



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# STRENGTHENING CANADIAN ENGAGEMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



42<sup>nd</sup> PARLIAMENT, 1<sup>st</sup> SESSION

Hon. Robert D. Nault  
Chair

NOVEMBER 2017

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

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**STRENGTHENING CANADIAN ENGAGEMENT  
IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA**

**Report of the Standing Committee on  
Foreign Affairs and International Development**

**Hon. Robert D. Nault  
Chair**

**NOVEMBER 2017**

**42<sup>nd</sup> PARLIAMENT, 1<sup>st</sup> SESSION**

## **NOTICE TO READER**

### **Reports from committee presented to the House of Commons**

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.

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# **THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

has the honour to present its

## **THIRTEENTH REPORT**

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), the Committee has studied the Situation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia 25 Years After the End of the Cold War and has agreed to report the following:





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS .....	1
STRENGTHENING CANADIAN ENGAGEMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA .....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	3
REGIONAL STABILITY AND MUTUAL TRUST .....	4
A. Competing Regional Interests between the West and Russia.....	6
B. Information Warfare .....	9
C. Promoting Regional Stability and Mutual Trust .....	10
DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION .....	14
A. Social and Ethnic Cleavages.....	18
B. Changing Political Leadership .....	19
C. Supporting Democratic Consolidation .....	20
COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS.....	22
A. Expanding Canadian Commercial Partnerships.....	26
A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH .....	30
A. Ensuring a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Engagement .....	32
Appendix A: List of witnesses.....	35
Appendix B: List of briefs .....	37
Appendix C: Travel to Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Latvia and Poland.....	39
Request for government response .....	49



# LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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*As a result of their deliberations committees may make recommendations which they include in their reports for the consideration of the House of Commons or the Government. Recommendations related to this study are listed below.*

## **Recommendation 1**

**The Government of Canada should continue its sanctions against Russian and post-annexation Crimean officials, those responsible for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine, as well as those involved in the abduction and illegal show trials of Ukrainian citizens in Russia and Crimean Tatars and others within Crimea. The Government of Canada should also engage with the Russian government on the need to respect international law and Ukraine’s sovereignty. ....13**

## **Recommendation 2**

**The Government of Canada should continue to support multilateral efforts, including through the OSCE, NATO, the UN and other international organizations, to bring about a resolution to Russia’s military invasion and illegal annexation of Crimean territory and logistical and military support for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine. In support of this objective, the Government of Canada should continue its commitment to Operation UNIFIER.....14**

## **Recommendation 3**

**The Government of Canada should continue to ensure that Canadian international assistance to Ukraine benefits the most vulnerable populations in the country, particularly the indigenous Crimean Tatars, and those who have been internally displaced by the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea.....14**

## **Recommendation 4**

**The Government of Canada should work with its allies in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and elsewhere to improve collective defence mechanisms against cyberattacks, as well as proactively monitor disinformation campaigns and develop counter measures to minimize damage inflicted by information warfare. This should include continued financial and personnel support for the NATO Centres of Excellence for Co-operative Cyber Defence (Estonia) and for Strategic Communications (Latvia). ....14**

**Recommendation 5**

The Government of Canada should continue to show leadership on security issues by ongoing deployments through Operation REASSURANCE, including air policing in Eastern Europe and the Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroups in the Baltics and Poland. ....14

**Recommendation 6**

The Government of Canada should work with the Canadian business community to engage with government officials, civil society and business leaders in all countries that were adversely affected by Soviet occupation and control on best practices to combat corruption in both the public and private sectors.....15

**Recommendation 7**

The Government of Canada should build on existing multilateral and bilateral efforts that support the enhancement of democratic values, good governance, participatory democracy, the rule of law, and social inclusion of marginalized groups such as women, the LGBTI community, and indigenous populations, through ongoing discussions with government officials, parliamentarians and members of civil society in all countries that were adversely affected by Soviet occupation and control. ....21

**Recommendation 8**

The Government of Canada should work with the Canadian business community to support and promote commercial opportunities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, particularly in areas that build on Canadian expertise in resource management and other sectors. ....29

**Recommendation 9**

The Government of Canada should consider measures to improve the efficiency of the visa application process without compromising considerations related to Canadian security and national priorities. ....34

**Recommendation 10**

The Government of Canada should engage with Eastern European and Central Asian governments on youth-oriented partnership frameworks, including youth mobility agreements and educational exchanges, that facilitate employment experience for young people.....34



## STRENGTHENING CANADIAN ENGAGEMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

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### INTRODUCTION

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (the Committee) travelled to Poland, Latvia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan in January 2017. The objective of the mission was to gather first-hand information for the Committee's study of Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia 25 years after the end of the Cold War. Following this fact-finding mission, the Committee held six meetings in Ottawa to supplement its findings and to prepare a concise report.

