

The role of education in international cooperation– how Canada plays its part

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Good morning. It's an honour to be with you today. And such an auspicious day with the announcement by our Prime Minister that Canada is making a bid to take a seat on the United Nations Security Council beginning in 2021!

It's a pleasure and a privilege to speak to CIC Victoria today. I'm very familiar with the important work of the CIC in encouraging informed dialogue on a wide range of international developments and policy issues. In fact over a decade ago I served on the Montreal advisory group to the CIIA – predecessor to the CIC.

I have been asked to provide an update on what's happening at Pearson College – Canada's most deliberately diverse international college – where I have served as President and Head of College since last August. Mainly, I have been asked to share my views on international development, and in particular, international aspects of education.

I am sure that many, if not all, of you are familiar with Juniper Glass' article, *Decades of Change: A Short History of International Development Organizations in Canada* published in [The Philanthropist](#) in May 2015. She points out that, "For the most part, international development interventions in the mid-20th century were based on a charity approach of helping the needy through the provision of basic services while accepting the traditional model of economic growth." However, she continues, "In the 1960s, a change began in the orientation of development work that has continued to gain strength to this day, **moving away from the charity model in which the global North knows best, toward partnerships with citizens, organizations, and governments of the global South.**"

Allow me to remind you of some of those changes achieved under Liberal and Conservative governments during the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties by taking you through some of the historical highpoints.

Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO) was launched in 1961. It and other volunteer-sending organizations such as **Canadian Crossroads International** provided the opportunity for thousands of Canadians to live and work for significant periods of time in countries of the global South.

The experience was transformative for many. Working alongside Southern counterparts, receiving the same salary and living conditions, these volunteers gained knowledge and respect for the host countries and cultures and became the "first generation of development workers" in Canada.

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Prime Minister and Nobel Peace Laureate **Lester B. Pearson** is best known for his commitment to international peace. However, both he and **Pierre Trudeau** were equally committed to international development.

In 1966, Mr. Pearson appointed **Maurice Strong** as Director-General of the **Office of External Aid**. Mr. Strong brought a refreshing new perspective to the position, along with some best practices from the business world; and he immediately set about completely overhauling the OEA.

Having had the great good fortune to have worked with Mr. Strong when he was Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Environment and Development – universally known as the Earth Summit – I can only imagine the battles that must have raged inside the OEA and among Ottawa’s senior bureaucrats!

However, as was usually the case with Mr. Strong, he prevailed and two years later, the new government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau upgraded the EAO as the **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)** with Maurice Strong as its first president.

CIDA, created in 1968, added a huge boost to the growth of the international cooperation sector. From the beginning, partnerships with non-profit organizations were a primary means for CIDA to meet its objectives, in addition to official development assistance provided to governments of the global South, and contributions to multilateral aid.

Mr. Strong served as president of CIDA from 1968 to 1970 and continued to transform Canada’s international aid programs and processes although he did not realize his ambition to have CIDA become the center for all Canadian international development efforts.

Development and Peace was established in 1967 by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in response to Pope Paul VI's encyclical letter *Populorum Progressio* that declared that “Development is the new word for Peace.”

Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) began operations in 1967. Under its auspices, highly experienced Canadian volunteers carried out assignments focused on improving the economic and social well-being of peoples across Canada and in more than 122 countries. [NB Maurice Strong was one of the founders]

In 1969, [Canadian Crossroads International](#) was granted a charter as a charitable organization and, for the first time, began working in countries outside the African continent. That same year, a francophone branch was founded in Montreal, which took responsibility for placements in French-speaking African countries.

Today, Crossroads brings Canadian organizations into longer-term partnerships with civil society organizations that work in areas of women’s rights and poverty reduction in

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Western Africa, Southern Africa, and South America. Crossroads volunteers play a vital role in supporting partner organizations as they increase their organizational capacity in information technology, programming, and organizational management. **Many continue to work for global change long after their placement is complete.**

The **IDRC International Development Research Centre** was established by an Act of Parliament in 1970 to help developing countries find solutions to their challenges. [*The International Development Research Centre Act*](#) describes the Centre's mandate: "*to initiate, encourage, support, and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical, and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of those regions.*"

To fulfill this mandate, IDRC encourages and supports [researchers](#) from developing countries to conduct research in their own institutions and regions. In doing so, IDRC supports networking and knowledge sharing between scientific, academic, and development communities in Canada and developing countries.

