

The Plan for a Stronger Canada

National Security for Canadians

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Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

The Plan for a Stronger Canada : National Security for Canadians.

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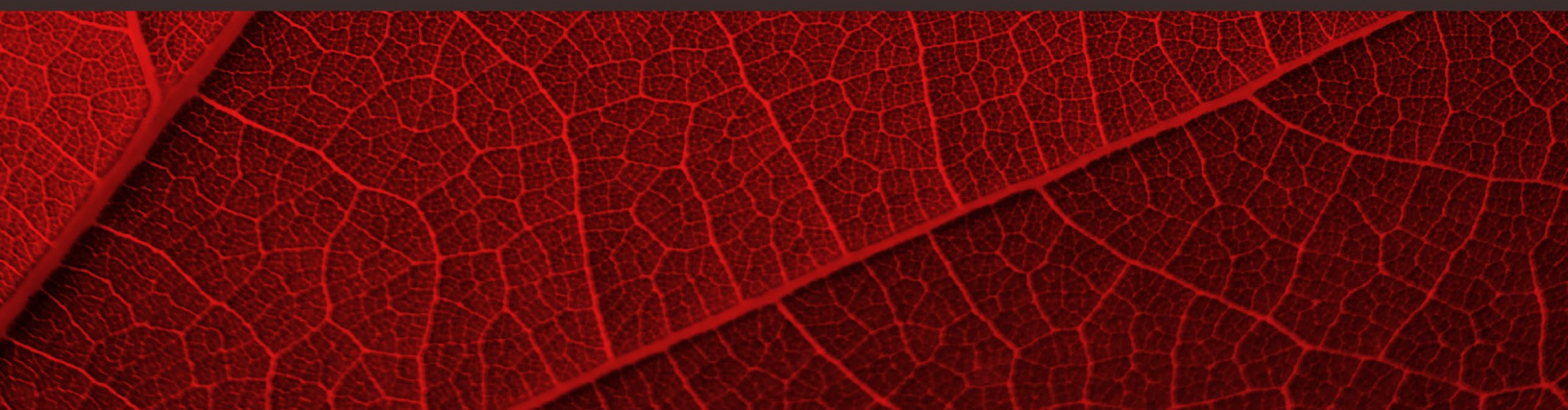
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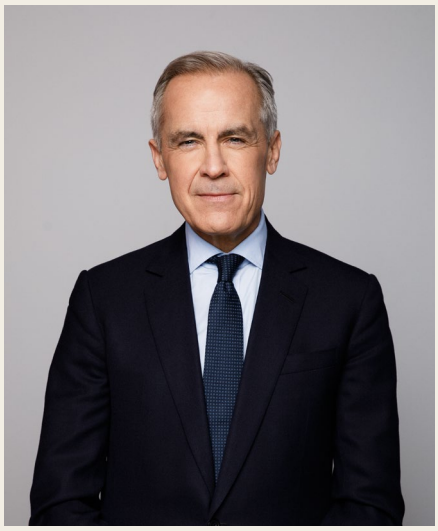
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Message from the Prime Minister



This is the plan for a sovereign, resilient, and prosperous Canada.

It has been over 20 years since Canada last published a national security policy. Today's world demands a new plan that reflects profound new realities.

Canada stands at a hinge moment in history.

The world is increasingly defined by contested borders, authoritarian aggression, and acute global threats. The long-held belief that the combination of our geography, interconnectedness, and a rules-based international order could substitute for Canadian sovereign capacity to protect ourselves is no longer tenable.

Threats once thought distant are now immediate and proximate. The international rules-based order is under threat. The open global trading system is deeply challenged. What were once strengths—our strong connections and deep integration with other countries—have become vulnerabilities.

To bolster our sovereignty and national security, we will build long-term economic strength through generational domestic investments. We will develop a dense web of trading relationships that bolster our strategic capabilities. We will focus our diplomatic efforts on practical cooperation and partnerships that will help us influence the course of global events to serve the interests of Canadians. We will rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces. We will develop our sovereign defence industrial capabilities. We will collect actionable intelligence. We will continue to invest in keeping our borders secure and stopping criminals. We will live up to our responsibility to defend Canada's Arctic in support of Canadian, North American, and global security.