It has been over 25 years since the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since then, the geopolitical landscape in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been so completely transformed that it is nearly unrecognizable. Countries across the region re-established their sovereignty or proclaimed their independence for the first time. Institutions, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), expanded their memberships and reconfigured their mandates to align with this new environment. The European Union (EU) deepened its integration and widened its membership with states from Eastern Europe. Trade and security arrangements were redrawn, commitments were made to democratic principles, and millions of people found new economic opportunities.

In the years following the end of the Cold War, Canada was not an idle bystander. It engaged with countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia by leveraging its strong people-to-people ties, a shared commitment to democratic values, and a mutual interest in building economic prosperity. In the process, Canada welcomed new allies, supported democratic transitions, forged new economic partnerships, and reinforced its reputation as a reliable international partner.

While significant political and economic progress has been made throughout these regions over the past 25 years, today the post-Cold War institutional order is struggling with new challenges. The United Kingdom's vote in June 2016 to leave the EU represents a major challenge to that Union, which was already struggling to achieve a degree of consensus on a range of difficult issues. Meanwhile, the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States (U.S.) in November 2016 has raised questions about the future of U.S. relations with the EU, with NATO and its member states, and with Russia. Indeed, relations between the West and Russia are arguably at their lowest point since



the Cold War. Information warfare has also emerged as a weapon for sowing distrust in the age of the Internet and social media. Moreover, democratic consolidation has stalled in some countries, and economic prosperity continues to be elusive for many. All of this just as a new generation of leaders prepares to take office.

This is the regional context in which the Committee decided to undertake its study. While the study could have been approached in any number of ways, the Committee chose to focus on four key countries: Poland, Latvia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. During its fact-finding mission to these countries, the Committee met with a number of interlocutors representing a wide range of perspectives. These included current and former prime ministers, government ministers, and officials representing foreign affairs, defence, and development ministries, among others. It also met with parliamentarians, including members of opposition parties and counterpart committees on foreign affairs. Members of the diplomatic community, representatives of NATO and the OSCE, independent analysts, civil society organizations, as well as industry and business associations provided additional insights from a non-governmental perspective. While the Committee did not visit Russia, the role played by that country in Eastern Europe and Central Asia was a recurring theme throughout the mission, and during the Ottawa-based Committee hearings.

This report presents the Committee's main findings and makes 10 recommendations aimed at strengthening Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and specifically with Poland, Latvia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. The report is structured around four thematic areas which the Committee believes merit greater focus as priority foreign policy areas: promoting regional stability and mutual trust; supporting democratic consolidation; expanding commercial ties; and ensuring a comprehensive approach to Canadian engagement. The sections that follow consider each of these themes in turn.

## **REGIONAL STABILITY AND MUTUAL TRUST**

The Committee heard during its study that several key events have undermined the trust built up among countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia since the end of the Cold War. The most commonly cited of these events by witnesses was Russia's military invasion and illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Russia's continued logistical and military support for separatists in Ukraine's eastern regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. Described as the main catalysts for escalating regional tensions, Russian military intervention in Ukraine has made its neighbours fearful for their sovereignty and security to an extent not previously seen in the post-Cold War period.

A number of witnesses expressed concern about the fragility of successive peace efforts aimed at resolving the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. For example, some emphasized the lack of compliance on the part of all stakeholders with the terms of the Minsk II Agreement<sup>1</sup>, especially the failure to adhere to the ceasefire it established. In the context of the ongoing violence in Eastern Ukraine, the Committee heard that there have been delays surrounding the implementation of the Minsk II Agreement.<sup>2</sup> For instance, Ukraine still has not been returned control over its shared border with Russia in Luhansk and Donetsk.

