared but also out of a sense of strategic self-interest. In 1947, at the beginning of the Cold War, Secretary of State Marshall laid out the need for a rebuilding program that would be equivalent to 2% of American GDP for several years. In 1951, in the midst of a massive military build-up due to the Korean War, Canada and other nations set out to support the Colombo Plan, in order to help reduce the risk of collapse in the newly independent countries of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Lester B. Pearson argued that, if "ordinary men and women in the free countries of Asia are to feel attached to the new political institutions which they have established, they must be given hope of receiving some tangible benefits for themselves in the form of food, more clothing, better housing and better protection from disease." These arguments hold for low-income countries in Asia and Africa today—and speak to our challenge to preserve human progress in the midst of a new military confrontation.

Annex A
Preliminary Assessment of the Costs of Addressing COVID-19 Scarring

Quickly determining an actionable order of magnitude for the costs of an anti-scarring package is a precondition for engaging decision-makers. This Appendix goes through a "ballpark" estimation of the possible elements of such a package. The determination of the components of the package and its costing still require much refinement. What is proposed below is preliminary and will not conform to every country's circumstances, even though anti-scarring interventions will have to be tailored and country-driven.

First, it is important to note that the donor community efforts announced by the International Financial Institutions and the G7 to address food insecurity will hopefully have addressed a limited portion of the COVID scarring, related to nutrition (child wasting for instance).

To assess the costs of the potential non-nutrition elements of an anti-scarring package, let us begin by considering the outside cost for its health component. The Lancet estimated that prior to the Pandemic, the cost of closing the gap between rich and poor countries by 2030 in key health domains was $70 billion per year.[48] Our package is much less ambitious. If we limit it to child health, the funding gap for comprehensive care would be $33 billion per year (estimated in 2021).[49] Our package would still be much less ambitious, focusing instead on a few key areas and we can turn to the Global Fund (GF) to see more realistic catch-up costs. To address the scarring in its own area of operation and fund progress toward the SDGs, the GF estimated it required 30% more funding than it was disbursing three years ago.[50]

If we increase Gavi funding in the same proportions, we would require $1 billion more per year for incremental routine immunization costs.
For reproductive health, the amount would be $2 billion per year, following the same 30% rule.

If we add $2 B/year to cover the reductions in health contribution that are likely to follow the reductions in aid budgets in the UK, Nordic, and possibly other countries, we arrive at a rough total of $5 billion per year for health.

For education, UNESCO assesses the extra costs brought by COVID-19 to be in the order of $25 billion, including re-enrolment and remediation. We could assume the payment of these costs over 2 years (although they could be stretched over 5 years, which would be far from ideal).[51]

Supporting the business sector is critical to avoid collapse. Micro-entreprises are the economic backbones of LICs. Supporting working capital for microenterprises is even more difficult to assess, but as most of the funding could in the form of loans, a notional grant component of $10 billion per year might be sufficient to cover delivery costs and loan losses. Larger businesses who are viable should be supported by loans (not included here), and provisions for such liquidity should be made by IFIs.

It is important to note the World Bank, in developing its strategy to navigate multiple crises, also addressed in its Pillar 2 "Protecting People and Preserving Jobs" the same three areas: health, education and enterprise funding.[52]

The amounts are very tentative and require more development by experts, but it is worth pointing to the fact that the largest share (health and education) is grosso modo consistent with the human capital funding estimates in Bhattacharya A et al. (2022). Their estimates, in table 4.4, involve a ramping up of additional funding until 2025, at which point the additional amount reaches $40 billion per year, which would bring total human funding beyond historical trends so the SDGs could be reached.[53] Assuming ramping up amounts of $20 billion in 2023 and $30 billion in 2024, our estimate of $17.5 billion per year for our less ambitious health and education interventions appears to be defensible.

This very rudimentary estimation is summarized below.

Anti-Scarring Intervention	***Annual Costs in US dollars***
Routine Immunization	$1 billion
Reproductive Health	$2 billion
Compensating for Health Assistance Reduction	$2 billion
Education, including Re-enrolment and Loss of Learning Remediation	$12.5 billion
Supporting Loans for Working Capital of Micro and Small Enterprises	$10 billion
TOTAL	***$27.5 billion***

Annex B: **Summary of Evidence COVID-19 Scarring**

Note: While case numbers and deaths from COVID-19 have generally been lower in low-income countries (LICs) than in other countries, LICs have suffered disproportionately from the pandemic's adverse socio-economic effects. This document provides a tentative a top-level summary of current evidence on pandemic scarring in low-income countries. The effect of this scarring will likely be compounded by the impacts of the Ukraine situation, keeping in mind that LICs are among the most vulnerable – if not the most vulnerable countries – to food and fertilizer shortages as well as hikes in interest rates and oil prices.

> "When I say the word shock, I usually mean an unpredictable change in external factors that influences an economy. When I joined the Gates Foundation last year to lead its work in development policy and finance, after 33 years at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, I fully expected that the shock that would set the context for all our work would be the pandemic. Now another shock, the crisis in Ukraine, is resetting the context all over again." (Dr. Kalpana Kochhar, Dir. Development Policy and Finance, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).

It is important to understand the pandemic scarring to properly assess the unfolding additional impacts of the Ukrainian crisis.

I. Macro-Economic Scarring

a) Output

According to the World Bank, in contrast to advanced economies, most Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs) are expected to experience growth trajectories not strong enough to return investment or output to pre-pandemic trends over the forecast horizon of 2022-23. Before the onset of the Ukraine crisis, EMDES were expected to still be 6% below the pre-pandemic trend in 2023, while advanced economies would be above: In other words, poorer countries not only suffered a deeper reduction in GDP but will take more time to recover from it.[54] The IMF Chief Economist goes even further: "the divergence that opened up in 2021 between advanced and emerging market and developing economies is expected to persist, suggesting some permanent scarring from the pandemic".[55]

b) Inflation

Before the Ukrainian crisis, inflation had reached its highest rate since 2011 in emerging economies, due to higher production costs. This will only go upward in the predictable future and become a major stumbling block for the economy. Already, a 1.5% further reduction in real income is expected.

