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A Roadmap for Canada in 2025: Reclaiming Leadership and Unity

Canada stands at a crucial juncture in 2025, where the decisions we make today will shape the nation's future for generations. The opportunity to reclaim our leadership on the world stage and restore our national unity is within reach. However, the path to realizing this vision will require bold actions, decisive leadership, and a commitment to the principles that have historically defined this country: democracy, freedom, equality, and opportunity.

This report lays out a transformative roadmap for Canada to emerge as a global leader and a unified, prosperous nation in 2025. Key areas of focus include foreign policy, immigration, public safety, higher education, economic reform, military investment, and confronting extremism. By addressing these critical challenges head-on, Canada can rebuild its international reputation, secure its future, and strengthen its social fabric.

Restoring Global Leadership

Over the past decade, Canada's international reputation has steadily declined, marked by strained relationships with key allies and inconsistent foreign policies. Our standing has faltered as a result of misaligned priorities, failure to align with democratic values, and instances of misguided inaction.

One of the primary concerns has been Canada's shifting stance toward its allies. Relations with Israel, a crucial ally in the Middle East, have soured, largely due to Canada's perceived reluctance to support Israel against hostile forces in the region. Canada's refusal to halt financial aid to Hamas through UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) and its failure to provide military assistance to Israel has led to significant strain in diplomatic relations. Similarly, our relationship with India, one of our largest trading partners,

has been significantly weakened by diplomatic missteps, and the United States has voiced frustration over Canada's policies, particularly in trade. The incoming Trump administration has signaled the possibility of tariffs on Canada's exports, further highlighting the lack of trust between our two nations.

To regain global credibility, Canada must realign its foreign policy with the countries that share our democratic values, namely Israel, India, and the United States. Strengthening these relationships is crucial to restoring Canada's role as a trusted partner on the world stage. By supporting our allies unequivocally and adopting a principled stance at international forums such as the United Nations, Canada can reassert itself as a nation that stands for something significant. This means unequivocally condemning terrorism, including Hamas, and supporting policies that promote peace, stability, and democratic principles globally.

Addressing the Immigration Challenge

Canada has long been regarded as a land of opportunity and a beacon of hope for immigrants from around the world. However, our immigration system is under strain. Rapid population growth, combined with the pressure to accommodate newcomers from diverse backgrounds, has led to growing challenges in integrating immigrants into the social fabric of the nation. While immigration remains an essential element of Canada's identity, it is necessary to address the long-term sustainability of our policies.

To maintain the social cohesion of the nation, a critical examination of immigration policies is essential. A reduction in immigration from countries whose cultural practices conflict with Canadian values is necessary to preserve the social integrity of our society. More stringent vetting procedures should be implemented to ensure that immigrants share the core values that underpin Canadian democracy, such as gender equality, the rejection of honor killings, and respect for human rights. The introduction of a values-based test for immigration would help ensure that newcomers are aligned with our democratic principles.

Inspired by Germany's approach to citizenship and its requirements for immigrants to demonstrate respect for human rights, including questions about antisemitism and the right of Israel to exist, Canada should introduce a similar test for all potential immigrants. This would not only foster integration but also ensure that newcomers can fully embrace the values of freedom and equality that define Canadian society.

Empowering Public Safety

Canada's reputation as a peaceful and welcoming nation is under threat from radical ideologies that have gained traction in certain corners of society. In recent years, there has been a troubling rise in extremism, both domestic and foreign, which threatens the safety and security of Canadians. Pro-Hamas demonstrations, ISIS sympathizers, and individuals espousing violent ideologies have been able to spread hate and engage in acts of intimidation without sufficient oversight or consequence. The violent attack in New Orleans by an ISIS sympathizer in late 2024 serves as a stark reminder that the threat of radical violence is real and escalating.

In response to this growing threat, Canada must empower its law enforcement agencies to effectively combat hate crimes, extremist rhetoric, and violent protests. The legal system must be more proactive in addressing hate speech and incitement to violence. Police forces should be given the tools and training necessary to manage public order and protect citizens from extremist elements that seek to disrupt Canadian society. This includes reducing bureaucratic obstacles that prevent the effective prosecution of hate crimes and ensuring that law enforcement can quickly act to prevent violence from escalating.

Canada must also take a firm stance against the forces of intolerance that have recently gained ground, particularly within certain radical groups. By creating a clear legal framework to combat extremism, we will send a strong message that Canada will not tolerate hate, violence, or radical ideologies that seek to undermine the values of freedom, peace, and mutual respect.

