

THE UNITED NATIONS AND CANADA

WHAT CANADA COULD AND SHOULD DO AT THE UNITED NATIONS 2018: A QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP

Preface: An Open Letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland Concerning the Government of Canada's Foreign Policy

John E. Trent, Editor

Dear Mr. Prime Minister and Minister Freeland,

Your Liberal Party electoral program and your government's early foreign policy pronouncements announced Canada's 'Recommitment to the United Nations and the international community' and to reinforcing multilateralism by re-establishing Canada's 'leadership in world politics'. We fully understand that you have been justifiably preoccupied with our relationship with the United States. But the world is in economic, social and political turmoil that is putting pressure on international organizations. It requires countries like Canada to mobilize coalitions of actors and civil society to renew the international system. The objective of this booklet is to encourage your Government to return to your two goals of reengagement and leadership on the world stage before it is too late.

With regard to reengagement with the United Nations, the Liberals said Canada would enhance its participation in peacekeeping, welcome refugees and immigrants, combat global warming, increase aid to the poorest in developing countries, protect women and children in conflict, furnish humanitarian aid following natural catastrophes, change the approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, promote human rights and rebuild bridges with the international community. There is also the question of UN renewal to achieve these ends. Your speeches on diversity, optimism, openness and tolerance were applauded around the world. But clearly we must move beyond words to greater action.

Your Government has also announced its intention to seek a seat on the UN Security Council for the period 2021-2022. This campaign is entering a crucial year at the UN. Canada started late and faces very strong competition from Ireland and Norway, who both make strong, consistent contributions to the work of the Organization. Not only will UN member states want to know what Canada will do for them but more importantly what leadership role Canada will undertake for the UN as an institution. Time is short. Our campaign will require a strategy and a team of specialists to show why Canada is worthy of being elected. We have to show how our foreign policy goals are attached to significant global norms that are crucial for the world's future.

Mr. Trudeau and Minister Freeland, in these times, when others lack a strong commitment to multilateralism, we would like to encourage your Government to return to the foreign policy objectives you enunciated during the election campaign and the government's first months in office.

Sincerely,

John Trent

Chair, Board of Directors, World Federalist Movement - Canada