c) Poverty

Globally, the number of people living in extreme poverty is estimated to have increased by around 100 million. [56] This leads the Brookings Institute to forecast that there will be 50 million more people in extreme poverty by 2030, mainly in Africa. In the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), a grouping that largely overlaps low-income countries, one estimate suggests an additional 35 million people living in extreme poverty. As a result, as much as 35 per cent of the combined populations of LDCs are estimated to be living below the extreme poverty line as of 2021.[57]

d) Fiscal Stresses and Indebtedness

Efforts to contain Covid-19 outbreaks have hurt economic activity, weighing on tax revenues, even as public expenditure pressures have risen with demands for additional healthcare spending and stimulus. General government debt/GDP rose between 2019 and 2021 in all Fitch-rated Sub-Saharan Africa sovereigns, with the exception of three resource-producing countries. COVID-19 has left developing economies with total debt at a 50-year high: the equivalent of more than 200 percent of GDP. As pointed out in a 2022 World Bank blog, "Among the poorest countries—most of them in Africa—nearly 60 percent are at high risk of debt distress or already in it. There is little precedent for such levels of debt remaining harmless under the conditions we see today: When growth is slowing, inflation is up, and a major cycle of monetary-policy tightening is underway". It is important to keep in mind that the situation could also be worse than it appears because of the secrecy surrounding China's loans, as missed payments and restructuring details are not disclosed and defaults, if any, remain hidden.

e) Social and Health Issues

i. Health Financing

According to the World Bank, while Government health spending is expected to grow over the medium term, "the expected growth in government health spending in 2026 will cover only 63.5 percent of the necessary annual investment to strengthen and maintain public-health preparedness and response capabilities in LICs," pointing to persistent extreme vulnerabilities.

ii. Pre-pandemic pandemics

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the world was already on its way to eliminating the three pandemics of HIV-AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. According to the Global Fund against TB and Malaria, HIV testing was down 40% in 2020 across Asia

and Africa and anti-retroviral drug regimens were disrupted. This will inevitably lead to increased transmission and incidence.

Tuberculosis, an illness whose symptoms resemble COVID-19's, was associated with increased stigma during the pandemic. As a result, there has been a reduction in the number of TB cases diagnosed from 7.1 million (2019) to 5.8 million (2020). The number of the TB deaths has consequently increased from 1.2 million to 1.3 per year, ending a slow but steady decline in mortality. [58]

As for malaria, the number of cases grew by 14 million during the pandemic with mortality increasing by 11%, while funding has plateaued and drug resistance is on the rise. Ending these three pandemics by 2030 will now be very difficult and costly.

iii. Neglected Tropical Diseases

To date, 600 million people no longer require treatment for neglected tropical diseases. Forty three countries have eliminated at least one neglected tropical disease as a public health concern. Cases of some of these diseases, such as leprosy, sleeping sickness and Guinea worm disease, are at an alltime low. Most recently the Gambia and Saudi Arabia eliminated trachoma, a bacterial infection which causes blindness. However, this progress is now at real risk of reversal as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

iv. Nutrition

Acute food insecurity is the stage when a person's life or livelihood is in immediate danger because of a lack of food. According to Global Network Against Food Crises,[59] an estimated 388 million people experienced acute food insecurity in 2021 at a "crisis" or "stressed" (one step away from "crisis") level, a 5% increase over the prior year.

Before the Ukrainian crisis, food prices were near all-time highs due to elevated input prices which, combined with high transport costs, are raising import bills, and the Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium estimated that "by 2022, more than 1.5 billion people would not be able to afford even half of the cost of a healthy diet". This hits poor and developing countries hardest, as they depend on food imports the most. As of February 2022, the Agricultural Commodity Price Index was 35% higher than its January 2021 level. Fertilizer prices in Q3 2021 had never been as high since 2008 (a sharp rise in the price of fertilizer).[60]

All the above has deep consequences in terms or migrations, psychological scarring, life-long stunting, poor health outcomes, not to mention diversion of efforts away from long term development goals.

v. Education

As of the end of 2021, 200 days of schooling/child had been lost due to the pandemic. Tens of millions of children are at risk of never returning to school.

The economic losses give an idea of the magnitude of the scarring: $17 trillion of losses for today's cohort (more than $10,000/student, i.e., several years' salary in a low-income country).[61]

Learning poverty, defined as the percentage of 10-year-olds unable to read and understand a simple story, was already at 50% before the pandemic. Unless swift and bold action is taken, learning poverty can reach 70% in a matter of months.

In low-income countries, learning poverty stood at 90% prior to the pandemic. If it was going to take one additional year of schooling for a 10-year-old to read and understand a simple story, now it may be two or ever three additional years, which may discourage many parents and learners.

If this was not terrible enough, the education crisis is compounding the nutrition crisis: 75% of Kenyan adolescents lost access to their main meal in 2020 with school closures, and it is 350 million children world wide that lost their main meal (It is time to return to learning (worldbank.org)).

II) A Set-back for Women's Empowerment

The pandemic has had a disproportional impact on women and girls because of:

- disruptions in key health services, including reproductive, adolescent, and maternal health;
- greater exposure to mental health stress as women are overrepresented in the health sector and are more likely to be caregivers;
- jobs held by women have been lost at a faster rate than jobs held by men, and women-owned and -led micro, small and medium enterprises are also more severely affected (A survey of SME owners across 30 African countries reveals that most womenled SMEs are at risk of permanent business shutdown as a result of the pandemic).
- sharp increases in gender-based violence

The gender dimension of scarring is difficult to quantify, but a literature review published in Lancet concluded that "Between March, 2020, and September, 2021, women were more likely to report employment loss (26.0%) than men (20.4%), as well as forgoing work to care for others (ratio of women to men: 2.4 by September,

2021). Women and girls were 1.21 times more likely than men and boys to report dropping out of school for reasons other than school closures".

