



Panel Presentation: Canada's New Posture in the International Arena

The Trudeau Government's claim that "Canada is back" in the international arena is highly contestable. The government continues to support defence and trade policies initiated by the Harper government as well as energy policies inconsistent with the Paris Accord. There is more similarity with the Harper Government's foreign policy than with the peacebuilding and development initiatives associated with Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau.

Our foreign policy panel will engage in a wide-ranging debate, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and areas of coherence or inconsistency, and to make recommendations on whether and how Canada's foreign policy can actually be returned to its traditional posture of a more progressive player in global peacekeeping and sustainable development.

Moderator:

Ferry de Kerckhove

Speakers:

1. Julia Sanchez's
2. Angella MacEwen
3. Peggy Mason



18 January, 2018



7-9p.m.



Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa

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Cost:



\$15 Regular Admission

\$5 Student/Unwaged

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The Group of 78
Le Groupe des 78

Panel on Foreign Policy Background
CANADA'S NEW POSTURE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA
Knox Presbyterian Church
7-9 pm Jan. 18 2018

After winning the October 2015 election, the Trudeau Government signalled Canada's "return" to the international stage, most prominently by its active participation in the Climate Change deliberations and its embrace of the Paris Accord. However, rather than adopting measures consistent with the Accord to reduce Canada's production of hydrocarbons, the new Government confirmed the Harper Government's support of pipelines to take yet more Alberta oil to international markets via the west coast (Kinder Morgan) and to the U.S. (Keystone XL).

In other areas of international policy, there has been even more continuity than change from the Harper to the Trudeau Governments. For example, in the defence arena, under both governments Canada has continued to be an active NATO member, deploying Canadian Armed Forces units to Central and Eastern Europe in support of questionable, and arguably provocative, NATO policies.

As for the international trade arena, the Trudeau Government has been every bit as keen on trade liberalization, despite considerable opposition by labour and civil society organizations critical of the growing inequalities spawned by such deals.

And in June 2017 the government announced a new "feminist international assistance policy." While this initiative has been lauded by many CSOs, no effort has been made to reverse the decline in ODA spending that took place under the Harper Government, particularly after 2010. While the government has expressed its intention to increase its defence budget by 73 percent in the next decade, restraint characterizes its much smaller "feminist" international assistance budget.

In sum, the Trudeau Government's claim that "Canada is back" in the international arena is highly contestable. The government continues to support defence and trade policies initiated by the Harper government as well as energy policies inconsistent with the Paris Accord. There is more similarity with the Harper Government's foreign policy than with the peacebuilding and development initiatives associated with Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau.

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