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CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL: NON-PERMANENT INFLUENCE AND CANADA'S 2021 CAMPAIGN BID

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JCSP 43

Exercise Solo Flight

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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
JCSP 43 – PCEMI 43
2016 – 2017

EXERCISE *SOLO FLIGHT* – EXERCICE *SOLO FLIGHT*

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Word Count: 5189

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INTRODUCTION

Out of the ashes of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) emerged in the midst of a period of multilateral expansion and immediately assumed a position of global preeminence among international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Designed with the primary goal of managing threats to peace and security, the UN has pursued its mandate in the face of ever-changing global security challenges for more than 70 years. It continues to be the preferred leader in global security initiatives and, at the very least, the key actor in legitimizing the use of force in the international arena. For all of its flaws, inefficiencies and the frequent challenges to its credibility, the United Nations “remains the only truly global security institution” and one that is argued to have “shown that it *can* work.”¹

At the core of the UN sits the Security Council (UNSC). The UNSC is the sole organ charged under the United Nations Charter with primary “responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.”² Comprised of 5 permanent members (P5), the United States, Russia, China, France and Great Britain, as well as 10 non-permanent members (NPMs), the UNSC represents the most exclusive club in town and a seat on the Council is a highly sought after commodity. Since 1963, the distribution of NPM seats has been formalized. Five seats are allocated to Africa and Asia, one to Eastern Europe, two to Latin America and the Caribbean and two to the Western Europe and Others group (WEOG), of which Canada is a member.³

¹ Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall. *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*. Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007, 518.

² United Nations, “Charter of the United Nations.” <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html>, Article 24-1, Accessed April 2017.

³ David, Malone. “Eyes on the Prize: The Quest for Nonpermanent Seats on the UN Security Council.” *Global Governance* 6, no. 1 (2000): 3-23, 5.

Since its inception, Canada has been actively involved in the UN and has sought to maximize its global power and influence within it. From peacekeeping initiatives under Lester B. Pearson, to the establishment of the Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel landmines, Canadian actions have yielded tangible results on a global level.⁴

Canada has been a frequent member of the UNSC. It ranks seventh on the all-time list of NPM countries, having served a total of six terms.⁵ Thanks to its failure to be elected in 2010; however, it last served on the Council in 2000. The Trudeau government intends to end the recent dry spell. Upon election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated his desire for Canada to return to the global scene and, on 16 March 2016, backed up this aspiration by officially announcing Canada's bid for a 2021 seat on the UNSC.⁶

The announcement came without any serious analysis of the value of a Council seat to Canadian interests in the current global climate. Indeed, the value of non-permanent seats has often been debated and is frequently tied to the relative influence, or lack thereof, that NPMs can exercise in the face of a powerful P5 and oft-times inefficient or ineffective UN procedures and protocol. Furthermore, a bid represents a major commitment of diplomatic power and political will and must therefore be congruent with the state's policy. Assessing the potential value of a Council seat to Canada must take into consideration at least three factors: whether Ottawa has demonstrated the ability to use Council membership to promote its interests in the recent past; whether similar NPMs – in this case Australia – have been able to exert influence over Council affairs since Ottawa last served; and, finally, whether the Trudeau government's comments, policies

⁴ Alfred, Knopf. "Navigating a New World: Canada's Global Future." Toronto, 2003. <http://economics.ca/cpp/bookreviews/CPpv30n2.pdf>, 231.

⁵ United Nations, "Welcome to the United Nations." <http://www.un.org/en/index.html>. United Nations Security Council, Accessed April 2017.

⁶ Prime Minister of Canada. News Releases, 16 March 2016, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/releases>.

and actions with regards to its decision to contest a Council seat are consistent with Canada's national interests. In this paper I will argue that recent UNSC experiences of Canada and Australia demonstrate that membership in this exclusive club represents an opportunity to play an important role in the shaping of multilateral initiatives with global and domestic implications. Furthermore, the stated objectives of the Trudeau government are congruent with Canadian national interests.

THE 1999-2000 CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

Canada's most recent UNSC term took place at the turn of the century. At the time, the world, the UN and Canada sought to re-imagine the meaning and purpose of global security. The post-Cold War euphoria had subsided and was replaced by a sense of apprehension as a result of evolving global security issues and recent UN failures. With memories of Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Somalia looming like a dark cloud over the UNSC, Canada pushed for its sixth term on the Council.⁷

Canada announced its intention to run for the 1999 seat in 1993.⁸ The campaign would be comprehensive, with implications not limited to the international community but rather equally impactful in the middle power's own back yard. Whether deliberately intended to impress the international community or not, the Chretien government foreign and defence policy reviews in 1994-1995 had a significant impact on shaping the Canadian campaign plan, particularly the human security agenda.⁹ Canada also placed a great deal of diplomatic horsepower behind its campaign with experienced diplomat

⁷ David M. Malone, and Patrick Wittmann. "Canada and the UN Security Council in the Post-Cold War Era." *Canadian Issues* (2002): 41, 6,7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹ Harald, von Riekhoff. "Canada and the United Nations Security Council, 1999-2000 - a Reassessment." *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 10, no. 1 (2002): 71-106. doi:10.1080/11926422.2002.9673308, 89.

