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something about the long-standing, but now decisive crisis in state order that is sweeping the world, undermining “peace, order and good government” in as many as thirty of the world’s states.

The crisis of ‘state order’ is a product of two waves of freedom that have swept the world since 1945: the first began with the independence of India and culminated with Mandela’s walk to freedom in 1990. This wave of self-determination brought majority rule, national independence and democracy to Asian and African peoples ruled by the great European empires. The second wave began with the breakup of the last European empire, the Soviet Union, in 1991. Since then 16 new states from the Baltic to central Asia have emerged and are now struggling for viability. Under the impact of these two waves, the number of states has jumped from 45 to 191. There are more democracies than ever before, more genuine freedom—for women, for previously subjugated minorities, for colonized peoples—than at any time in human history. But if a majority of states are stable and self-governing, a significant number rank as burdened, failing, failed or rogue states.

Burdened states are those without the resources or the institutions to meet the needs of their people. Failing states are those where the central government no longer controls all its territory, and is battling insurgencies or separatist movements. Failed states are those where law and order have broken down and basic service provision has failed. Rogue states are those where government functions but where government defies the obvious rules of the international community.

For Canadians, the crisis of state order is not a distant issue. Our concern for it is not simply humanitarian. It has direct impact on our interests. Three of our most important recent immigration streams—from Somalia, Sri Lanka and Haiti—have come from failed or failing states. While we must always maintain our commitments to provide asylum for refugees, and while it is in our interest to maintain comparatively high levels of immigration, it is not obvious how any rich and favoured country like Canada can expect to maintain effective immigration control and population management if we find ourselves living in a global order where state order is collapsing in twenty-five to thirty states around the world.