The Committee heard about the humanitarian crisis that has resulted from the violence that began in Ukraine in 2014. The conflict in Eastern Ukraine has destroyed homes and roads. Other infrastructure, such as electricity, water, and sanitation, has also been damaged or blocked by authorities as a means of applying pressure to opponents. Local economies have been disrupted, leading to increased poverty as well as to illicit commercial activities. Food insecurity and reduced access to both health services and education are growing challenges. Of particular concern are the living conditions faced by the most vulnerable populations, including seniors, women and children. The Committee was also told about human rights violations that have been committed by authorities in occupied Crimea against minority groups, especially targeting the Crimean Tatars.<sup>3</sup> Overall, the Committee heard that, since 2014, approximately 1.4 million people have been internally displaced in Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> This mass displacement of people has put significant pressure on local authorities and social services that are providing shelter, food and other provisions, as well as on the already strained Ukrainian government.

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1 In September 2014, a ceasefire agreement (the Minsk Protocol, known as Minsk I) was negotiated in Minsk, Belarus, and signed by the Trilateral Contact Group, comprised of representatives from the OSCE, Ukraine and the Russian Federation, as well as representatives from the unrecognized People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. The ceasefire was almost immediately violated. In recognizing the failure of Minsk I, the Trilateral Contact Group agreed to a second Minsk ceasefire, the *Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements* (Minsk II), on 12 February 2015. The peace deal included, among other requirements: a full and immediate bilateral ceasefire; the withdrawal of all heavy weapons on both sides from the front line to equal distances; effective monitoring of the ceasefire and withdrawal; launch of a dialogue on local elections; release of all hostages and other illegally detained persons; and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid.

2 House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAAE), *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

3 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

4 Ibid.



The Committee heard from several witnesses that these events in Ukraine have resulted in the worst crisis in relations between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War. In response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, actors including NATO, the EU, the U.S., Canada and others have undertaken a series of measures, including the imposition of sanctions, to deter further Russian aggression and to reassure allies in the region, such as Latvia and Poland. Despite these measures, Russia's annexation of Crimea has not ended, and some witnesses question whether it ever will.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, some witnesses warned of a growing fear that Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine may not be its last in the region.<sup>6</sup> Many raised specific concerns about Russia's military modernization and growing military budget, as well as about the various large-scale naval, land and air training exercises that Russia is conducting along its borders, at times in conjunction with partners such as Belarus.

### A. Competing Regional Interests between the West and Russia

Witnesses testified that the initial period of cooperation between the West and Russia in the early years of the post-Cold War era is at risk of being supplanted by a return to East-West competition in what Russia considers its traditional spheres of influence.<sup>7</sup> Nowhere has this been more acutely manifested than in Russia's response to efforts by some former Soviet republics to develop political, economic and military links with the EU and NATO.<sup>8</sup> Olga Oliker, Senior Advisor and Director, Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, spoke to this point. She indicated that, while Russia was initially "a comparatively willing participant in these processes," it soon came to see them as "antagonistic, aimed at limiting Moscow's influence in its

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5 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

6 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.

7 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Kyiv.

8 Following the end of the Cold War, 12 states in Eastern Europe joined NATO in three rounds of enlargement: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 1999; Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004; and Albania and Croatia in 2009. On 5 June 2017, Montenegro became the 29<sup>th</sup> country to join NATO. In 2004, eight Eastern European countries joined the EU: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Romania and Bulgaria joined in 2007, followed by Croatia in 2013.



neighbourhood, and thus limiting the very prestige it felt it was due.”<sup>9</sup> Joan DeBardleben, Chancellor’s Professor at Carleton University, echoed this point, noting that the Russian government is today “very wary of western interference” in what it views as its neighborhood.<sup>10</sup>

Some witnesses suggested that Russia’s efforts to assert its regional influence are defensive in nature and largely misunderstood. According to this minority perspective, Russia increasingly feels encircled by its former Cold War adversaries and believes that the West has deliberately enlarged NATO to Russia’s borders. Christopher Westdal, former Canadian ambassador to Russia and to Ukraine, Director of the Canada Eurasia Business Association (CERBA), a Kremlin-sponsored business lobby, and Non-Executive Chairman of Silver Bear Resources Plc, a mining corporation with exclusive rights to the Mangazeisky Silver Project in Russia, spoke to this point in discussing Russia’s response to the Revolution of Dignity.<sup>11</sup> Mr. Westdal stated: “Call Russia’s reaction ‘aggression,’ if you will, but as we grew NATO by leaps and bounds, what did we expect? ... That Russia would just roll over in the face of an obvious strategic calamity...?”<sup>12</sup>