Robert Fowler heading the UN delegation and Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy passionately engaged in the campaign and subsequent term.¹⁰

Recent international engagements also served to strengthen Canadian credibility as a proficient global actor and more importantly a competent negotiator capable of developing consensus within a multilateral environment. In the mid-1990s, Canada was the driving force behind the movement to ban anti-personnel landmines. Its efforts ultimately culminated with the signing of the Ottawa Treaty in December 1997 and prompting UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to declare that “it is on the subject of landmines that Canada has made its most resounding contribution to humankind this decade.”¹¹ This was followed by Canadian involvement in the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC). An active supporter of multilateral initiatives aimed at improving global security, once again Canada proved adept at consensus building in support of what Axworthy dubbed a “court worth having,” with the General Assembly voting overwhelmingly in favor of adoption in July of 1998.¹²

Buoyed by recent successes in promoting multilateral initiatives with a distinctive humanitarian flavour and anchored by a motivated and competent team, Canada proceeded to articulate and promulgate the agenda upon which the campaign would hinge. The overwhelming theme of the 1999-2000 programme would be human security. Increased transparency and increased Council credibility were also pivotal aspects of the

¹⁰ Ibid., 75.

¹¹ Lloyd, Axworthy, Greg Donaghy. “All god's children: human security and Canadian foreign policy 1996–2000.” <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/11926422.2003.9673326?needAccess=true>, 46.

¹² Ibid., 48.

Canadian plan, both of which represented a direct challenge to the P5's customary *modus operandi*.¹³

After being elected on the first ballot in 1998, Canada was eager to produce concrete results. Ottawa immediately eyed the Council presidency as the primary vessel upon which it could float its initiatives. Canadian planners strategized to take full advantage of two forthcoming opportunities to promote key Canadian agenda issues.

The February 1999 presidency began with a focus on transparency. Longstanding complaints by non-Council members and the public writ large as to the secretive nature of the UNSC were addressed with a significant increase in Council accessibility. The Canadian president provided weekly summaries of current Council issues via the Canadian mission's relatively sophisticated website and by holding numerous open Council sessions to which representatives from civilian organizations, non-Council members and subject matter experts (SME) were invited.¹⁴ The president regularly availed himself to the media after Council meetings and also frequently briefed non-Council members.¹⁵

Next on the agenda was the question of UNSC credibility, specifically sanctions. The recurring theme of sanctions failing to achieve the desired aim or causing the inadvertent human suffering placed this issue high on the Canadian agenda.¹⁶ During its first presidency, Canada doubled down on its involvement as chair of the Angola sanctions committee to shed significant light on this specific case as well as the broader

¹³ Malone, "Eyes on the Prize," 8.

¹⁴ von Riekhoff, *Canada and the United Nations Security Council*, 81.

¹⁵ Norman, Hillmer, Maureen Appel Molot, Fen Osler Hampson, and Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. *Canada among Nations 2001: The Axworthy Legacy*. Don Mills, Ont: Oxford University Press, 2001, 137.

¹⁶ von Riekhoff, *Canada and the United Nations Security Council*, 84.

question of sanctions reform. Setting the stage for actions that would take place during its second presidency, Canada pushed for, and achieved, the establishment of an expert panel outside of the UN Secretariat to study the weaknesses of the Angolan sanctions.¹⁷

The final, and most pervasive, element of the Canadian agenda was a focus on human security. As the political scientist Harald von Riekhoff points out in his evaluation of the 1999-2000 Canadian term, “one encounters human security initiatives at virtually every step.”¹⁸ Minister Axworthy took a personal leadership role and led open debates on civilians in armed conflict. In a presidential statement, Axworthy called upon the Secretary General to examine how the UNSC could better “ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict.”¹⁹ Canadian-led debates and consensus building efforts resulted in a new standard in UN resolution language. UN resolution 1227 recognized the importance of both “safety of the civilian population and respect for human rights and international humanitarian law,”²⁰ in a single resolution.

The second Canadian presidency took place in April 2000. With the conditions appearing to be ripe for a more aggressive engagement on the human security issue, Minister Axworthy once again took the lead, personally chairing numerous debates and ensuring that this issue permeated all Council discussions. In the 2001 edition of *Canada Among Nations*, the second presidency is said to have placed the focus on multiple themes “interweaving the agendas of transparency, credibility, and human security.”²¹ To this end, Canadian-led debates focused on human security issues such as Rwanda while

¹⁷ Hillmer, *Canada among Nations* 2001, 138.