More limited evidence shows increased early marriages in DRC and NE Nigeria, reduced access to contraceptives in Bangladesh (-35%), a reduction in access to family planning (-50%) and in contraceptive use in DRC as well as multi-country reduction in ante-natal visits. Additional evidence shows that addressing this unmet need for family planning could reduce maternal mortality rates by 35 per cent in Africa[62]

III) Increases in Global Inequalities

a) Inequalities in COVID Vaccine Production

Early in the pandemic, there was a consensus that the best protection against COVID-19 was producing and administering vaccines. While a bold plan was put in place to prepare the mass production of vaccines, developing countries were never able to invoke the TRIPS waiver to produce their own vaccines, even when the richer countries became fully vaccinated. A recent effort to lift impediments to production is being discussed more than two years after the initial outbreak, and, even if it were successfully implemented, it would not apply to apply to therapeutics or diagnostics.

b) Support for vaccine acquisition

Solidarity mechanisms were implemented months after the beginning of the pandemic to support prospective vaccination efforts in lower-income countries. Unfortunately, they were not seriously supported by donor countries, especially the COVAX vaccine initiative. As a result, whereas globally, 65% of the population has received at least one vaccine, in Low Income Countries, the percentage falls to 16%. In High Income Countries and Upper Middle-Income Countries, the average number of COVID19 vaccines administered is 2.0 per capita. In Low Income Countries, the average number is ten times lower at 0.2 per capita.

Low-Income Countries (LICs) are alone in this marginalized situation, as Lower Middle-Income Countries, at 1.2 vaccines per capita, are closer to richer nations. Lower Middle-Income Countries are also more likely to implement vaccine manufacturing schemes in the future, another feature that separates them from LICs.

c) Instability

While this is difficult to predict, socio-economic scarring is likely to lead to disrupted supply lines, uncertainty around investments and depressed labour

markets. This will probably lead to instability, and in certain cases, riots, coups, population displacements and increased migration. High income countries may not be able to provide additional assistance to help low income countries address this instability: whereas the OECD shows that donors were able to maintain and even increase their aid levels during the pandemic, the Ukrainian crisis may absorb any new increases and even claim a portion of existing aid budgets.

Over time, this instability could well affect high income countries themselves, through mechanisms that are too well known (influx of economic and political refugees, peacekeeping in failed states, insecurity, etc.), a reminder that COVID-19 scarring affects us all.

Prepared by Jean-Francois Tardif and Robert Greenhill

Footnotes

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[8] According to a 2022 IMF analysis, "on average, government revenues remained well below prepandemic projections as the decline in revenue mobilization—1½ percentage points of GDP lower revenue-to-GDP ratio— was compounded by a severe output loss".
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[24] Food systems, diets and nutrition in the wake of COVID-19 | Nature Food
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[26] See for instance Malaria (gatesfoundation.org)
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MUTUAL LEARNING ON DISINFORMATION

COMPARING TRENDS IN ANTI-MIGRANT POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN CANADA AND GERMANY[1]

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Introduction

In their seminal 2018 work "Networked Propaganda," Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris and Hal Roberts demonstrate the emergence of a new kind of media ecosystem challenging democratic societies. Shaped by the strong incentives social media create to polarize political debate, a set of political actors, media outlets and voters prioritize confirmation of their views over seeking the truth. The ecosystem self-perpetuates through a feedback loop in which audiences reward media outlets with attention if they confirm their views, media outlets reward politicians with coverage if they confirm the views of their audiences, and politicians reward both in return.[1]

This new media ecosystem has shaped politics in many democratic nations, such as the United States, Germany, Sweden, Brazil, and Italy. In each of these countries, the ecosystem is dominated by grassroots movements and political parties of the right. Ideas such as "anti-government," "free speech absolutism," and "anti-immigration" began to see an uptick, with their respective parties latching onto these ideas and freely promoting them.[2] In the United States, presidential candidate Donald Trump courted the "Tea Party" with his anti-government and anti-immigration policies, notably his attempts at "Muslim bans" and "Build the Wall" and thus birthed the "Make America Great Movement" (MAGA). In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro promoted principles similar to President Trump's MAGA movement, even going so far as to question the 2020 American Presidential Election in a fashion similar to that of MAGA followers. His supporters also attacked several Brazilian government buildings following the results of the 2022 Brazilian Presidential Election, with noted similarities to the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. As far-right actors increasingly promote their narrative across the globe, often interfering in legitimate domestic processes, pluralist democracies, such as Canada, need to understand the structure of these media ecosystems better and measure their influence and reach.[3]

Due to the rising prevalence of these ideas, commentators have become gradually concerned by the state of liberal and pluralist ideals in modern democracies. Indeed, the rise of far-right political parties championing illiberal principles and their mounting popularity might have become the biggest threat to democracies. Klinger et al. (2022) drew on the ideas outlined in Networked Propaganda to explain how right-wing actors

[1] A comparative study based on the 2022 Paper by U. Klinger et al. : https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369118X.2022.2050415

used social media to spread an anti-immigration narrative with blatant mistruths to the extent that it came to dominate mainstream German political debate in 2018.[4]

Klinger et al. monitored how a far-right German narrative travelled through multiple mediums, such as social media platforms, right-wing news media, and other publications, through party networks such as the Alternative for Germany (AfD), and then onto the public. Their focus was on intermediaries, institutions, or people who would take an idea that, in their opinion, was not receiving much attention or traction on social media, and they would make social media posts about said topic to garner more attention on the issue, preferably from those with greater reach or influence.

Klinger et al. explained that the AfD party, which initially began as a neoliberal alternative to the German Christian Democrats party (CDU), soon became a hotbed of white nationalists who promoted anti-immigrant sentiments through social media sites. The authors analyzed the rhetoric concerning a 2017 agreement by UN member-states called the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) in German-based social media outlets and news media. According to them, only "sporadic social media attention trying to promote GCM" was found before 2018. However, once the Identitarian movement began to spread falsehoods about the GCM, low-level AfD accounts and supporters began to promote content which had originated with the Identitarians until AfD party leaders took notice and embraced the campaign.

Klinger and her colleagues concluded that these ideas were "laundered" by the larger party so they could take advantage of the offensive content generated in public opinion while maintaining distance from the extremist source. As the legal party began issuing the same "laundered" content, their accounts followers distributed more broadly across mainstream German debate. Several superspreaders facilitated this cycle. The German researchers had, in short, identified a mechanism in which information circulating within a right-wing media ecosystem escaped its confines and impacted the larger national political debate. In a situation where their respective social media followers were aligned, "source-washing" allowed mainstream political parties to combine forces with far-right extremists and achieve a more significant impact, all while giving them plausible deniability if they were associated with extremists by using their rhetoric or language. A small number of unaccountable superspreaders helped the campaign achieve virality.