The Committee heard from some witnesses that Russia is using political, economic, or military means to assert control over its “near abroad” and to keep any more former Soviet republics from joining or deepening their relations with NATO and the EU.<sup>13</sup> In the case of Ukraine, for instance, Leigh Sarty, Director General, European Affairs Bureau, Global Affairs Canada (GAC), highlighted how Russia viewed the situation there from the

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9 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

10 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

11 The Revolution of Dignity began in November 2013 when then-President Viktor Yanukovich rescinded his commitment to the European Union and to the people of Ukraine to sign an association agreement with the European Union as a result of Kremlin pressure. In response, protesters and members of civil society occupied Independence Square (*Maidan Nezalezhnosti*) in Kyiv and held large-scale protests there and in other parts of the country. The protests and subsequent violent crackdown by the Yanukovich government continued for months, with escalating state violence against protesters, abductions of civil society leaders, torture and sniper killings that resulted in the death of over 100 civilians. On February 22, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine’s Parliament, voted to impeach President Yanukovich; Yanukovich fled Ukraine for Russia on the same day. On March 1, 2014, Russia’s Parliament approved President Vladimir Putin’s request to use military force in Ukraine, in violation of international law. By early March, 2014, Russia began a military invasion and occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Ukraine and annexed the peninsula. This illegal annexation was confirmed by Vladimir Putin on March 18, 2017.

12 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.

13 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Kyiv.



lens of domestic considerations. He explained, “The Russian decision to support the separatists and actively intervene militarily was, in part, driven by the concern about what implications a Ukraine that was successfully reforming, and indeed had real prospects of entering NATO and the European Union, would have further east and for the regime there.”<sup>14</sup> Witnesses also highlighted previous Russian attempts to crack down on the coloured revolutions in its vicinity, such as the ones that took place in Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, Kyrgyzstan in 2005, and Belarus in 2006. According to several witnesses, the Russian leadership views such uprisings as Western strategies to advance liberal democratic values and to undermine Russia’s influence in the region.<sup>15</sup>

Russian aggression in Ukraine comes at a time when trans-Atlantic and European multilateral institutions are facing their own challenges. Some witnesses suggested a leadership vacuum is emerging in NATO due to the ambiguity about the United States’ commitment to the Alliance under President Donald Trump.<sup>16</sup> Witnesses also indicated that the United Kingdom’s decision to withdraw from the EU was adding to fundamental concerns about the future integrity of this political and economic union. Other experts argued that the spread of populist movements and rising Euro-skepticism across Europe are leading to questions about the benefits of EU membership and continental integration.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, some witnesses referred to criticism levelled against the OSCE, a regional organization that comprises 57 participating states, including Russia, Canada and the U.S., which is mandated to promote comprehensive security. In particular, critics charge that the OSCE’s consensus-based model of decision-making makes it difficult to take effective action against members who violate its norms or do not meet their commitments. Leigh Sarty from Global Affairs Canada spoke to this point, commenting, “[The OSCE’s] work has been made more difficult in the climate of much deeper east-west tensions we’ve been experiencing for the past few years.”<sup>18</sup>

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14 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

15 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga.

16 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

17 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

18 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

## B. Information Warfare

Concerns relating to the increasingly sophisticated and injurious use of communication and information tools in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, especially those in cyberspace, were another recurring theme of the Committee's study. Some witnesses specifically implicated Russian actors in the use of cyber technologies in a manner that favours and promotes Russian interests. One witness who met with the Committee during its fact-finding mission argued that some Russian actors are attempting to exploit what they see as an "intrinsic vulnerability" of democracies and open societies by disseminating false information to gain an advantage.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the Committee heard about efforts to target Western institutions and values, particularly electoral processes, as a means of influencing and discrediting them.<sup>20</sup> Paul Stronski, Senior Fellow, Russia and Eurasia Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, summarized this point in his testimony:

We see Russian propaganda, information operations, and Cold War-style subversion going on in Europe as many elections approach. They are magnifying a dangerous wave of populism that is threatening European unity. It could help upend other European political systems, and this has brought repercussions for eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet space.<sup>21</sup>

Beyond disinformation, witnesses also spoke about the use of cyber warfare tactics in Ukraine and the Baltic states, such as the intentional spread of viruses, data hacking and denial-of-service attacks. For example, His Excellency Edgars Rinkevics, Latvia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, indicated that Latvia faces "many attempts to penetrate our IT systems, whether it be of the foreign ministry or the defence ministry," and that these attacks occur "almost on a daily basis."<sup>22</sup> Minister Rinkevics added that Latvia is witnessing "unprecedented" propaganda warfare.

In other respects, witnesses argued that Moscow is trying to take advantage of the sizeable Russophone populations that reside in neighbouring countries by capitalizing on their access to Russian media. In particular, the Committee heard from some about how Russian state-run information agencies use various media platforms to foment discontent and anti-government sentiment within ethnic-Russian populations. According

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19 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga.

20 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga, and Kyiv.

21 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

22 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017.



to this perspective, such discontent could serve as a prelude to Russian intervention if these groups made the case that their rights or interests were being denied.<sup>23</sup>

The Committee was told about the importance of ensuring that regional institutions, including NATO, focus attention on the threat of disinformation and cyber warfare, and to coordinate counterstrategies to mitigate their damaging effects.<sup>24</sup> Similar to the experience of other allies, the Committee heard that Canada could find itself the target of increased cyberattacks as a result of its leadership role in NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence.<sup>25</sup> Such threats underscore the value of taking counter measures, including public diplomacy campaigns, and coordinating strategies among stakeholders. In this respect, the Committee was encouraged to hear about Canada's support for NATO's Strategic Communication Centre of Excellence in Latvia and that a Canadian may soon join its staff.<sup>26</sup>

### C. Promoting Regional Stability and Mutual Trust

Canada can contribute to efforts aimed at promoting regional stability and mutual trust in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Canada is well-regarded in these regions and the results of the Committee's fact-finding mission underscored that there is an opportunity for it to play a greater role in supporting and facilitating dialogue between stakeholders. Several witnesses noted, for example, that Canada does not carry the political baggage of some other allied countries, nor is it experiencing the sort of internal turmoil that is undermining the ability of some to contribute effectively to regional stability. Paul Stronski highlighted this argument in his testimony with reference to Central Asian countries:

Many of these countries are looking to the west. They see a European Union that is in disarray and they're looking at other countries in the west. Canada is one of them. I think Canada has a role and it's one they would like to play.... As they see Europe and the United States turn inward on themselves, they are now hoping for countries that have not been as in front of the west as places they would like to increase engagement with.<sup>27</sup>

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23 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

24 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Kyiv.

25 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

26 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga.

27 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

One possible means of supporting regional stability is to reinforce the region's institutional architecture, notably within the EU, NATO and the OSCE. Witnesses emphasized that the stronger these institutions are, the more capable they are of supporting regional cooperation and stability.<sup>28</sup> The Committee believes that Canada should work constructively with these institutions. In this respect, several witnesses cited recent Canadian initiatives such as the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) that are already achieving important results. Examples also include Canada's military deployment to NATO's multinational, forward defence battlegroup in Latvia as part of the Alliance's commitment to collective defence and deterrence. This most recent military commitment builds on Canada's existing investment in regional security through Operation REASSURANCE, which deploys Canadian Forces personnel in Central and Eastern Europe in support of NATO's deterrence and reassurance measures.

Canada's efforts to strengthen regional institutions and promote stability are also evident in its support for Ukraine's partnership with NATO. Although Ukraine is not a NATO member country, Canada has supported Ukraine's efforts to carry out defence reform and achieve NATO standards under the Ukraine-NATO Comprehensive Assistance Package by 2020. Indeed, the focus of Canada's Operation UNIFIER – first established in 2015 and extended until 2019 – is to assist the Ukrainian armed forces with military training. The Committee heard from one witness that this initiative is having an “enormous impact” on Ukraine's defence capability.<sup>29</sup> Other important signs of Canada's support for Ukraine include its participation in Ukraine's Defence Reform Advisory Board, and the formalization of defence cooperation between Canada and Ukraine by way of the Canada-Ukraine Defence Cooperation Arrangement signed in April 2017. These initiatives are in addition to Canadian support for security sector reform in Ukraine, as well as tactical first aid training that the Canadian Armed Forces have provided to Ukrainian forces as part of Operation UNIFIER.

