

Canada Does Not Deserve a Seat on the UN Security Council

By [Yves Engler](#)

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Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [History](#), [United Nations](#)

Despite its peaceful reputation, Canada is not acting as a benevolent player on the international stage.

Rather, Canada ranks among the twelve largest arms exporters and its [weapons](#) have fueled conflicts across the globe, including the devastating war in Yemen.

In a disappointing move, Canada refused to join 122 countries [represented](#) at the 2017 UN Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination.

Ottawa has also been an aggressive proponent of the nuclear-armed NATO alliance, and currently leads coalition missions in Latvia and Iraq.

Echoing Trump's foreign policy, Canada has backed reactionary forces in the Americas. The Trudeau government has led efforts to unseat Venezuela's UN-recognized government, while propping up repressive, corrupt and illegitimate governments in [Haiti](#) and [Honduras](#). Canada also lent its support to the economic elites and Christian extremists who recently overthrew the democratically elected indigenous president of [Bolivia](#).

In the Middle East, Canada has sided with Israel on almost every issue of importance. Since coming to power the Trudeau government has [voted against](#) more than fifty UN resolutions upholding Palestinian rights backed by the overwhelming majority of member states. The Canadian government has refused to abide by 2016 UN Security Council Resolution 2334, calling on member states to "distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied in 1967." On the contrary, Ottawa extends economic and trade assistance to Israel's illegal settlement enterprise. Should it win a seat on the UNSC, Ottawa has stated that it will act as an "[asset for Israel](#)" on the Council.

Canadian mining companies are responsible for countless ecological and human rights abuses around the globe. Still, Ottawa defends the most controversial mining firms and refuses to restrict public support for companies responsible for abuses. The chair of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights [criticized](#) the Trudeau government for refusing to rein in mining abuses while the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and hazardous substances and wastes has decried the "[double standard](#)" applied to Canadian mining practices domestically versus internationally.

Falling short of its responsibilities as a global citizen, Canada continues to oppose the [Basel Ban Amendment](#) on the export of waste from rich to poor countries, which became binding in late 2019 after ratification by 97 countries. Ottawa also [failed to ratify](#) the United Nations' Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading

Treatment or Punishment. Ottawa has [refused to ratify](#) more than 50 International Labour Organization conventions. In November 2019, Canada once [again refused](#) to back a widely supported UN resolution on “Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.”

Violating the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Trudeau government sent militarized police into unceded Wet’suwet’en Nation territory to push through a pipeline. The UN Human Rights Committee recently [documented](#) various ways Canada is [failing](#) to live up to its obligations towards indigenous people under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Ignoring front-line victims, Ottawa refuses to keep Canada’s dirty oil in the ground. Canada is on pace to emit significantly more greenhouse gases than it agreed to in the 2015 Paris Agreement and previous climate accords. Already among the world’s highest per capita emitters, the Canadian government is subsidizing further growth of heavy emitting tar sands, at the expense of impoverished nations who’ve contributed little to the climate crisis but bear the brunt of its impacts.

The international community should not reward bad behaviour. Please vote against Canada’s bid for a seat on the UN Security Council.

Signatories

David Suzuki, Award winning geneticist/broadcaster

Roger Waters, co-founder Pink Floyd

Noam Chomsky, linguist, author & social critic

Ellen Gabriel, artist and activist

Roméo Saganash, former MP Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou

Sid Ryan, former president of Ontario Federation of Labour and CUPE Ontario

Rawi Hage, novelist

Amir Khadir, former Quebec National Assembly member

Pam Palmater, Chair in Indigenous Governance, Ryerson

Judy Rebick, activist and author

Jord Samolesky, Propagandhi

Steve Ashton, long-serving member of the Manitoba legislature and cabinet minister

George Elliott Clarke, poet and professor

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Prize co-winner (1976)

Trevor Herriot, author and activist

John Clark, activist

Charles Demers, comedian & author

Alain Deneault, essayist and philosophy professor

Martin Duckworth, laureate of the 2015 Albert-Tessier Prix du Quebec for cinema

Cy Gonick, former Manitoba NDP MLA and founding editor of Canadian Dimension

John Greyson, film-maker & professor

Syed Hussan, Migrant Workers Alliance

El Jones, activist, educator, journalist and poet

Gordon Laxer, author/founding Director Parkland Institute

Monia Mazigh, PhD, author and activist

Jim Manly, Member of Parliament 1980-88

Kanahus Manuel, activist

Tim McCaskell, educator & activist

Sheelah Mclean, co-founder Idle No More organizer

Serge Mongeau, author & editor

Mike Palecek, former National President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Dimitri Roussopoulos, author, and long-time peace movement activist