¹⁸ von Riekhoff, *Canada and the United Nations Security Council*, 89.

¹⁹ Hillmer, *Canada among Nations* 2001, 139.

²⁰ United Nations. “Resolution 1227,”

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1227\(1999\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1227(1999)), Accessed April 2017.

²¹ Hillmer, *Canada among Nations* 2001, 142.

overlaying aspects of transparency, through the conduct of open debates, and credibility, by striving to identify tangible lessons learned that would be applicable to future conflict vice the conduct of a simple retrospective.²²

In the end, the second Canadian presidency produced two key resolutions. Resolution 1295 referred to the Angola sanctions regime with many aspects of the resolution reflecting key findings of the expert panel report mandated during Canada's first presidency.²³ Consistent with the second presidency theme, this resolution had a significant human security nexus while simultaneously addressing the credibility concerns of the UN sanctions writ large. UNSC resolution 1296 saw the incorporation of the protection of civilians into UN peacekeeping operations.²⁴ Human security was now more securely rooted in the UNSC lexicon, even gaining support from members such as China and Russia that were traditionally unsympathetic to any initiatives they perceived could infringe upon state sovereignty.²⁵

Throughout its two-year term, Canadian soft power appears to have played a major role in the apparent success of Canadian initiatives. Axworthy would later state that the wielding of soft power was an art where "desirable outcomes are achieved through persuasion rather than coercion" and that it was "obtained from networking and coalition-building."²⁶ This philosophy was key to the Canadian approach to the UNSC multilateral environment and enabled Canada to successfully address all three of its priorities. The role Canada played in elevating the status of human security issues cannot

²² Ibid., 143.

²³ United Nations. "Resolution 1295," [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1295\(2000\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1295(2000)), Accessed April 2017.

²⁴ United Nations. "Resolution 1296," [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1296\(2000\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1296(2000)), Accessed April 2017.

²⁵ Hillmer, *Canada among Nations* 2001, 139.

²⁶ Lloyd, Axworthy. "Canada and Human Security: The Need for Leadership," *International Journal* 52, no. 2 (1997): 183-196, doi:10.1177/002070209705200201, 192.

be understated nor should its pioneering efforts to increase public access to Council issues and the sanction reform initiatives championed by the mission.

It must be noted that the Canadian experience was hardly flawless. For all the Canadian initiatives aimed at increasing transparency, the P5 private meetings with the Secretary General persisted, as did the omni-present power of the P5 veto.²⁷ Canadian efforts to have the Chechnya and Sudan conflicts placed on the agenda also failed.²⁸ These failures, however, only serve to further highlight the importance of consensus building initiatives and would appear to place a premium on states with a strong diplomatic corps capable of thriving in a multi-lateral environment.

The information presented above argues that Canadian efforts did yield tangible results. Moreover, high level diplomatic and political engagement, excellent international credibility and a clear agenda all played significant roles in increasing Ottawa's effectiveness. By exploiting key opportunities such as the rotating Council presidency and by engaging in numerous sub-committees resident within the UN writ large, the Canadian delegation was measurably effective.

Nevertheless, that experience took place well over a decade ago. To determine whether Canada might be similarly positioned for success in 2021, it is worthwhile examining a more recent NPM Council experience. The timeliness of Australia's 2013-2014 UNSC seat along with its similarities with Canada make it an ideal case to study.

²⁷ Axworthy and Donaghy, *All god's children*, 49.

²⁸ von Riekhoff, *Canada and the United Nations Security Council*, 102.

THE 2013-2014 AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE

A Commonwealth Nation, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Group of 20 (G20) and WOEG member, Australia shares a comparable affinity for multilateral involvement with Canada and is also a founding member of the United Nations.²⁹ Similarities in population size, GDP as well as the size and composition of their respective defence forces, combine to further accentuate the parallels between the two nations.³⁰ In this section, Australia's experience will be examined in a comparable manner to the study conducted of the 1999-2000 Canadian term. Key aspects of its campaign strategy along with notable successes and failures will be analyzed and will demonstrate that, like Canada, it achieved measurable success on the Council.

Australian involvement in regional and global organizations has increased significantly since the end of the Second World War.³¹ From its "strategic partnership" with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to its membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), Australia has looked to multilateral platforms to promote its national interests and expand its sphere of influence.³² To this end, Australia has regularly looked to secure UNSC membership and a "seat at the table." Australia has served as an elected member on five separate occasions, equaling the incidence of WOEG counterparts Spain, Germany and Belgium.³³

Australia announced its candidacy for a 2013-2014 seat in March 2008 and immediately launched an active campaign intended to end a drought that would reach 27

²⁹ United Nations Association of Australia. Accessed April 2017, <http://www.unaa.org.au/learn/australia-and-the-un/>.

