



## Group 2: Constitutional and Governance - Discussion Summary

*What are Canada's strengths, niches, special areas of expertise and capacity to engage. What does Canada bring to peacebuilding.*

- Canada is not seen as a colonial, neo-colonial power or superpower. Canada is seen as having credible expertise especially in municipal, provincial and federal government management and governance.
- Canada stands up for others and promotes the implementation of international standards i.e. environmental standards.
- Canada has expertise at managing conflicts - in assisting in interventions by the international community and mediating between superpowers.
- Canadians learn when their mandate is inappropriate, unlike some other countries who continue even if their methods prove not to be effective.
- The opportunity to come together as citizens to discuss these foreign policy issues.

### Perceptions of Canada

- In Africa/Caribbean/Pacific where Canada is a relatively important player - the reaction becomes either more positive or more resentful as we become more and more engaged. In Indonesia there is currently concern about Canada's involvement.
- Cutbacks in Canada's ODA program can shape perception. As ODA program resources shrink, there can be an increasing perception that Canada has an agenda and that aid is more conditional.

- While Canada is regarded as a middle-sized power it is sometimes perceived as associated with major powers because of its membership in the G7. Canada should therefore endeavour to define its peacebuilding efforts as helping our global neighbours.

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### What should Canada do in the future

Some of the most critical policy issues will be how governance, reconstruction and civil society all come together. They interrelate differently depending on the situation. Canada has chosen to invest much in our international role. We give aid in 120 countries instead of focusing intensively on 13-14. We are in a position to assemble a wide range of resources for possible responsive intervention.

Non-specialization is our specialization. In the future, Canada should respond to fewer events but in a more comprehensive, multi-faceted way. We should design complete and well thought-out plans for peacebuilding. We need to find the right mix, the right amount of influence in the right order, where 1-2 countries act as the lead countries in a situation, rather than many countries contributing in a more minor way in every single conflict event.

The intervention needs to be better coordinated, and more carefully chosen. Intervention should be a recipe rather than a shopping list. It is a matter of assessing each country's strengths (resource inventory).

Canada should identify its strongest expertise - such as resource management - and go beyond good plans on paper, and strengthen the implementation.