

A Dialogue on Foreign Policy

abroad, we are advancing humanitarian concerns that Canadians have long cherished, and are promoting social models endorsed by many of our allies. At the same time, we are helping to foster global conditions conducive to our own security and prosperity. As we try to realize our social and political values more fully at home, we can benefit ourselves and others by also promoting these values abroad.

One of the most internationally respected elements of Canada's foreign policy is our long-standing advocacy of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, respect for diversity, gender equality and good governance. While such values are embraced by many nations and peoples, Canada has unique opportunities to contribute to their realization in virtue of our population and our experience.

Examples abound of Canada's assets in this area. In a world of intra-state conflict and ethnic strife, Canada's experience as a federal, bilingual and multicultural state shows that nations can combine diversity and social cohesion. Our flexible federalism, which seeks to balance national solidarity with respect for local autonomy, has been taken as an example by other countries trying to unite peoples of different languages and cultures. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is seen abroad as an inclusive framework for articulating rights in a diverse society.

As a country open to immigrants from all over the world and committed to their full participation in all aspects of society, Canada is respected abroad for its understanding of cultural differences. We have been called on by other countries to share our experience with dialogue and the peaceful resolution of differences; many opportunities exist for us to serve a mediating role.

Amid current international tensions, Canadians may be able to play an important global role in fostering dialogue among different cultural communities. By reaching out to partners at home and abroad, we can work to show all nations that diverse religions are compatible with shared core values of democracy, human rights, diversity and civility. Highlighting the diversity within all faiths may help us collectively to respond better to extremists who would radicalize religion for political aims.

Promoting our culture

Another of Canada's foreign policy aims is to enrich our country by attracting foreign students. Not only do they contribute economically to our country, but over time foreign students foster the exchange of knowledge, cultural understanding and commercial prospects between citizens of Canada and other countries. Promoting