³⁰ The World Bank. "Data." Accessed April 2017, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/australia?view=chart>.

³¹ Australian Government. "Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade," Accessed April 2017, <http://dfat.gov.au/international-relations/Pages/international-relations.aspx>.

³² Ibid.,

³³ United Nations, "Countries Elected Members of the Security Council." <http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/elected.asp>. United Nations Security Council, Accessed April 2017.

years by 2013, the mission's longest absence from the UNSC since its inception.³⁴ A successful Australian campaign would be reliant upon two key elements: high profile public diplomacy,³⁵ and a convincing theme. The first element required political and diplomatic participation in championing the bid. This was effectively achieved as both Prime Ministers (Rudd and Gillard) as well as all three Foreign Ministers (Smith, Rudd and Carr) were active advocates throughout the duration of the campaign.³⁶

Diplomatically, Ambassador Gary Quinlan and Canberra's core of experienced diplomats spearheaded the effort and focused heavily on the other 192 Permanent Representatives.³⁷

In a move intended to "showcase" Australia to General Assembly Permanent Representatives, events were organized that saw more than 100 representatives visit the country.³⁸

The second key element of the bid was the campaign theme. As international security expert and career diplomat David M. Malone stresses, UNSC candidates must "develop one or two themes on which they can hammer away consistently over the campaign."³⁹ Australia initially struggled with this concept and began the campaign by highlighting numerous areas where it was dedicated to making a difference on a global scale vice one or two coherent themes. Commitments to peacekeeping and disarmament, support for Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), action on climate change, support

³⁴ John, Langmore and Jeremy Farrall. "Can Elected Members make a Difference in the UN Security Council? Australia's Experience in 2013-2014." *Global Governance* 22, no. 1 (2016): 59, 61.

³⁵ Caitlin, Byrne. "Campaigning for a Seat on the United Nations Security Council: A Middle Power Reflection on the Role of Public Diplomacy," 9. <https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/useruploads/u35361/2011%20Paper%2010.pdf>

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁷ Jeremy, Farrall and Jochen Prantl. "Leveraging Diplomatic Power and Influence on the UN Security Council: The Case of Australia." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 70, 6 (2016): 601-612, 603. http://apcd.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2016-12/leveraging_diplomatic_power_and_influence_on_the_un_security_council_the_case_of_australia.pdf

³⁸ Langmore and Farrall, *Can Elected Members make a Difference*, 62.

³⁹ Malone, "Eyes on the Prize," 8.

of UNSC reform and a strong commitment on making a difference for small and medium-sized countries were all stated objectives.⁴⁰ Australia would eventually focus on being a champion to “small and medium countries” and use the accompanying slogan, “we do what we say,” as its “hammer” as the campaign progressed.⁴¹

The Australian campaign proved highly effective and resulted in election to the Council on the first ballot.⁴² The 140 votes it received was perceived as a clear indicator of strong support for the Australian campaign theme and confidence in its ability to be an effective Council member. Initial goal achieved, Australia then shifted focus to the identification of clear objectives. Ongoing conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan were mentioned in broad terms, as were other more specific goals. Shortly after election, Minister Carr identified that building momentum towards a global arms treaty represented one such priority.⁴³

Like Canada in 1999-2000, Australia had the presidency on two occasions during its term, in September 2013 and November 2014. During its first presidency it scheduled an open debate on small arms and light weapons (SALW) in which the threat to international peace and security was acknowledged. The resulting UNSC resolution 2117 was the first resolution on this topic and sought to “curb the use of small arms and light weapons” which were viewed as “a major driver of conflict, especially in Africa.”⁴⁴

⁴⁰ John, Langmore. "Australia's Campaign for Security Council Membership." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 1 (2013): 101-111. doi:10.1080/10361146.2012.760523, 104.

⁴¹ Julia, Gillard. “Making a Difference for the Small and Medium Countries of the World.” Speech to the Commonwealth Day Reception. New York, 2011, <http://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-17744>

⁴² Langmore, Australia’s Campaign, 108.

⁴³ Melissa, Conley Tyler and Eleanor Pahlow. "Australia on the UN Security Council 2013–14: A Voice for Small and Medium Countries?" *The Round Table* 103, no. 1 (2014): 95-108, 102. doi:10.1080/00358533.2013.874168.

⁴⁴ Gillian, Bird. “Australia’s UN Security Council Presidency – November 2014.” Australian Institute of International Affairs, Nov, 2014, Accessed May 2017,

Consistent with its campaign theme, this initiative would impact small and medium countries of the global south.