The Plan for a Stronger Canada puts forward an ambitious vision: A Canada that controls its own destiny and is resilient in the face of daunting challenges.

The Strategy requires clear priorities and unprecedented focus by the Government of Canada. Fortunately, the new reality plays to Canada's strengths: our people, our resources, and our principles. Canadian energy, critical minerals, advanced manufacturing, and leading technologies will be the bedrock of our relationships that promote a sovereign Canada and contribute to a more secure and prosperous world.

Strengthening Canada's National Security

True sovereignty allows Canadians to live our lives as we choose.

In the 21st century, the requirements for greater strategic autonomy extend far beyond food, conventional energy, and defence, as important as these are. Today's sovereignty requires a set of Strategic Capabilities that together build a stronger Canada which can face global threats.

To withstand the challenges from great power rivalries, authoritarian aggression, frontier AI, climate change, and pandemics, Canada must have access to reliable intelligence, space-based communications, secure telecommunications, and data storage. National resilience requires reliable access to vaccines, semiconductors, payment systems, capital, and more.

We must be strong where it matters: in technology, critical minerals, defence production, energy supply, and transportation, in pharmaceuticals and biotech, in food security and financial systems.

We can achieve greater strategic autonomy through a secure and growing economy, a disciplined foreign policy, a stronger and more agile armed forces, reinforced national defence, and better intelligence functions.

These will allow us to withstand shocks, adapt to the unexpected, make our own choices, and thrive in the decades ahead.

We will build strategic autonomy and national resilience on our own terms. We will honour our commitments as a responsible ally, and we will partner with others to build our collective resilience – guided by enduring national interests:

Canadian sovereignty, first, and above all. Once distant threats are now proximate and immediate. The global order that long protected our sovereignty has ruptured. We are prepared to protect Canada's sovereignty, and when it is threatened, we will act.

A prosperous, inclusive, innovative Canadian economy. We will pursue strategic autonomy and national resilience through economic growth, partnerships, and investment. We will innovate to keep Canada strong.

A cooperative, clear-eyed relationship with the United States. We will work to maintain a relationship with the United States based on mutual respect, national sovereignty, and shared responsibility for the security of North America.

Stability and security internationally, especially in:

- **A global system of partnerships that protect and empower Canada:** we will broaden our options and build our resilience by diversifying our economic and security ties around the world, including with new partners in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere.
- **The Arctic and Americas:** we will exercise Canada's sovereignty through a robust, permanent presence in our Arctic, and we will collaborate closely on security and other issues with like-minded Arctic countries. This, and NORAD, will anchor our wider role in the hemisphere. We will also pursue partnerships for enhanced stability and security, including to combat illegal drugs and the spread of organized crime.
- **Europe:** as a longstanding and like-minded partner, and ally within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), we will continue to prioritize security and stability in Europe. We will significantly deepen our connections and cooperate on Strategic Capabilities to reinforce our collective strength and resilience.
- **The Indo-Pacific:** peace, resilience and security in the Indo-Pacific are vital to Canada – as a Pacific, trading nation. We will work with partners who share our commitment to resolving disputes through diplomacy, fair economic cooperation, and respect for sovereignty and international law.

A values-based society. Unwavering commitment to freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought and expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association have helped make Canada the envy of the world. We will support Canada and Canadians in defending these values from those who would seek to weaken and divide us, including foreign states, new and evolving forms of radicalization, and organized criminal networks.

Strengthening Canada's national security is a national imperative. We will:

- Be transparent and engage Canadians on the seriousness of the threats and the need for effective responses.
- Prepare for all contingencies up to and including war and other worst-case scenarios.
- Pragmatically partner with countries who share our interests and work collectively through variable geometry coalitions to strengthen our Strategic Capabilities and advance our priorities.