In this paper, we assess whether:

1) there is alignment between social media followers of mainstream, far-right, and white supremacist groups in Canada;

2) political actors from either the mainstream or far-right groups actively engaging with or monitoring accounts that broadcast hate speech or promoted misinformation/disinformation; and

3) there was any evidence of superspreaders amplifying this content. If so, who are they, and how did they impact the content transmitted?

Our team aimed to replicate Klinger et al.'s German study using Twitter data to examine the immigration debate following the Syrian refugee crisis in Canada in 2019. With this study, we intend to discover what is the interaction among the white supremacist group, the far-right base of Canadian politics, and the mainstream political groups on immigration. To that end, we needed to find an inception point similar to that of Klinger et al.'s case of the German Identitarian movement's campaign against the GCM. We chose the Syrian refugee crisis because the Canadian government's 2015 decision to increase the acceptance of Syrian refugees stoked anti-immigrant sentiments among Canadians and sparked cries to restrict Canadian migration policies.[5][6] We believed that fringe far-right or white supremacist accounts would share followers with more popular right-wing accounts. Did the owner of these more mainstream accounts adopt and distribute extremist ideas to a broader audience? And did these efforts bring greater attention to these issues within public discourse?

This is relevant to Canadian policy because while Canada does not place definite limits on speech vs. hate speech like Germany does, it may guide Canadian policy in noting how hateful speech is shared and spread on social media.

Nor does Canada outlaw groups that advocate the overthrow of the democratic system of government as Germany does for the Nazi Party and allies such as the Identitarians, especially on issues associated with immigration and refugee policies. Particularly relevant to Canadian interests would be any insights we gather on how the spread of misinformation and disinformation online generates a sense of certainty in media reporting in which outright falsehood is reported. This was seen during the 2020/2021 COVID lockdowns, for example. Canadian legislators have a compelling interest in monitoring those who actively spread disinformation, as they can negatively affect the well-being of Canadian citizens and those who live within Canada's borders.

It is worth noting that we make the distinction between misinformation and disinformation. The former is incorrect information circulated with no dubious or ill intent, and the latter is deliberately false or misleading information intentionally spread to generate a particular opinion. Suppose there are agent provocateurs who are purposefully spreading disinformation to incite or create sentiments that threaten Canadian democratic institutions by their very nature. In that case, Canada should actively monitor those agents and what they are spreading.

The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Canadian Immigration Policy

In 2011, in response to national protests, Syrian armed security forces retaliated with brutal force, leading to the rise of resistance militias who pushed back against the government-armed security forces.[7] The Syrian civil war resulted in the displacement of 14 million Syrians, with the bulk of the displaced relocating to Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan.[8] In light of this humanitarian crisis, Canada opened its borders to

displaced Syrians and pledged several million dollars in humanitarian aid to the country. Between November 2015 and February 29, 2016, Canada resettled 25,000 Syrians within its borders and committed over $1 billion towards the development of Syrian infrastructure, Syrian humanitarian causes, and security assistance.

Despite the Canadian government's security clearance of refugees arriving from Syria, many Canadians were concerned about the impact of these newcomers on their country.[9] In the following years, the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) and the People's Party of Canada (PPC) advocated for Canada to adopt more restrictive immigration and refugee policies. When Liberal Party leader and current Prime Minster Justin Trudeau increased refugee intake in November 2015, Scheer and the CPC criticized the federal government, arguing that such a policy was undermining Canada's traditional approach to immigration.[10] Scheer believed there was a schism between immigrants who had arrived in Canada the "correct way" by navigating the traditional immigration channels and those who were "able to jump queues, exploit loopholes and skip the line," according to Scheer.[11] The CPC sought to close the loopholes within the Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the United States, moving judges closer to irregular border-crossing sites.[12]

Contrary to CPC views, however, most Canadians in 2019 viewed immigration as a positive good for the country. This required the CPC to find a balance between promoting an affirmative immigration policy and holding onto voters who believed that immigration, or, in their opinion, unchecked immigration, was hurting Canada and Canadians.[13] When prompted to clarify his stance on immigration, Andrew Scheer refused to give a concrete number that immigration should be limited to, choosing instead to review the issue and make recommendations or changes should he become Prime Minister.

For its part, the PPC attempted to appeal to CPC voters who felt that mainstream parties did not take a hard enough stance against immigration and refugee settlement. Under Maxime Bernier's direction[14], the PPC positioned itself as a more conservative option and took a hardline stance against Canada's current migration policies, with immigration reform being one of the leading party platforms. In contrast to the CPC platform position, Bernier and the PPC he wanted concrete numbers and hard limits imposed on immigration, capping the current number of immigrants coming into Canada between 100,000 and 150,000 per year.[15] In his speech, Bernier stated that unlimited immigration led to conflicts and a loss of national identity as those who come to Canada do not fully integrate into Canadian society or adopt Canadian ideals. Bernier painted a grim picture of Canada's embrace of multiculturalism, stating:

> "Mass immigration, open borders, unvetted immigration, extreme multiculturalism: all of this has nothing to do with freedom. On the contrary, it's a very dangerous type of social engineering. It amounts to large-scale government intervention in society and culture. It will bring increasing cultural balkanization, distrust, social conflict, and potentially

> violence, as we are seeing in other countries where division has reached a critical level."[16]

This position establishes the PPC as a suitable comparator to the role played by the AfD in the study by Klinger et al. For our analysis, therefore, we will distinguish between the PPC as a far-right group and the CPC as a mainstream political group. The CPC showed a more pragmatic approach to immigration, choosing not to pick complex numbers as a limit for immigrants but instead wanting to close loopholes that allowed illegal border crossings and choosing not to enable rhetoric to define their position.

Methodology

The Klinger et al. paper drew on data from social media platforms such as Twitter and YouTube while also looking at some far-right publications and news media. We limited the scope of our research to examine how anti-immigrant narratives developed by far-right or white supremacist groups filtered up to mainstream conservative journalists and politicians. For this paper, we used Twitter's academic API to collect data between July 2019 and December 2019[17][18], when an immigration reform debate played out online during the October 2019 federal election.