[*Canada World Youth/Jeunesse Canada*](#), founded in 1971 by former Senator Jacques Hébert, is based on a vision of a world of active, engaged global citizens who share responsibility for the well-being of all people and the planet.

Twenty years later, CWY ran its first programs with schools and youth groups. Since then, thousands of high school and college students have had the chance to learn about international cooperation and solidarity through the CWY Global Learner program.

In 1976, two Canadian women, Dr. Norma E. Walmsley and Ms. Suzanne Johnson-Harvor, created **MATCH International** to match the needs and resources of Canadian women with the needs and resources of women in the global South. MATCH was Canada's first international organization to place the issue of women's rights and empowerment as central to successful and sustained development in the global South.

In 1988, Brian Mulroney's Conservative government created the **International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development** (also known as Rights and Democracy) – an indication of the increasing importance of human rights in international development.

The *CIDA Partnerships Program* was still going strong in the 1980s, contributing funds to about 500 organizations in 1989/90, including the international programs of universities and colleges, cooperatives, faith-based organizations, and trade unions.

Thanks to international media coverage, a much broader segment of the population was sensitized to the problems in what was then-termed 'The Third World'. At the same time, organizations across Canada were introducing development education programs to help

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youth and adults alike understand the issues of global inequity and solidarity.

During the last two decades of the 20th century, even in the face of significant international policy resource reductions, Canada was able to make a difference.

In 2003 Foreign Minister Bill Graham brought Canadians the innovative, interactive [Foreign Policy Dialogue](#), using the Internet for the first time to ventilate and democratize the foreign policy development process. Later, Pierre Pettigrew signed off on the [International Policy Statement](#). **I had the opportunity to work on this document as the lead political advisor on the Development Cooperation section (as Senior Advisor on International Cooperation in the Martin Government).** There was much to admire in this innovative inter-departmental effort to integrate diplomacy, defence, commerce and development, but *all traces of that epic undertaking disappeared with the election of the first Harper government in 2006.*

As former CIDA President Robert Greenhill and Megan McQuillan point out in [Assessing Canada's Global Engagement Gap](#), Liberal and Conservative governments made similar higher commitments to global engagement between 1975 and 1995 and similar lower commitments between 1995-2014.

In the 1990s, Canada was beset with both political problems and severe fiscal ones. The deficit had to be reduced. The budget had to be balanced. And this without upsetting regional constituencies.

Tough choices had to be – and were – made. Then, after ten years of fiscal restructuring, as Canada's economic performance was beginning to improve, the Great Recession hit.

However, **under the Harper government, Canada's global engagement was hit disproportionately hard.** Cuts were three times as deep as those to overall program spending. Cuts to development assistance since 2008 have been greater than those of any G7 country, a \$600 million reduction since 2010.

In April 2010, MATCH International's funding from CIDA was cut, with losses representing 75 per cent of the organization's total budget.

In July 2010 CIDA program funding to the Canadian Council on International Cooperation – the umbrella organizations for Canadian-based development NGOs – was terminated. Happily, CCIC has bounced back as [CCIC Re-imagined, Restructured, Renewed](#).

In 2012 the Harper government closed down Rights & Democracy following a tumultuous and shameful [public confrontation](#) between Board members, the President and staff.

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And on September 10, 2014, The **North-South Institute** announced that it would close. In an article by Paul Martin, Joe Clark, Ed Broadbent and Joseph Ingram, the authors deplored the news reminding readers that “The closing of NSI constitutes the jettisoning of a critically important tool of Canadian leadership internationally, exercised not through Canadian military or economic might, but rather through our capacity to generate and globally disseminate knowledge and best-practice alternatives.” [North-South Institute: We’ve lost a Canadian asset](#)

So that’s the historical overview. Now: Going forward

“Many of you have worried that Canada has lost its compassionate and constructive voice in the world over the past 10 years. “Well, I have a simple message for you: on behalf of 35 million Canadians, we’re back.”- Justin Trudeau

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s often repeated declaration that *Canada is back* is music to the ears of all of us who care about Canada’s role on the world stage – a role which has been severely diminished by successive governments since the glory days of the last half of the 20th century. But there is a long way to go to re-establish Canada as the influential soft power that she was.