The Plan for a Stronger Canada

Canada's national security requires building our Strategic Capabilities in critical sectors, beginning with:

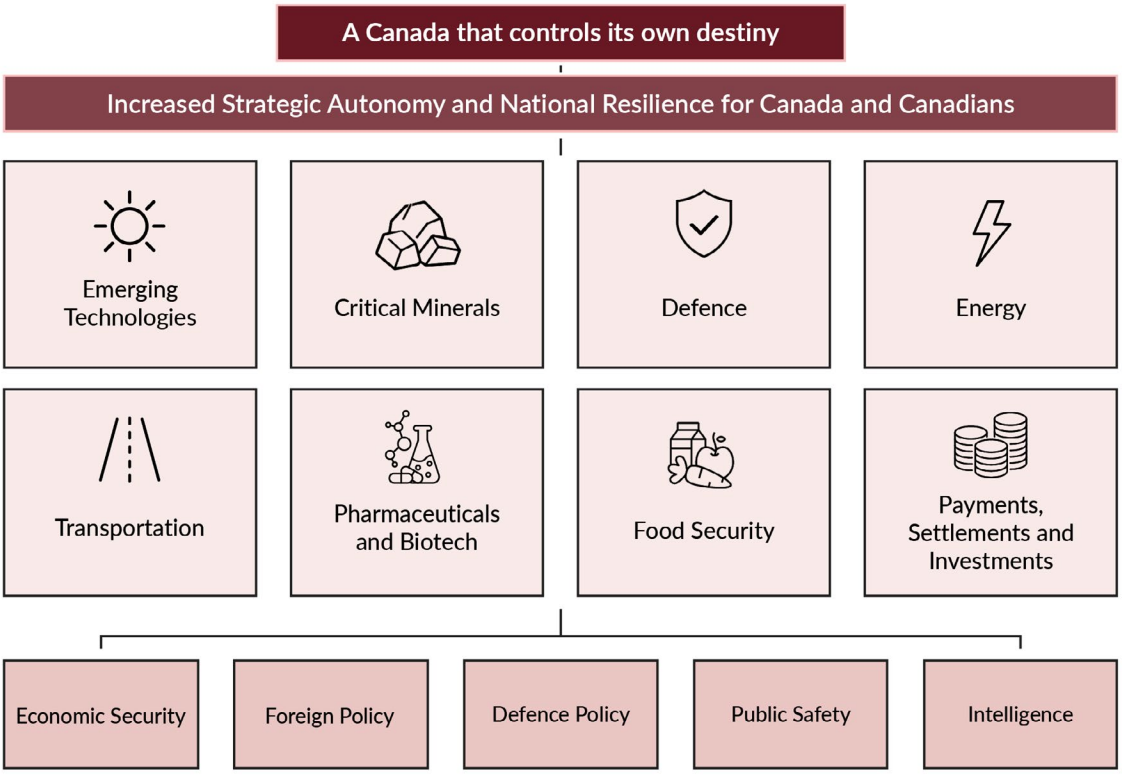
1. Emerging Technologies[1]
2. Critical Minerals
3. Defence
4. Energy
5. Transportation
6. Pharmaceuticals and Biotech
7. Food Security
8. Payments, Settlement, and Investment

Protecting and building these capabilities will drive our decision making at home and abroad. Where we can, we build these strengths at home. Where capabilities are complementary, partnering with reliable allies will bring us strength; where capabilities overlap, partnering will bring us scale.

Our Plan for building these Strategic Capabilities rests upon a foundation of:

1. Economic Security
2. Foreign Policy
3. Defence Policy
4. Public Safety
5. Intelligence

1 Including cloud and AI compute, quantum computing, space-based communications and navigation, semi-conductors and telecommunications.



These elements are mutually reinforcing. A strategic approach to economic security gives Canada more freedom to act and raises the cost of acting against us. Disciplined diplomacy helps keep the world open, peaceful, and predictable for Canadians and Canadian businesses. Investment in defence protects against threats, supports our economy, drives innovation, and gives our diplomacy more weight.

Our security and prosperity also depend on strong domestic institutions, safe public spaces, and the rule of law. Strengthened approaches to fighting crime, foreign interference, and managing emergencies will help Canadians and their communities flourish and build for the future. And more effective approaches to intelligence feed and strengthen every other effort.

Economic Security

Our Plan for a Stronger Canada begins, deliberately, with economic security.

