

context at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has changed this year with the appointment of John Manley as Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister and Gaëtan Lavertu as the new Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, the foreign policy mandate was renewed following the re-election of the Government. He stressed the importance of capacity building and strengthening the foreign policy community, especially by engaging youth. The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD) is committed to these objectives through all its activities, including the Annual Graduate Student Seminar and youth participation in roundtables on a regular basis.

2. CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

2.1. The World Today: A Journalist Perspective, Marcus Gee (Globe and Mail)

Marcus Gee spoke about the difficulty of branding Canada. Canadians do not have a distinctive accent or cuisine and Canada does not make many products that are readily distinguishable around the world. Canadian identity may appear fuzzy and indistinct and may not be easy to pinpoint. Nonetheless, one of Canada's most respected traditions is internationalism. The Canadian government should recognise this asset and devote more resources to maintaining Canada's internationalist role, he said. Instead, resources to development assistance and peacekeeping have been plummeting. There is no long term national commitment to internationalism. One option would be to fix a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), peacekeeping and other activities.

The lack of an internationalist vision is reflected in the private sector and the media as well. Private companies usually invest or produce in safe places, with a few exceptions, including Talisman. They should be encouraged to think more internationally. The lack of an international dimension in the media is demonstrated by the fact that there is no Canadian staff journalist or news organisation in Japan, for instance. Similarly, The Globe and Mail has no staff correspondent in Latin America. There is a lack of foreign affairs expertise in the media in general. Gee concluded that despite the shaky commitment of the Canadian government to internationalism and the lack of vision in the private sector and the media, Canadians are outward-looking, partly because of Canada's immigration tradition.

The discussion revolved around three issues: 1) the outward-looking nature of Canadians, 2) the need for leadership on foreign affairs issues and 3) the lack of resources. Some participants questioned the degree to which Canadians care about world affairs. Maureen Molot (Norman Paterson School of International Affairs) asked about the role of the media in shaping the public interest. Is it the media who influence the public or the other way around? Gee said the landmines campaign demonstrates that Canadians are interested in foreign policy issues if they are encouraged. Leadership is key in mobilising public support for international initiatives. A point was made that lack of resources will likely cripple the Canadian capacity to carry on the internationalist tradition. Gee responded that "while internationalism may not pay, Canadians want to stand for something."