

# Canada's UN Security Council Loss Shows Its "Foreign Policy Weaknesses"

Will it Embolden a Reform Movement?

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*India, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, and Kenya after a second round, won the June 17 elections at the 74th United Nations Assembly for five non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council for a two-year term starting on January 1, 2021.*

The biggest loser was Canada in its competition with Ireland and Norway for two seats available. A total of 128 votes were needed to secure a two-thirds majority. Norway secured 130 votes while Ireland got 128. Canada received just 108 votes. All efforts of phone calls by the Canadian officials to countries ambassadors to the UN did not help. This is the second loss following the one in 2010 under a Conservative government.

In the next few days we will read several analyses trying to ascertain why Canada lost what it considered a coveted position at the UN. **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** was campaigning for it since 2015. But the result was not totally unexpected as we [suggested](#) before the vote took place.

A very active [campaign](#) undertaken by Canadians asking the international community and Ambassadors at the UN not to vote for Canada had already laid out several reasons and may have had a small role in the outcome of the vote.

It is significant to note one of the most glaring contradictions or double standard. Ottawa professes to value the rule of law, however it can't even abide by the resolutions of the same body it aspired to sit on UNSC. The Canadian government has refused to abide by the 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." The resolution also urges "the intensification and acceleration of international and regional diplomatic efforts and support aimed at achieving, without delay a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions". On the contrary, Ottawa has stated that it will act as an [asset for Israel](#)"" on the Council. Further, it has consistently voted against the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination together with the US, "Israel" and a handful of other countries.

The Canadian government continues to promote its long-gone value as a "peacekeeping" country. However, that may just be rhetoric or wishful thinking. Canada's political closeness to the war-prone US government leading to interventions in other countries is more the real image in the era of Hybrid Wars. The Liberal Trudeau government has also signed off on a \$14 billion Light Armoured Vehicle [sale to Saudi Arabia](#) that was negotiated by the previous Conservative government.

Canada is aligned to most US foreign military incursions by ideology and by deed providing willingly its soft power in the guise of military and police training to countries with questionable records on human rights. In 2017-2018, the Canadian Directorate of Military Training and Cooperation delivered [training](#) to more than 1,500 candidates from 56 member countries across the globe. That may not be the offending part of it's foreign policy as several countries provide similar service, but doing that while stating as part of its [mission](#) to "Promote Canadian democratic principles, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights in the international arena", may well be seen as another contradiction.

Geopolitical reality seems to reveal Canada's policy incongruity and UN member States may see through that pretentious presupposition. Canada's silence about the military coup in Bolivia last November and its forceful determination to regime change in Venezuela against the legitimately elected government of Nicolas Maduro betray precisely a disregard for "democratic principles" and the "rule of law" in the international arena. The UN recognises the Venezuelan Ambassador appointed by the legitimate government of Venezuela.

Canada is not a peace-loving internationalist country anymore. It has lost the appeal that may have held in the past, and is [criticised](#) today for letting its mining corporations abuse the human rights and the environment in other - mostly - African countries.

At a time when the issue of racism managed to take over the world media stage over the killing of **George Floyd** in the US replacing the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been suggested that the block of [black and brown countries](#) of Africa may have rejected Canada's bid to the UNSC. When pressured to give his opinion on the anti-racism protests in the US at the beginning of June, Justin Trudeau avoided criticising Trump's administration and chose instead to [recognise](#) that there is "systemic discrimination" against racialised groups in Canada.

In concluding, the loss of the Canadian government on the international stage may be a victory for Canadians at home. Usually the Canadian public doesn't seem to care about foreign policy, which is never on the top 10 list of voter priorities. Only Canadians following regularly foreign policy would react to the news of a lost vote at the UN.

However, the campaign launched by Canadians questioning Canada's bid to a UNSC seat perhaps shows that Canadians care about Canada's international image and the possible links to domestic policy. They are willing to speak up and in fact, a [new campaign](#) has already being launched calling on the Prime Minister "to fundamentally reassess Canadian foreign policy." This in itself is a victory.

The international community has not given a vote of confidence to Canada's foreign policy by denying a seat to the UNSC. That's all the international community can do. It is up to Canadians now to demand changes to the Canadian government.

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