Canada has what the world wants. Securing our sovereignty in key sectors and delivering our resources and expertise to the world will reinforce Canada as a strategically important player in the global economy. Canada's ability to manage foreign threats and shocks to its economy – while fostering growth and guiding economic activity in the national interest – are key.

Economic security is a primary factor in decisions on industrial support, innovation, and foreign investment.

Canadian workers, firms, and innovators need a secure foundation, free from foreign interference, espionage and economic predation, so their efforts can build a prosperous future for all Canadians. We will choose long-term strength over short-term expediency.

To these ends, the Government will produce a plan to:

- Protect, build, and transform Canadian strategic industries. The Strategic Response Fund and the Canada Strong Diversification Fund will strengthen industrial capacity and help businesses pivot and grow;
- Foster a stronger, more unified, and more competitive Canadian economy. Implementing the Buy Canadian Policy will deploy Canadian capital to Canadian businesses;
- Strengthen food security through expanded domestic production, processing, and distribution capacity under the National Food Security Strategy;
- Safeguard supplies of essential medicines and biologics by strengthening biomanufacturing capacity, modernizing regulation, and securing critical health supply chains;
- Strengthen national security and intelligence information-sharing with the private sector and research institutions, and build intelligence, counterintelligence, and security screening capacity to support these partnerships;
- Modernize Canada's economic security toolkit, including stronger enforcement tools to protect Canadians from hostile foreign economic activity;
- Cement Canada as a major player in developing and commercializing advanced technologies, including AI, quantum computing, space-based technology, and energy; and
- Build resilience to economic threats by deepening collaboration internationally with allies and partners, and domestically with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous communities, industry, and academia.

Foreign Policy

Canada is a stable, reliable partner, in a world that is anything but. Our trust capital – built over decades of relationships and through a worldwide network of diplomatic missions – helps keep the world open, peaceful, and predictable for Canadians and Canadian business.

The primary goal of our foreign policy is to support Canadian strategic autonomy and resilience, by building pragmatic relations across an increasingly diverse web of partners, to advance trade, attract investment, and strengthen economic security.

To achieve this, the Government will produce a plan to:

- Diversify Canada's trade relationships while protecting our national and economic security, including communities vulnerable to transnational repression;
- Retool Canadian diplomacy to more effectively help companies expand abroad, secure supply chains, and grow exports;
- Build a new partnership with the United States;
- Align Canada's regional strategies (including the Indo-Pacific Strategy, the Africa Strategy and Arctic Foreign Policy) within a single, global, interest-based approach to foreign policy;
- Foster new avenues for multilateral cooperation among states that share our priorities and challenges, especially middle and regional powers;
- Develop collective economic security mechanisms, such as the Critical Minerals Resilience and Production Alliance, reinforcing our sovereign capabilities in critical sectors;
- Sharpen Canada's foreign policy toolkit - including sanctions and import and export controls - by integrating intelligence more effectively; and
- Reorient Canada's international assistance to advance our national interests and values, and to build deeper relationships.

Defence

A new era in security demands a new approach to defending Canada and Canadians.

Canada has long benefited from its geography. Protecting that geography in a contested world, including in the Arctic, is the defining task for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

We are making a generational investment in the CAF – the bedrock of Canadian security and an engine of this Plan. In 2025–2026, Canada invested 2% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in defence. That share will keep growing, putting Canada on a path to meet the NATO Defence Investment Pledge of 5% of GDP by 2035.

Our investments will ensure Canada can protect itself at home, and act as a responsible ally and partner abroad.

The Government will produce a plan to:

- Give the CAF one clear, central mission: the defence of Canada and Canadian interests;
- Establish CAF as a leader in the concept of "defence in depth" by institutionalizing the lessons of modern conflict (e.g., Ukraine) and developing the specialized capabilities and training that enable us, and our Allies, to adapt and respond to multi domain threats;
- Give Canada a broader, deeper range of military options - credible, flexible, and scalable choices - to deter, and defend against hybrid warfare and threats in space and cyberspace;
- Make Canada a defence partner of choice, meeting our commitments to NORAD and NATO, strengthening partnerships in the Arctic, and demonstrating our ability to contribute to security and stability in the Indo-Pacific, Middle East and elsewhere; and
- Build a robust domestic industrial base capable of equipping and sustaining the CAF and focus defence procurement on maximising strategic autonomy and resilience, working with the Defence Investment Agency to deliver the Defence Industrial Strategy.