It is important to note a significant difference between the research of Klinger et al. and our group, and that would be Germany's extensive anti-hate speech laws, with clear distinctions and definitions of what is considered hate or illegal speech versus speech that could be regarded as protected. Canada does not have as broad hate speech laws; in Canada, the law does not go so far as to define what "hatred" is in Canada in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms but has allowed various definitions in cases that have come before the Supreme Court.[19] The Charter also further emphasizes that while certain inalienable rights are endowed to every Canadian citizen, there are reasonable limits to those freedoms and rights, provided those limitations are from following the law. Canada also does not ban or limit harmful ideologies under the expression of those ideas. It should also be noted that while not all the accounts we observed participated in "hate" speech, a concerning increase in antagonistic language espouses harmful beliefs or promotes harmful ideas.

Following the data collection, a social network analysis was performed to identify accounts expressing anti-immigration sentiments. For this purpose, a retweet network was modelled using the Louvain modularity algorithm to visualize the connections between retweeting accounts and subclusters of accounts mentioning anti-immigration topics. The analysis of this anti-immigration network revealed 52,151 tweets and 8,681 unique accounts. With this information, we categorized our data into three specific categories: 1) "white supremacist/racist," 2) "radical or far-right," and 3) "mainstream political environment."

First, to identify Twitter accounts associated with the *white supremacy group*, we used the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) characterization:

> "White supremacy is a term used to characterize various belief systems central to which is one or more of the following key tenets: 1) whites should have dominance over people of other backgrounds, especially where they may co-exist; 2) whites should live by themselves in a whites-only society; 3) white people have their own "culture" that is superior to other cultures; 4) white people are genetically superior to other people. As a full-fledged ideology, white supremacy is far more encompassing than simple racism or bigotry. Most white supremacists today further believe that the white race is in danger of extinction due to a rising "flood" of non-whites, who are controlled and manipulated by Jews, and that imminent action is needed [ed] to "save" the white race."[20]

Figure 1. White Supremacist Group Word Cloud

Figure 1 above presents the main words used in these accounts' Twitter descriptions. As we can observe, a key parameter for this group in our dataset mentioned "Canada First" and "Make Canada Great Again (MCGA)," which are references to "America First" and "Make America Great Again", which were the slogans of former American President Donald Trump's campaign and presidency.[21] President Trump's use of the phrase has intimately connected his marked anti-immigration policies and racial views. His supporters have used it as a rallying cry on social media to identify those with similar views. Trump did not coin the original phrase, as President Woodrow Wilson had used it before World War I as a vow to keep American interests as a priority and to remain neutral during the war. It was then later used by the Ku Klux Klan during the interwar period of the 1930s to advocate for more isolationist and anti-immigrant policies.[22] We also labelled accounts that had the

keywords “nationalist”, “patriot”, “anti-globalist”, and QAnon in their description, which are groups that tend to have white supremacist ideas under the guise of wanting to protect their country or restore it to a former state. This group yielded 429 unique accounts.

Our second group was the *far-right group*. We define the far-right as being on the margins of the right axis of the political alignment chart, with ideas that are typically ultra-nationalist, nativist, and authoritarian. They also tend to court neo-fascist ideas and movements and are largely anti-immigrant. We followed Anievas and Saull's (2022) definition according to which:

> “the far-right aims to defend the ‘traditional’ bases of society centred around race, gender and sexual hierarchies from the ongoing disruptions and dislocations of liberal capitalist modernity. (They) share a mutual suspicion and hostility towards the grand universalizing processes associated with liberal ideologies and capitalism. The macro-sociological transformations unleashed by liberal capitalist modernity that overturn and destabilize such traditional orders instill the right with a sense of cultural despair producing a general political orientation toward projects of national, cultural, moral and/or civilizational regeneration.”[23]

Figure 2. Radical Far-Right Group

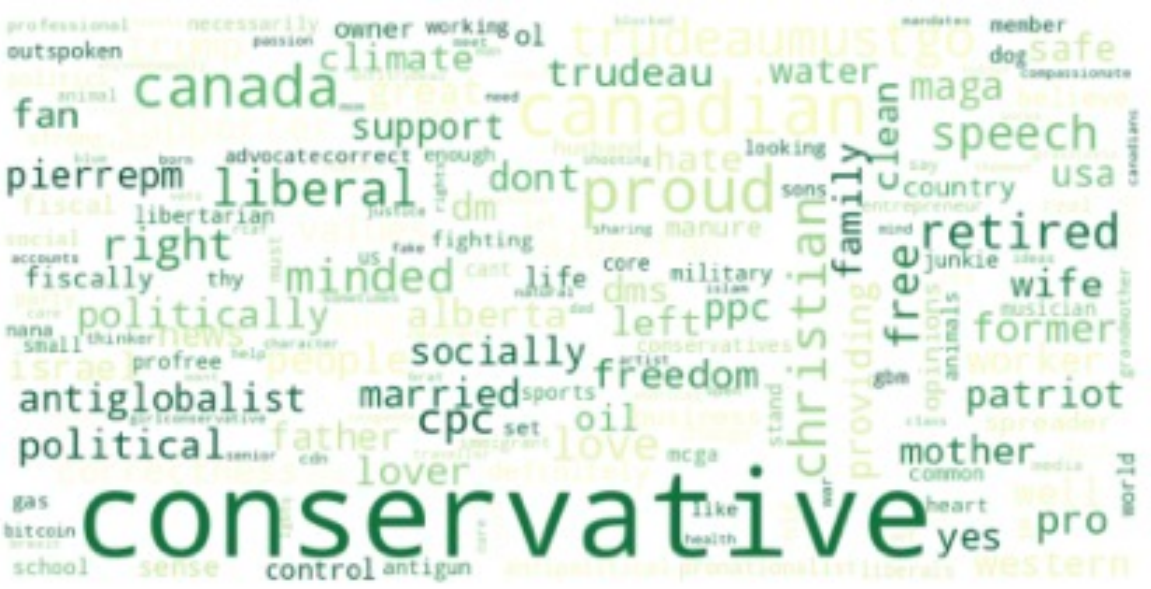
This group yielded 243 accounts. As we can see in Figure 2, accounts associated with this group used similar terms to the white supremacist group (“canadafirst”, “patriot”),

while also expressing ideals more readily related to conservative movements ("freedom", "responsibility", etc..). This group includes the PPC and its founder, Maxime Bernier. While they describe themselves as classically liberal and believe in the tenets of fairness, freedom, responsibility, and respect, many of their followers also express antithetical ideas. Examples of this would include calling for free-speech absolutism, but only if that speech agrees with what they say or believe. Per the University of Guelph Political Science professor Tamara Small:

> "The party that ran on an anti-immigration, anti-lockdown platform that has been endorsed by white nationalists, Neo-Nazis and other far-right groups has become a home for anti-vaxxers, anti-government protesters and gun rights activists, showing that populism on the left or right may be more about a movement than a traditional political party."[24]

The final group was categorized as a *mainstream political group*. The mainstream political group was defined as accounts that were not explicitly bigoted or racist but carried many ideas on how Canada should reform or even limit immigration. Many of the accounts we found carried moderate or conservative opinions, with several of the accounts tweeting at the Conservative Party of Canada's (CPC) account or Andrew Scheer, the former leader of the Official Opposition of Canada. These accounts also voiced concerns about Canadian immigration and often proposed ideas in which they could moderate immigration, among other things. The group yielded 567 accounts.

Figure 3. Mainstream Political Group



Discussion

After collecting the data, our team created word clouds on the tweets from each group. We could not observe a significant difference in the "buzzwords" used. However, we were able to identify the most influential accounts. This was further sorted by the degree of centrality, which measures the importance of an account in the anti-immigration network. This gave us about twenty of the most influential conservative and far-right Twitter accounts that were active in anti-immigration conversations on Twitter between July 2019 and December 2019.

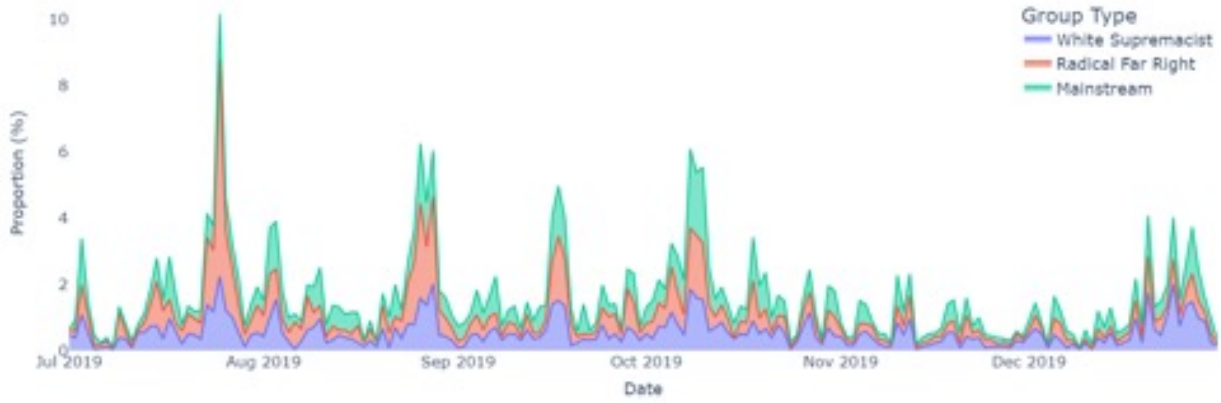
Some notable accounts we identified were David Jacobs, a doctor of radiology and prolific conservative commentator; Bill Tufts, a policy advisor for the People's Party of Canada; and Ezra Levant, founder and CEO of Rebel News. Ian Miles Chong and Andy Ngo, noted right-wing agent provocateurs, appeared in our data tweeting about Canadian immigration issues, while neither are Canadian citizens nor have readily apparent interests in Canada beyond the superficial. Tufts, while not having an explicitly bigoted account, was seen engaging in some of the coded language that is often employed by those who were in our white supremacy group. While failing to meet the "hate speech" criteria, this language is deliberately coded so that it appeals to others who have similar sympathies and no qualms about expressing themselves as such while also appearing innocuous to those unfamiliar with this coding. Tufts can maintain plausible deniability of participating in "hate speech" under the guise of simply asking questions for what he believes is for the betterment of Canada. However, it is essential to see what narrative Tufts and others like him are trying to cultivate with this coded language and how it affects Canada.

These accounts had follower counts in the tens of thousands and often engaged with their followers daily, either by retweeting news articles relevant to their interests or responding to tweets directed at them. Maxime Bernier was also prevalent among our word cloud findings, as he actively engages with his base and other far-right outlets, such as Rebel News, on the platform.

Figure 4. Word Cloud of the Top 20 Twitter Accounts

After reviewing the word cloud, we imported all the Twitter accounts we had scraped for further analysis. We plotted the number of tweets from July until December 2019 and visualized the distribution of anti-immigration tweets from the three groups.

Figure 5. Distribution of Anti-Immigration Tweets by Group Type



Once the data was imported, we noticed temporal peaks mapped to specific dates. Six specific dates had the most distinctive peaks: July 25, August 26, August 28, September 17, and October 8. On July 25, the most prominent peak from the radical far-right, Maxime Bernier, gave his speech in which he promised that, if elected, he and the PPC would drastically cut immigration from the typical average of 350,000 immigrants per year to a cap of 150,000, though preferably 100,000. He further suggested that immigrants seeking Canadian permanent residency or citizenship must have an in-person meeting with an immigration official to determine if their values and beliefs matched those of Canadians. He also criticized multiculturalism, stating that multiculturalism was "a lie based on the idea that all cultures are equal. A lie destructive of our Western liberal democratic heritage, traditions, and values based on individual rights and freedoms."[25] He also promoted the idea that "political Islam" was a threat to Canadian lives and values.[26]