Clayton Thomas-Müller – Director, Author, Senior Campaign Specialist – 350.org

Rinaldo Walcott, professor

Ingrid Waldron, author & professor

Harsha Walia, author & activist

Antonia Zerbisias, journalist & activist

Greg Albo, Professor of Politics, York University

August Arnold, journalist and author

Antonio Artuso, Front uni contre le fascisme et la guerre

Corey Balsam, National Coordinator, Independent Jewish Voices Canada

Nik Barry-Shaw, author

Corey Balsam, National Coordinator, Independent Jewish Voices Canada

Susan Bazilli, PhD – Director, International Women’s Rights Project

Ron Benner, artist

Karl Beveridge, artist

Raul Burbano, activist

Nancy Brown, teacher/librarian, peace/human rights activist

David Camfield, activist and academic

Stefan Christoff, artist & activist

Carole Condé, artist

Gerry Condon, Veterans for Peace (US), former president

Deborah Cowen, Professor, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

Raju J Das, York University

Judith Deutsch, academic

Gord Doctorow, educator

Martine Eloy, antiwar and human rights activist

Darren Ell, Photographer

Gary Engler, author

Yves Engler, author & activist

Joe Emersberger, author

Richard Falk, Professor of International Law emeritus, Princeton University

Kiran Fatima, co-chair Toronto Association for Peace & Solidarity

Richard Fidler, Author and Activist

Miguel Figueroa, President, Canadian Peace Congress

Don Foreman, Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Alan Freeman, author & economist

Gavin Fridell, Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor in International Development Studies Saint Mary’s University

Dr. Todd Gordon, Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University

Peter Gose, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology Carleton University

Harry Glasbeek, Professor Emeritus and Senior Scholar, Osgoode Hall Law School

Tracy Glynn, activist and writer

Cory Greenlees, activist

Malcolm Guy, documentary film director/producer

Michael Harris, author

Jamelie Hassan, artist

David Heap, teacher-researcher; peace & human rights advocate

Evert Hoogers, CUPW (retired)

Pierre Jasmin, artiste pour la paix

Dru Jay, author & activist

David Kattenburg, University instructor & journalist

Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Nonviolence (USA)

Gary Kinsman, activist and author

Harry Kopyto, legal activist

Jonathan Kuttub, International human rights lawyer

Dimitri Lascaris, lawyer/journalist/activist

Ed Lehman, Regina Peace Council

Raymond Legault, activist, Collectif Échec à la guerre

Tamara Lorincz, PhD candidate and member of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace

Martin Lukacs, journalist

Eva Manly, retired filmmaker

Robin Mathews, author

Amy Miller, filmmaker

David Mivasair, retired rabbi

Bianca Mugenyi, activist, former Co-ED The Leap

Elizabeth Murray, former Deputy National Intelligence Officer for the Near East, National Intelligence Council (ret.)

Dr. Susan O'Donnell, researcher, writer and activist

Nino Pagliccia, activist and freelance writer

Dr. Idrisa Pandit, academic

Brent Patterson, activist

Justin Podur, author and professor

Judi Rever, journalist and author

Karen Rodman, human rights activist

Richard Roman, retired professor, writer

Reuben Roth, Professor

Herman Rosenfeld, Socialist Project

Grahame Russell, Co-Director – Rights Action

Joan Russow, activist

Cory Greenlees

Sakura Saunders, activist

Harold Shuster, Independent Jewish Voices-Winnipeg

Ken Stone, President – Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War

Donald Swartz, Carleton University

Koozma J. Tarasoff, peace activist

Marianne Vardalos, PhD Department of Sociology

Jay Watts, co-chair Toronto Association for Peace & Solidarity

Paul Weinberg, author

Barry Weisleder, federal secretary, Socialist Action

Elizabeth Whitmore, activist

Ellen Woodsworth, writer, organizer and former Vancouver City councillor

Dwyer Sullivan, board member – Conscience Canada

Dr. Thom Workman, professor, University of New Brunswick

Ann Wright, retired US Army Colonel and former US diplomat.

Organizations

Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) – Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain

Mining Watch

Independent Jewish Voices/ Voix juives indépendantes

Mouvement Québécois pour la Paix

Solidarité Québec-Haïti

Hamilton Coalition To Stop The War

Council of Canadians – London Chapter

Canada Palestine Association-Vancouver

International League of Peoples' Struggle

Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement pour une Paix Juste

Socialist Project

Canadian BDS Coalition

Socialist Action

Canadian Boat to Gaza,

Leap Montreal

CAIA Victoria

Freedom Flotilla Coalition

Gaza Freedom Flotilla Australia

Regina Peace Council

Al-Haadi Musalla

The petition will be delivered to UN member states prior to the vote for the security council seat in June.

If your group or organization would like to endorse the open letter, please write to us at info@foreignpolicy.ca.

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