Revitalizing Higher Education

Canada's universities, once renowned as bastions of critical thinking and free speech, have increasingly become fertile ground for divisive ideologies. The rise of so-called "wokeism," which seeks to suppress dissenting opinions and promote radical social agendas, has marginalized traditional values and stifled productive debate. Additionally, some institutions have given cover to extremist groups by allowing them to promote their ideologies under the guise of academic freedom.

The federal government must reevaluate its funding policies for universities, particularly those that promote divisive and radical ideologies that undermine Canadian values. Programs that promote critical thinking, mutual respect, and constructive dialogue should be prioritized, while institutions that fail to address extremism within their ranks should face financial consequences. Provincial governments must also play a role in holding universities accountable for ensuring that their campuses are places of intellectual diversity and open debate, rather than echo chambers for radicalism.

Moreover, universities should be places where students are encouraged to think critically, engage with differing perspectives, and develop the skills necessary to be productive, thoughtful citizens. The federal government should work to reintroduce policies that foster intellectual diversity and ensure that future generations are equipped to lead with integrity and reason.

Economic Innovation and Reform

Canada's economic system is in need of significant reform to ensure it remains competitive and sustainable. With a ballooning national debt and an overextended public sector, there is an urgent need to streamline government services and reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies. This would create the space necessary for private sector growth, innovation, and job creation.

One of the key pillars of Canada's economic renewal must be the revitalization of entrepreneurship. By offering tax incentives for small businesses, providing targeted support for startups, and reducing unnecessary red tape, Canada can foster an environment where innovation

thrives. A more dynamic private sector would not only generate employment opportunities but also help lift Canadians out of poverty and into the middle class.

At the same time, Canada must address the growing national debt, which poses a serious threat to the country's long-term fiscal health. The government must take steps to reduce spending, particularly in areas where it can be most effective. A commitment to fiscal discipline will ensure that Canada can continue to provide essential services while avoiding the risks of runaway debt.

Modernizing Military Investment

For decades, Canada's military has been underfunded and under-equipped to deal with modern security challenges. The rise of global instability, particularly in the Middle East and the Arctic, requires that Canada invest heavily in its military to ensure that the nation's sovereignty is protected and that it can play a significant role in maintaining global stability.

This will require significant investment in modernizing Canada's military capabilities, including cutting-edge technology, improved training programs, and increased strategic alliances with our global partners. A well-equipped military will ensure that Canada can respond to emerging threats, defend its interests, and contribute to global peace and security.

A modern military is not only essential for national defense but also for ensuring that Canada remains a respected player on the world stage. By revitalizing our defense capabilities, Canada can once again assert itself as a serious force in international relations.

Confronting Extremism and Hate

Extremism and hate remain significant challenges to Canada's unity and safety. The recent surge in hate crimes, including incidents such as the defacing of Jewish institutions with swastikas in Winnipeg, is a stark reminder that these issues cannot be ignored. The failure to take strong action against such displays of hate only serves to embolden those who seek to divide Canadians along racial, religious, and ideological lines.

At the same time, the world remains silent as radical groups, such as Hamas, continue to hold Israeli hostages and perpetrate violence in the Middle East. Canada must not be silent in the face of these atrocities. By standing firmly against terrorism and extremism, both at home and abroad, Canada can reclaim its moral leadership and contribute to a more stable and just world.

Rebuilding Canada's Identity and Unity

Canada's identity as a unified, democratic nation has been under threat in recent years. The forces of division, whether from within or from external actors, have sought to weaken the social fabric that has held the nation together for over 150 years. It is crucial that Canada take decisive action to rebuild its sense of shared purpose and national pride.

This includes reaffirming the values that have made Canada a beacon of hope to the world: freedom, democracy, equality, and respect for human rights. By recommitting to these principles

and ensuring that they are upheld in all areas of public life, Canada can restore its identity as a nation that stands tall on the world stage, proud of its history and values.

In conclusion, the challenges facing Canada in 2025 are substantial, but they are not insurmountable. By taking bold, decisive action in the areas of foreign policy, immigration, public safety, higher education, economic reform, military investment, and confronting extremism, Canada can reclaim its leadership on the world stage and ensure a prosperous and unified future for generations to come. The time for change is now, and the path forward is clear: a Canada that stands proudly on its principles and remains committed to a brighter, stronger future.

Note: This paper is based on an article written by AGPI's Founder and CEO, Avi Abraham Benlolo and published on the front page of the National Post: <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/new-years-resolution-make-canada-into-a-serious-country-again>