When we reviewed the tweets that were posted on July 25, we noted the large majority of these were "single tweeters," meaning that they tweeted once about Maxime Bernier and his speech on this day and did not tweet again, suggesting artificial amplification and inauthentic behaviour or supporters trying to avoid public opprobrium. Bernier's speech appeared to engage and invigorate these single tweeters to such a degree that it created the first spike. After Bernier's tweet in which he broadcasted his speech to his followers, the most quoted tweet from our findings is below:

> "No other politician in the last 50 years has had both @MaximeBernier's pride in Canada and the guts to say what changes are needed to our

> immigration and multiculturalism policies to ensure that Canada remains a destination of choice. #PPC2019 https://t.co/kzKlH3bDRe" - CanadaFirstXX1

On August 26, there was another notable peak in activity from the radical far-right group. Users in this group criticized what they called the "woke mob" and the oppression of free speech as the billboard company removed billboards that featured Maxime Bernier. True North, the billboard advertising company, seemingly agreed to put up these PPC donor-funded billboards but did not review the information displayed on the billboards. Once they became aware of the contents of the billboards, which stated "Say No to Mass Immigration" and similar slogans, True North decided to remove them.[27] In response, Maxime Bernier remarked that his billboards were not controversial as two-thirds of the Canadian voters agreed with him, and "It's only controversial for the totalitarian leftist mob who want to censor it."[28] The owner of True North Strong & Free Advertising Company, who removed Bernier's billboards, disagreed, disavowing the ideas the PPC promoted in their advertising.[29] Frank Smeenk, head of True North Advertising, stated, "We completely disavow any sympathy with or support for the views expressed by donors who paid for and selected the content of their advertising, which we were mistakenly not afforded an opportunity to first approve."[30] It should be noted that Twitter and most online polls are unreliable as they are unregulated and only require a simple email address to participate in the polls, thus allowing the answers to be skewed in any direction bots or agent provocateurs wish.[31]

> "These results, with 21,656 votes, are in line with those of scientific polls.
> A majority of Canadians want lower immigration, better integration of immigrants in our society, and a sharper focus on Canada's economic needs.
> That debate won't go away. https://t.co/YANzKkJj8c" – Romeo_Romeo52 Retweeting Maxime Bernier

There was also another peak in activity on August 28, two days after a recent peak, in which we noted that there was a flutter of activity in which the far-right began tweeting with calls for more people to vote for the PPC after what they described as an attempt to block their free speech rights earlier that week with the removal of the billboards. They mentioned voting for the PPC as an alternative to the system that is currently in place with the Liberals and Conservatives, as well as being the party that would restore trust in the Canadian political system.

On September 17, another peak appeared amid the cries against illegal immigrants who were supposedly navigating the system as fake refugees. Many of the tweets seemed to have a bit of an antagonistic tone, arguing that the influx of fake refugees

was putting a strain on Canada's immigration system and resources and exploiting the system as well. This seemed to coincide with the announcement of Maxime Bernier's entrance into the upcoming political debates after being denied.[32] The following tweet had the most traction among the data we pulled, but many of the tweets that day had a similar tone:

> "The Liberals lost control of fake refugees at the border.
> They massively increased overall immigration numbers.
> And now they're also losing control of birth tourism.
> We need a sustainable immigration policy that benefits Canada, not the rest of the world."

On October 7, there was a debate about the federal election, which caused a noted peak on social media on the 7th and 8th. It appears as if the debate among the top contenders for Prime Minister sparked much discussion among Canadian Twitter users, not just the far-right group we have been reviewing. Notably, the peaks of activity appear to be almost identical for the mainstream group and the far-right group, with very little activity from the white supremacist group. This seems to indicate that there possibly is a type of linkage between the mainstream/CPC group and the far-right groups, but not one between the white supremacist group and the mainstream/CPC group.

> "Words matter ... Listen to Trudeau carefully: he says "migration" not immigration. He promotes globalization over national sovereignty. He also clearly says that we need to "redefine what Canada is". 😐😐 #Debatenightincanada #cdnpoli #elxn43 #polcan https://t.co/ld87b4wOWy

From the data, we observed that the peaks seem to be led by far-right influencers, especially the PPC and white supremacists. Ideas seem to begin among smaller accounts on the far-right or in the white supremacist groups, as they seem to be unafraid to speak freely and without fear of being reprimanded. The CPC and mainstream political parties are warier in making unsubstantiated claims and using overtly racist language. However, the two themes we noticed among all three groups were the issues of immigration and refugees. While the far-right and white supremacist groups were often outwardly racist or bigoted in their calls against "mass immigration," the CPC tended to take a more tempered approach, with practical ideas to mitigate the wave of immigrants they saw coming to Canada. While the far-right and white supremacist groups were anti-immigrant and anti-refugee, the CPC also seemed to be welcoming of immigrants and refugees who followed Canada's

immigration guidelines. We also noticed a flourishing activity concerning these topics among the smaller and larger accounts. Still, we failed to identify a feedback loop, which the Klinger et al. paper noted. The peaks seem to be led by the white supremacist group and far-right influencers, notably with the topics of anti-immigrant and anti-refugees, with the two groups failing to differentiate between the two. The CPC seems more moderate in its approach, differentiating between refugees who come to Canada seeking asylum and immigrants who desire to make their home in Canada.

While we noticed several peaks that occurred on the earlier-mentioned dates, we cannot definitively say that they created a feedback loop that was then picked up by the mainstream networks and disseminated throughout social media. Nevertheless, from what we observed, there would be an action or event that would prompt a tweet or response from a far-right persona, and this would create a flurry of activity among the white supremacist group. In contrast, the mainstream group would focus on the event itself. For example, with the removal of the PPC billboards, the white supremacist group believed that there was a bias against PPC voters and politicians, which resulted in the removal of the billboards. In contrast, the mainstream group noted that the billboard owner was a private enterprise and that they could promote or remove billboards that didn't align with their business values instead of immediately believing in a bias to remove or silence CPC politicians.