During its second Council presidency, Australia was again able to achieve tangible results as it spearheaded the first ever session dedicated to UN policing. The critical function that police play in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations was debated, as was the crucial role of women in policing. The resulting UNSC resolution 2185 focused on increasing the effectiveness of police deployments within the UN context and was adopted unanimously by the Council.⁴⁵

Canberra achieved arguably the greatest success of its term in the summer of 2014, during the time between its presidencies. Following the downing of flight MH17 in Eastern Ukraine that killed nearly 300 people including 38 Australians, the mission immediately set to work on a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in the area of the crash and a comprehensive investigation aimed at identifying those responsible.⁴⁶ With Foreign Minister Julie Bishop personally leading the negotiations, Australian resolve succeeded in achieving Council consensus getting UNSC resolution 2166 adopted despite the reluctance of the United States or the United Kingdom to play a leading role and in the face of Russian opposition. Political scientists John Langmore and Jeremy Farrall describe this instance as “a clear example of an elected member successfully influencing a Council outcome.”⁴⁷

Along with the successes, also came failures. Despite chairing three separate sanctions committees and priding itself as a model of “best practice” with regards to UN

http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australian_outlook/australias-un-security-council-presidency-november-2014/

⁴⁵ Ibid.,

⁴⁶ Langmore and Farrall, *Can Elected Members make a Difference*, 64.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 65.

sanction implementation, Canberra was unable to advance its sanction reform agenda.⁴⁸ Although it was able to initiate debate and co-sponsor a High-Level Review (HLR) of UN sanctions, it was not able to build consensus among all P5 members. The strength of Russian resolve and its power of the veto ultimately stymied Australian efforts and effectively put an end to this initiative.⁴⁹

Throughout its term, Canberra also placed considerable diplomatic effort behind humanitarian action in Syria. Beginning its efforts during its first presidency in 2013, Australia worked diligently on this issue and was a key facilitator in the adoption of multiple UNSC resolutions. However, by the end of its tenure, the humanitarian crisis in Syria was still deplorable with only marginal progress having been made “despite the sustained diplomatic effort by Australia.”⁵⁰

A broad evaluation of the Australian experience indicates that it was able exert influence and did achieve tangible results. High level public diplomacy, adherence to the campaign theme and dogged resolve on issues with domestic implications all played significant roles in increasing Canberra’s effectiveness. The Australian delegation exploited key opportunities during its two presidencies and succeeded in remaining a key Council member when not serving as chair.

The two cases studied here validate the theory that a NPM can be measurably effective on the Council. It is therefore reasonable to hypothesize that a motivated Canada, possessing adequate diplomatic prowess, sufficient political will, and an appropriate agenda, would be able to exert influence. Although coherent, this analysis is incomplete as it only addresses the *potential* for Canada to be effective and is therefore

⁴⁸ Farrall and Prantl, *Leveraging Diplomatic Power and Influence*, 606-607.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 607.

⁵⁰ Langmore and Farrall, *Can Elected Members make a Difference*, 67.

inconclusive when it comes to assessing whether a bid for a 2021 Council seat is in Canada's interests. A closer look at current Canadian policy and the 2021 bid is required in order to complete a fulsome assessment.

THE 2021 CANADIAN BID

There are at least two key aspects to be examined when analyzing whether the Trudeau government's decision to contest a Council seat is consistent with Canada's national interests: first, what are the potential benefits and dangers associated with the bid, i.e. what does Canada have to gain or lose; and second, are the policies, actions and comments of the government sufficient to yield successful results? Put differently, is the government doing what is necessary to win?

To think that Canada would seek UNSC membership for purely altruistic reasons is utopian at best. Canada, like all other independent states, must take measures that are in its own best interests. With Canadian prosperity strongly linked to international trade and mobility, international peace and security must logically be considered a fundamental national interest. In other words, the "global good" is good for Canada.⁵¹ Council membership would provide Canada with a voice at the table and the opportunity to be actively involved in addressing issues and shaping responses to international problems with domestic implications.

Re-engagement with the UN via the Council would also signal a return of sorts to the international scene. Canada's reputation has traditionally served it very well internationally but recent history has tarnished its name in the eyes of some. Under the

⁵¹ John, Trent. *The United Nations and Canada: What Canada has done and should be Doing at the United Nations*. 2014th ed. Ottawa, ON: World Federalist Movement - Canada, 2014, 3.

Harper government, Canadian policy became increasingly principles based and self-serving, distancing Canada from many international partners. Long-time politician and diplomat Robert Fowler who served as Foreign Policy Advisor to three separate Prime Ministers argued that the Harper “me-first” attitude was “arrogant” and “un-Canadian.”⁵² UN members apparently agreed with this analysis as Canada failed in its bid for a 2010 Council seat based largely on its diplomatically unpalatable and steadfast stands on issues such as foreign aid, climate control, Israel, and a petty dispute with the United Arab Emirates.⁵³ A strong Canadian bid could serve to reinvigorate international trust in Canada and increase its sphere of influence by reinforcing old ties and providing the opportunity to forge new ones.