It is encouraging that Global Affairs Canada Minister Stéphane Dion is seconded by the Minister of International Development (and La Francophonie) whose [mandate](#) is to “Refocus Canada’s development assistance on helping the poorest and most vulnerable, and supporting fragile states. This would include: *consulting with Canadian stakeholders and international aid organizations to create a new policy and funding framework to guide Canada’s aid decisions, empower people, and support broad-based, sustainable growth in the developing world.*”

Will there be changes to the [international assistance priorities](#) enunciated under the Harper government?

[Increasing food security](#)

[Securing the future of children and youth](#)

[Stimulating sustainable economic growth](#)

[Advancing democracy](#)

[Promoting stability and security](#)

When the budget is tabled next Tuesday, we will be able to see the broad outlines of this government’s commitment to international cooperation.

Now, from the general international development context to education – and how these fit together.

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Education

Education and international cooperation – as the song says “you can’t have one without the other”.

Almost exactly one month ago, the federal government [announced](#) the launch of a new education brand, *EduCanada* to represent the country’s global education scheme and attract more international students to Canadian institutions. The press release notes that “The Government of Canada works closely with the provinces and territories to market the quality and value of a Canadian education around the world.” And it adds that “It is estimated that in 2015, 357,000 international students collectively spent more than \$10 billion in Canada and generated employment for some 90,000 Canadians.”

Making the announcement, The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of International Trade, said the following: *“International students are ambassadors of their own countries while they are with us, and once they return home, they become ambassadors for Canada in their communities. We must continue to highlight internationally the excellence in Canadian education, and I am very pleased with today’s campaign to attract new students from around the world.”*

This is indeed a promising development; but I would sound a **cautionary note** and would love to hear your thoughts.

The moral dilemma: when Canada welcomes gifted foreign students from developing nations to our universities, it is usually understood that they will return to their home countries to share the knowledge and the skills acquired here. But many do not. For some, often the ‘best and brightest’, it is tempting to continue to pursue advanced degrees in North America. For others, unexpected and irresistible work opportunities open here. And so, Canada is contributing to a ‘brain drain’ from precisely those countries that are most in need.

In this regard, it has just been announced that Philip H. Knight, the co-founder and chairman of Nike Inc., [has pledged to give Stanford University \\$400 million](#) to recruit graduate students around the globe to address society’s most intractable problems, including poverty and climate change.

Starting in 2018, the Knight-Hennessy Scholars Program will annually offer full tuition and board to 100 students — a third of them from the United States and two-thirds from abroad — who will gain admittance to one of Stanford’s seven graduate schools and commit to working on important issues in small, multidisciplinary teams.

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I could not agree more with Stanford’s president John L. Hennessy’s accompanying statement: “To say we can solve all the world’s problems is naïve ... *To say we can educate people to make a significant difference in trying to solve those problems — that’s an achievable goal.*”

Pearson College alumnus Brett House, now a Massey Visiting Scholar, recently organized – and chaired - a roundtable on the Centre for International Policy Studies (CIPS) Working Group report: *Building Canada’s Engagement with Global Sustainable Development*

The working group was co-chaired by Margaret Biggs, a former president of CIDA, and John McArthur, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and UN Foundation.

You may have read the [extensive interview with the report’s authors](#) published in the CIC’s digital publication *Open Canada* in late January.

While the report is packed with excellent analysis and strong recommendations, I would particularly draw your attention to the authors’ 4th recommendation: Ensure Global Education for a Global Generation: *Set a target such that, by 2030, every Canadian university graduate completes an overseas learning or work opportunity, with an emphasis on emerging economies*

I would argue that **the opportunity to study or work abroad should not be limited to university and college students**. As the experience of our NGOs has shown, there are so many communities in the developing world that could use the help of creative young minds with technical or trade skills. And who are the best innovators? Youth, of course.

Prime Minister Trudeau has promised to “invest \$25 million annually in a restored Youth Service Program that would give young Canadians valuable work and life experience, and provide communities with the help required for much-needed projects.”

In response, last December Ilona Dougherty, co-founder of Apathy is Boring, and I wrote an opinion piece [How to build a youth national service program that actually works](#)

We recommended the establishment of a truly national service program that “inspires Canadian youth from all socio-economic backgrounds, from every corner of the country, to undertake a service year following secondary school before going on to pursue a vocation or university.”