Public Safety

Canadians should feel safe and free to take part in every facet of Canadian society.

We will work with domestic partners, including all levels of government, Indigenous Peoples and Northern communities, to strengthen our defences and build resilience against threats facing Canadians. We will intensify efforts to counter foreign interference, espionage, violent extremism, and transnational organized crime, including sabotage, extortion, fraud, online exploitation, financial crime and money laundering, while protecting Canadians and our institutions from foreign information manipulation.

The Government will produce a plan to:

- Counter foreign interference by implementing the Foreign Influence Transparency and Accountability Act, creating a centralized process for reporting incidents and better supporting victims;
- Stop illegal guns, drugs, and human smuggling before they reach our streets by strengthening the border, including new CBSA officers, modernized border technology, and better use of intelligence;
- Protect Canadians, businesses, and institutions from cyber-crime by strengthening the digital capabilities of law enforcement and the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), and by implementing the National Cyber Security Strategy;
- Strengthen Canada's resilience with a comprehensive, all-threats approach to securing critical infrastructure, including government-supported major projects;
- Combat money laundering and financial crime, drawing on new RCMP capacity and the Financial Crimes Agency;
- Drive a coordinated, cross-sectoral fight against the fentanyl/opioid crisis; and
- Strengthen federal leadership in emergency management and enhance societal resilience, including by implementing a national exercise and preparedness program, improving federal capacity to coordinate response and communicate with Canadians, and developing stronger civilian response capabilities.

Intelligence

Canada's ability to collect, analyse and leverage intelligence, together with our partnerships, helps ensure we are not taken by surprise, and that we can operate with an informed understanding of the world around us.

The Government will produce a plan to:

- Increase sovereign intelligence capabilities, collection and analysis;
- Increase contributions to the Five Eyes intelligence partnership, and strengthen and diversify intelligence partnerships elsewhere to expand Canada's access, influence, and resilience;
- Strengthen the capacities of CSE, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and Canada's defence intelligence enterprise;
- Invest in technologies, including artificial intelligence and secure cloud infrastructure, to increase the speed, scale and sophistication of intelligence collection, processing and analysis;
- Strengthen intelligence collaboration with a broader range of partners to identify and counter emerging threats before they reach Canada;
- Enhance Canada's Foreign Information Manipulation Detection capability, using open-source information;
- Increase the speed and depth of intelligence assessment, particularly all-source intelligence;
- Modernize intelligence authorities to reflect current threats and technologies while protecting Canadians' rights; and
- Improve approach to security clearances and information sharing to better protect sensitive information.

Implementation

Implementing the Plan for a Stronger Canada will require new, more efficient ways of working within the national security and intelligence community and across government.

The federal government leads Canada's national security efforts, but the targets of threats, and the tools for responding, may reside within other levels of government, or outside of government altogether. As a first step, the Prime Minister will convene a First Ministers' Meeting on National Security, where First Ministers will look at ways to align federal, provincial, and territorial activities that relate to national security. National security will become a regular agenda item at First Ministers' Meetings.

We will also expand and deepen collaboration with provinces, territories, and Indigenous governments, increasing information sharing and coordination on issues such as economic security, foreign interference, organized crime, emergency response, violent extremism, and election security.

We will also expand direct engagement with strategic sectors of industry, labour unions, and academia, through new and existing advisory bodies.

Canadians should expect more frequent updates to Canada's national security legislative framework to adapt to the pace of new threats and protect our common values.

We will bring forward proposals to modernize legislation within the first year of this Plan and will initiate a review of our entire national security enterprise, including relevant legislation, structures and capabilities, and review and oversight bodies, in order to inform the first update to this strategy, in no more than four years.

Given the pace of change and the evolving environment of threats and opportunities, going forward, we will produce an updated Plan for a Stronger Canada every four years.