While a Canadian bid for a Council seat appears to be in its best interests, it is not void of risk. First, there is the danger that a Canadian seat on the Council could place it at odds with traditional partners, specifically the United States. Council membership requires countries to publically commit during voting and the potential of Canada taking a stance contrary to the US is a genuine possibility with bona fide implications. Historically Canada has demonstrated that it does not always agree with the US as witnessed by its decision not to participate in the Second Iraq War in the absence of a UNSC resolution. However, it must be noted that Canada was not a Council member at the time.

There is also the question of the general relevance of multilateral organizations such as the UN in the contemporary global environment. Isolationist and populist

⁵² Trent. *The United Nations and Canada: What Canada has done and should be Doing*, 16.

⁵³ Doug, Saunders. *Why Canada Lost at the Security Council: All Principle, No Purpose*. Dougsaunders.net. October 16, 2010, Accessed May 2017, <http://dougsaunders.net/2010/10/canada-united-nations-security-council-harper/>

movements have become more prevalent in recent years prompting many to question the future of multilateralism. The election of President Trump in the US has given rise to a resurgent nationalistic sentiment; fiercely anti-immigration and eager to implement “America first” economic policies. The British decision to leave the European Union (EU), Brexit, is another indication that multilateral organizations are experiencing considerable challenges in today’s environment.⁵⁴

Finally, the domestic cost of UNSC bid must be considered. Financially, the cost of a UNSC bid has grown considerably in recent years. David Malone indicated that Canada’s 1999 campaign cost \$1.9 million,⁵⁵ while others have placed the price closer to \$10 million.⁵⁶ John Langmore reported the bill for Australia’s 2013 bid to be in excess of \$23 million.⁵⁷ Additionally, these figures do not include the enormous financial contributions to foreign aid and development that are expected of a middle power vying for a NPM seat.

It must also be noted that domestic costs are not limited to dollars. A significant investment of political will is required to “sell” the utility of Council membership to a domestic audience. The Trudeau government has been challenged to justify its Council bid in much the same way that Australia was during its 2013 campaign.⁵⁸ The Canadian Conservative Party recently called into question the credibility of the UN as a whole

⁵⁴ Michael, Peters. *The end of neoliberal globalisation and the rise of authoritarian populism, Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 2017, DOI: 10.1080/00131857.2017.1305720, Accessed May 2017
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00131857.2017.1305720?needAccess=true>

⁵⁵ Malone, “Eyes on the Prize,” 12.

⁵⁶ Laura, Fraser. “Canada’s Pitch for UN Security Seat Will Cost ‘Financial and Political Capital.’” CBC News, 16 March 2016, Accessed May 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/un-security-council-1.3494537>

⁵⁷ Langmore, Australia’s Campaign, 102.

⁵⁸ Langmore and Farrall, Can Elected Members make a Difference, 61.

following the election of Saudi Arabia to a UN commission on women's rights and in light of its inability to deal with the crisis in Syria.⁵⁹

Regardless of the result, there remains a school of thought that argues; even a losing bid can yield tangible benefits for the bidding country. Effective public diplomacy throughout the campaign can result in “reputational or soft power benefits” that can be “leveraged well beyond the contest closure, and regardless of the outcome.”⁶⁰ This mindset was evident in the Australian experience as Minister Carr stated that even if they had lost, he “would have argued that that was money well spent because it brought over 100 UN ambassadors to Australia who saw our multiculturalism, the sophistication and competitiveness of our economy.”⁶¹

The final section of this essay will examine the policies, actions and comments of the Trudeau government in an effort to analyze the congruency between a bid for a seat on the Council and Canada's national interests. Understanding that there is never a guarantee of success when it comes UN General Assembly voting, is Canada doing what is necessary to win?

Based on the previous analysis of the Canadian and Australian experiences, three broad criteria for success have surfaced: the importance of strong diplomatic and political engagement; recognized legitimacy and credibility; and, a clear agenda or theme. The current Canadian efforts will be weighed against these criteria.

⁵⁹ Ryan, Maloney. “Michelle Rempel: Trudeau Should Decry Saudi Arabia's Election to UN Women's Rights Commission.” Huffingtonpost. 24 April 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2017/04/24/michelle-rempel-trudeau-saudi-arabia-un_n_16209524.html

⁶⁰ Byrne, Campaigning for a Seat: A Middle Power Reflection, 33.