The article concludes:

“Today’s young people believe in community, service and innovation. They volunteer and care passionately about the problems of our country and our planet. They bring fresh approaches

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to tough issues like climate change and renewable energy, the promotion of peace and social justice, economic prosperity and national security.”

I believe passionately that international education is indispensable to creating a more socially just, economically sound and environmentally sustainable future.

As I was preparing for this talk, I reminded myself of the etymology of the word ‘Education’.

‘Education’ is derived from a combination of the words **e** (out) and **ducare** (lead, drawing), or *drawing out*. Most modern etymologists agree that this implied meaning is not a misinterpretation, and that *drawing out* is indeed the true meaning of **educate**.

Wikipedia defines **Education** as “the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Educational methods include storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, and directed research. Etymologically, the word "education" is derived from the Latin *ēducātiō* ("A breeding, a bringing up, a rearing") from *ēducō* ("I educate, I train") which is related to the homonym *ēducō* ("I lead forth, I take out; I raise up, I erect") from *ē-* ("from, out of") and *ducō* ("I lead, I conduct").

Thus, education in its broad sense is a form of leadership.

And I am thrilled that for the past eight years, first at the Jeanne Sauvé Foundation and now at Pearson College, I have been able to devote myself to working with remarkable young leaders whose ambitions include the marriage of the two.

I agree with my colleague John Walmsley , past Principal of United World Atlantic College, who [wrote recently](#) “I believe international education - bringing together young people from totally diverse areas of the world with different beliefs, attitudes, experiences - can be a long term solution to some of the problems the world faces. He argues “... *our young people aren’t students forever, they are future politicians, teachers, economists, many of whom go back to their home countries to put what they’ve learned into practice.* “

Just to prove the point, I would like to cite [an article in the Times of Israel](#) about Pearson alumnus and Israeli hi-tech executive **Oded Rose** for whom the time at Pearson was truly transformational and, as it turns out, inspirational.

“A year and a half ago he opened the **Eastern Mediterranean International School**, on the campus of Kfar Hayarok, an agricultural youth village located between Tel Aviv and Ramat Hasharon.

The school currently hosts 140 students, 20 percent of whom are Israeli Jews and Arabs, 20 percent of whom are Palestinians or citizens of Arab and Muslim countries, with the remaining 60 percent hailing from lands as diverse as Germany, Cambodia, New Zealand, China and Ecuador.

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Almost all students receive full or partial scholarships, says Rose, funded by Israel's Ministry of Education, foundations, and private donors.

Almost none of the non-Israeli students are Jewish, and there are even students from Afghanistan, Venezuela and Yemen, countries with which Israel has no diplomatic relations.”

Since I officially took up my position as President and Head of College last August, I have been constantly amazed by the range of experience, talent, knowledge and wisdom of our young students – and the accomplishments of our many extraordinary alumni.

Speaking of which, did you know that David Newland , host of *Adventure Canada*, is an alumnus of Pearson and will be at the Greater Victoria Public Library Juan de Fuca Branch for this evening's presentation featuring photography, video, stories and songs inspired by Adventure Canada expeditions to the Arctic and east coast?

I hope you all saw [the article](#) in the *Times Colonist* about the six Pearson students who spent their project week at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria sharing their verbal and linguistic fluency in their first languages with immigrants and refugees.

I encourage you to consult and bookmark our website <http://www.pearsoncollege.ca/> , and to follow [Pearson UWC](#) on Facebook for daily bulletins about comings and goings at Pearson and stories of some of our alumni.

Our students thrive in the ambiance fostered by the United World College movement. We will ensure that they continue to do so by securing Pearson's future as a global innovator in leadership education, offering top-notch academic and experiential curriculum as well as service opportunities.

As a key part of my first year at Pearson, the Board of Directors and I have launched a strategic planning process to revisit our vision and define a road map for achieving it. The plan will accurately reflect the views and recommendations of a broad range of our stakeholders including our current students and alumni. Between now and April, we will engage hundreds of Pearson supporters – both on and off campus – in this exercise.

In conclusion, I believe that there is a bright future ahead for international cooperation founded on global education. Canada will again be playing its part and so will Pearson College!

Thank you for your attention.