> "A simple comparison to how bizarre, corrupt and backwards the present Liberals govt has gotten. Signs for the PPC R being taken down despite election laws allowing it. Yet the same govt is considering giving safe passage into Canada for a murdering FOREIGN ISLAMIC ISIS TERRORIST?" - @ RobertR96506389[33]
>
> "Ahmed Hussain is from Somalia - the mass immigration is mostly coming from the middle east - hmm is it just me or is that like the fox watching the hen house - will Canada take in any Christian farmers being killed in genocide by Muslims - everyone I know is voting for PPC Party" - @RandyBrady52[34]

This suggests that the dominant direction of content is from the mainstream to the extremists rather than the reverse. Far-right groups create controversies, and white supremacists would stoke simmering tensions on hot-button issues to generate activity among other white supremacist accounts and draw the attention of mainstream conservative accounts. Our findings were that we observed an interaction that included the far-right group driving content creation or tweets that were then spread to the other groups to varying degrees.

Question 1: "Is there alignment between social media followers of mainstream, far-right groups, and white supremacist groups?" As stated above, while we did not see

evidence of the feedback loop that the Klinger et al. paper noted, we noticed peaks or flourishes in activity were mostly around events that were driven by the far-right group, which included the PPC and were then amplified by the white supremacist group. While some of the milder tweets are shown in this paper, some of the more egregious ones are still readily available on Twitter to view and influence opinions. The thrust of the issue is that while we could not identify an identical feedback loop that Klinger et al. noted, we do note that there are possible intermediaries, but with far less coordination than what was also pointed out in the Klinger et al. paper. A possible explanation for this would be that this lack of coordination may be intentional to prevent others from disrupting their actions, but this remains to be seen.

Question 2: "Were political actors from either the mainstream or far-right groups actively engaging with or monitoring accounts that broadcasted hate speech or promoted misinformation/disinformation?" For our inception point, we looked at the Syrian Refugee Crisis that stemmed from the Syrian Civil War. We looked at both the PPC and the CPC for their reactions toward refugees and immigrants, and we noticed that one individual affiliated with the PPC did actively engage with white supremacist and far-right groups. There is no discernable pattern of the PPC directing or acting on this activity. For their part, they seemed to retain a fair degree of nuances in their responses; some members of the CPC may share similar apprehension about immigration, but they sought to find meaningful ways of addressing immigration issues. They also maintained a distinction while dealing with the refugee crisis instead of choosing a blanket statement to deal with them all and immigration more generally.

Question 3: "Was there any evidence of super spreaders? If so, who are they, and how did they impact the content transmitted? "In the Canadian case, there were superspreaders, in that a small number of social media accounts often account for a disproportionately large volume of content. However, because our study did not find the same patterns of transmission from the far-right into the mainstream from political parties deliberately mining extremist content, the role of superspreaders lacked the salience that it did in the German case.

Conclusion

Our analysis did not find the mechanisms of transmission observed in the Klinger et al. paper to be present in the Canadian environment.

Our findings may differ because we limited ourselves to one platform, which did not reveal the entire story that may explain the peaks in better detail and demonstrate the "source-washing" that Klinger et al. observed.

Second, the fact that Canada does not criminalize political movements or organizations as in Germany means that the transmission of ideas from extremist groups to the political mainstream is not a criminal matter. For a German political

party to intentionally draw content from an illegal group is a criminal activity. In the Canadian context, sharing content is an act of free speech protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

That said, there is a vast difference between outright "hate" speech and inflammatory or offensive language, as well as language that is purposefully misleading or a product of disinformation. Canada has a compelling interest in recognizing that distinction, as well as the idea that while the speech may not be "hateful," it can be inflammatory, misleading, and used to stir similar sentiments as hate speech, but under the guise of plain-speaking or "just asking questions." This allows the speaker a measure of plausible deniability and the cover of being innocuous while altogether inflammatory and divisive.

This coded language can be harmful when discussing issues important to Canadian citizens. While we could not replicate the study in its entirety, and we did not find a feedback loop similar to theirs, we did uncover interesting spikes in Twitter activity that seem to show accounts made to parrot a singular idea and then are never used again. We also could note when these spikes occurred and trace them to notable events, which may be worth investigating in the future. This study also shows that the dynamics of media ecosystems that have distorted political debate in other countries are very likely at work in Canada, which merits further investigation.

Footnotes

[1] (Benkler, Faris and Roberts, 2018)
[2] (Kildiş, 2020)
[3] (Rocha, 2019)
[4] Klinger et al., 2022
[5] (Reid, 2022)
[6] (Dawson, 2022)
[7] (*Syria Refugee Crisis Explained*, n.d.)
[8] (*Syria Refugee Crisis Explained*, n.d.)
[9] (Reid, 2022)
[10] (Austen & Bilefsky, 2019)
[11] (Harris, 2019)
[12] (Global News Staff, 2019)
[13] (Wherry, 2019)
[14] In 2018, after citing issues with the morality and perceived corruption of the Conservative Party of Canada, Maxime Bernier left the party and helped form the People's Party of Canada (PPC).
[15] (*Immigration - People's Party of Canada*, n.d.)
[16] Speech - the People's Party of Canada Position on Immigration and Multiculturalism - People's Party of Canada, n.d.

[17] We focused on this period as it was before the Canadian federal election and we believed that it would provide the most relevant political tweets, as immigration was a hot-button issue for many voters during this election. The Academic Research Product Tract API was used to collect tweets within a specific timeframe, focusing on immigration-related discussions within Canada. The data collection process involved using keywords such as "immigration," "global compact," "pacte mondial," "refugee(s)," and "réfugié(es)" alongside a location query for Canada. In total, 233,558 tweets and 100,447 unique Twitter accounts were gathered.
[18] YouTube data posed some challenges, as the API and collected data from the proposed keyword query primarily yielded YouTube videos related to Canadian VISA information and application guides.
[19] (Legislative Services Branch, 2020)
[20] ("White Supremacy | ADL". 2017)
[21] (Tumulty, 2023)
[22] (*Canada First Exposed: Months Inside One of Canada's Biggest, Youngest, and Newest White Supremacist Chatrooms*, 2021)
[23] (Anievas & Saull, 2022)
[24] (Somos, 2021)
[25] (The Canadian Press & The Canadian Press, 2021)
[26] (The Canadian Press & The Canadian Press, 2021)
[27] Smith (2019)
[28] Smith (2019)
[29] Smith (2019)
[30] Smith (2019)
[31] (Rogers, 2016)
[32] Staff (2019)
[33] (R, 2019)
[34] (Brady, 2019)

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