⁶¹ Tony, Eastley, Lisa Millar. “Australia Wins Seat on UN Security Council,” ABC News. 18 October, 2012. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-19/australia-wins-seat-on-un-security-council/4321946>

The Canadian bid began on a high note with Prime Minister Trudeau personally announcing Canada's candidacy for the 2021-2022 term following a meeting with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.⁶² The importance associated with the bid quickly permeated all levels of the Canadian political and diplomatic apparatus. From Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stephane Dion's human rights focused address to the UNSC,⁶³ to Canada's Ambassador to the UN, Marc-Andre Blanchard pointing to foreign aid as key to the Canadian agenda,⁶⁴ the government clearly regarded the bid as a priority endeavor worthy of high-level engagement. Finally, Canada established a dedicated team from Global Affairs Canada (GAC) to coordinate its efforts and whose singular purpose is to "work on the government's goal of winning a two-year seat on the UNSC."⁶⁵

It could be argued; however, that in recent months the Canadian bid does not appear as frequently in political communications and has lost momentum. This, compounded by a relatively vague mandate letter for the Minister of Foreign affairs within which there is no mention of the UNSC bid,⁶⁶ could place Canadian political will and its diplomatic commitment to the cause in question.

As a result of an arguably late start to its campaign and the necessity to re-establish its credibility in the post-Stephen Harper era, Canada set in motion numerous

⁶² Tamara, Khandaker. "Justin Trudeau Wants Canada's Security Council Seat Back, But it May Take a Decade." Vice News, 11 February, 2016, Accessed May 2017, <https://news.vice.com/article/justin-trudeau-wants-canadas-security-council-seat-back-but-it-may-take-a-decade>

⁶³ Stephane, Dion. "Address by Minister Dion to the United Nations Security Council." Government of Canada, New York, 10 June 2016, Accessed May 2017, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1083739>

⁶⁴ Mike, Blanchfield. "Peacekeeping, foreign aid at 'core' of Canada's UN Security Council Bid." The Canadian Press, 12 June 2016, Accessed May 2017, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/06/12/peacekeeping-foreign-aid-at-core-of-canadas-un-security-council-bid-envoy.html>

⁶⁵ Chelsea, Nash. "Canada Mobilizes Campaign Team for Security Council Bid." Hill Times, 8 February 2017, Accessed May 2017, <https://www.hilltimes.com/2017/02/08/canada-campaign-team-security-council-bid/95015>

⁶⁶ Prime Minister of Canada. "Minister of Foreign Affaires Mandate Letter." Accessed May 2017, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/minister-foreign-affaires-mandate-letter>.

initiatives aimed at legitimizing it as a viable and contributing international player. Similar to the Jean Chretien mandated reviews in 1993,⁶⁷ Prime Minister Trudeau mandated policy reviews in the run-up to the election. Canadian Defence Policy and International Assistance Policy were targeted as they represent key aspects of the Canadian bid⁶⁸ with the potential to shape the campaign agenda.

Concretely, Ottawa targeted the international security agenda with its August, 2016 launch of the new Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOP) that aims to work with partners and allies to help: stop violence; provide security; and, create space for dialogue and conflict resolution.⁶⁹ Ottawa also focused on global climate change, signing the Paris Agreement, committing \$2.65 billion to fund clean, low-carbon growth in developing countries and announcing its plan for a national carbon tax.⁷⁰ On the humanitarian front, the reception of 31,000 Syrian refugees along with the concerted efforts to facilitate their integration highlighted the Canadian engagement.⁷¹

Canada has also taken a significant stand on gender equality. From Prime Minister Trudeau's gender-equal cabinet, to the gender-based analysis incorporated into the 2017 Canadian budget, to its 2016 election to the United Nations Commission on the

⁶⁷ von Riekhoff, *Canada and the United Nations Security Council*, 89.

⁶⁸ Blanchfield. *Canada's UN Security Council Bid*, 1.

⁶⁹ Government of Canada. "The Peace and Stabilization Operations Program." 26 August 2016, Accessed May 2017, http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/world_issues-enjeux-mondiaux/psop.aspx?lang=eng

⁷⁰ Elizaberth, McSheffrey. "Canada Officially Ratifies Historic Paris Climate Agreement." *National Observer*, 5 October 2016, Accessed May 2017, <http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/10/05/news/canada-officially-ratifies-historic-paris-climate-agreement>

⁷¹ Prime Minister of Canada. "Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Address to the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly." 20 September 2016, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2016/09/20/prime-minister-justin-trudeaus-address-71st-session-united-nations-general-assembly>

Status of Women for the 2017-2021 term⁷², Canadian commitment to promoting the rights of women and girls is well documented.

Although Canada is advancing its reputation in many domains, there are challenges that need to be addressed. For example, Canadian efforts to reform the International Assistance Structure have met with mixed results with critics claiming that, contrary to the government's stated focus on aid, Canadian spending has decreased.⁷³ The government counters this position by arguing that spending has not decreased, but rather is being redistributed⁷⁴ to things like the highly publicized \$650M dollar commitment to sexual and reproductive health rights.⁷⁵

Although the foreign aid issue does discredit Canada somewhat, by far the most damaging issue to Canadian credibility is its failure to commit to a UN peacekeeping operation. Prime Minister Trudeau repeatedly referenced Canada's historical contributions to peacekeeping as well as his intent to reinvest in this area. Ultimately, in August 2016, he committed 600 troops, 150 police officers and \$450 million dollars to a UN peacekeeping operation with the mission location to be announced one month later.⁷⁶ At the time of this paper, 9 months after the government announced its commitment, a UN mission had yet to be identified. As Fergus Watt and Walter Dorn clearly articulate in

⁷² Government of Canada. "Canada Elected to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women." 7 April 2016, Accessed May 2017, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1047489>

⁷³ Levon, Sevunts. "Canada's Foreign Aid Bucks Global Trend, Drops Under Trudeau: OECD." CBC News, 11 April 2017, Accessed May 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-international-aid-drops-trudeau-1.4066640>

⁷⁴ Aniket, Bhushan. "Canada's 2017 Budget: Why Nothing New Isn't All Bad News." Canadian International Development Platform, 27 March 2017, Accessed May 2017, <http://cidpnsi.ca/canadas-2017-budget-why-nothing-new-isnt-all-bad-news/>

⁷⁵ Government of Canada. "Canada Announces Support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights." 8 March 2017, Accessed May 2017, https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2017/03/canada_announcessupportforsexualandproductivehealthandrights.html

⁷⁶ Murray, Brewster. "Liberals Commit \$450M, up to 600 Troops to UN Peacekeeping Missions." CBC News, 26 August 2016, Accessed May 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-peacekeeping-announcement-1.3736593>

their analysis of this situation, “a country must show that its word is its bond and that promises are kept. Otherwise credibility is lost.”⁷⁷

The last element of an effective campaign is the development of a clear campaign theme. The Canadian campaign to this point has been successful in identifying numerous issues that warrant the attention of the Council; however, a campaign theme has not been overtly stated. Nevertheless, an analysis of Prime Minister Trudeau’s key addresses to the UN does suggest that climate change; gender equality; and, humanitarian initiatives⁷⁸ such as the dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis sit very high on the Canadian list of priorities.⁷⁹

In this section it has been established that the potential benefits associated with a UNSC seat outweigh the possible risks. Canada has more to gain than it does to lose and, in fact, there may be public diplomacy benefits regardless of success or failure. The question of whether or not the Trudeau government is doing what is necessary to win a seat is less conclusive. The government has taken numerous steps aimed at legitimizing its campaign but has yet to clearly articulate a campaign theme. The major stumbling block at this juncture; however, remains Ottawa’s failure to follow through on its commitment to UN peacekeeping, a fact that could lead UN members to question the seriousness of Canada’s desire to return to the Council.

⁷⁷ Fergus ,Watt, Walter Dorn. “Canada Dithers on its Peacekeeping Commitments – and Loses Credibility for it.” Ottawa Citizen, March 21, 2017, <http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/watt-and-dorn-canada-dithers-on-its-peacekeeping-commitments-and-loses-credibility-for-it>

⁷⁸ Kathleen, Harris, Melissa Kent. “Trudeau Unveils Canada’s Plan to Seek 2021 UN Security Council Seat.” CBC News, 16 March 2017, Accessed May 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-united-nations-security-council-1.3491917>

⁷⁹ Prime Minister of Canada, Address to the 71st Session of the United Nations

CONCLUSION

The assessment of the potential value of a Council seat to Canada began by examining the recent Council experiences of both Canada and Australia and demonstrated that a NPM can be measurably effective. For all of the challenges faced by NPMs striving to positively influence global affairs, the UNSC remains the preferred forum to champion their initiatives. Subsequently, an analysis of the Trudeau government's comments, policies and actions found that risks associated with a UNSC bid were negligible and that the pursuit of a Council seat was in fact in Canada's national interests. As Roland Paris, University of Ottawa professor and former advisor to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated, "the bottom line is that the Security Council remains the most important forum for international politics in the world ... that was true during the Cold War, that was true after the Cold War, and it remains true today."⁸⁰ Finally, it is worth noting that the major obstacles to the Canadian bid were assessed to be; the absence of a clear campaign theme: and, Ottawa's failure to follow through on its UN peacekeeping commitments.

The findings of this essay are constrained by the scope of the factors upon which they are based. Further analysis of the Canadian International Assistance Structure as well as correlations between the Canadian campaign agenda and US policy under the Trump administration could further inform this study.

⁸⁰ Alex, Boutilier. "Is Canada's UN Security Council bid still worth it?" thestar.com, Dec 23, 2016. <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/12/23/is-canadas-un-security-council-bid-still-worth-it.html>. Accessed April, 2017.

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