Canada's deployment of experts to the [OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine](#) (SMM) is a further example of the importance Canada has placed on the region's institutions. The SMM is the only international mission with a presence and mandate robust enough to monitor actions at the line of contact in Eastern Ukraine. Indeed, its value as a responsive, flexible confidence-building mechanism is reinforced by the fact that the SMM's initial mandate to monitor the security situation in the country, to establish facts relating to specific incidents and to facilitate dialogue among all parties,

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28 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga, and Kyiv.

29 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.



took on added significance as political tensions continued to escalate and violence broke out in Donetsk and Luhansk. In particular, the SMM has come to play an essential role in observing the implementation of the Minsk agreements that were concluded after its initial deployment. Witnesses testified that the SMM and the unarmed civilian monitors are doing remarkable work under extremely challenging circumstances and at great risk to personal safety, including the threat of kidnappings.<sup>30</sup>

Canada's engagement with the OSCE provides an important avenue to promote regional stability. The OSCE is the only regional security forum where participating states like Canada and the United States can engage and promote dialogue with Russia, which is also a member. Moreover, as Christopher Westdal testified, "It's at the OSCE where you find the most relevant mandate to try to explore a security arrangement that includes all of Eurasia. That's where I think we should put our effort."<sup>31</sup> While the OSCE's consensus decision-making process is often criticized, it can also be useful in achieving the most abiding agreement among its 57 state members with wide-ranging interests. More broadly, given its limited diplomatic presence in Central Asia, the OSCE's network of offices throughout the region provide Canada with valuable insight into developments there. As the Committee heard from a GAC official, "from those OSCE offices, we get very useful reporting on trends on the ground. By virtue of the OSCE being there and our being part of the OSCE, it gives us great insight into developments in the region."<sup>32</sup>

Another component of Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia concerns its relations with Russia in the context of the crisis in Ukraine. The Committee heard from several witnesses about the importance of pursuing a two-track policy that simultaneously allows for dialogue with Russia, while at the same time condemning Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and support for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine. In this respect, the Committee believes that Canada should continue its sanctions against Russian and post-annexation Crimean officials, those responsible for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine, as well as those involved in the abduction and illegal show trials of Ukrainian citizens in Russia and Crimean Tatars and others within Crimea. The Committee also believes that Canada should engage with the Russian government on the need to respect international law and Ukraine's sovereignty. Indeed, such an approach aligns with NATO's strategy of deterrence and reassurance that was adopted at its 2016 Summit in Warsaw.

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30 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

31 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.

32 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

The issue of Canadian and other sanctions regimes against Russia was a common and hotly debated subject during the Committee’s study. Some witnesses suggested that sanctions against Russia should be strengthened, such as by targeting the country’s energy sector, its international financial transactions as well as travel by key Russian individuals.<sup>33</sup> In contrast, other interlocutors encouraged Canada and others to pursue dialogue with Russia, seeing this as a more effective tool of statecraft than sanctions.<sup>34</sup> Still others underlined that – if sanctions are imposed – they should be targeted, and communicated as such, in order not to be regarded as “anti-Russian.”<sup>35</sup>

This point about ensuring that sanctions are targeted against specified individuals, entities, sectors or activities, rather than broad measures against an entire economy or population, was underscored in the Committee’s report entitled *A Coherent and Effective Approach to Canada’s Sanctions Regimes: Sergei Magnitsky and Beyond*. That report was the culmination of the Committee’s statutory review of the *Freezing Assets of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act* and the *Special Economic Measures Act*. The report noted that sanctions should not be seen as a solution to every problem, but rather as one useful tool to be employed as part of broader efforts to promote international peace and security. It also underlined that when the Government of Canada decides to impose sanctions, it should do so in pursuit of a clear objective and should target the measures to the relevant situation.<sup>36</sup>

The Committee’s fact-finding mission to Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, as well as its hearings in Ottawa, underscored that Canada has a role to play in promoting regional stability in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In light of the foregoing testimony and observations, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

### Recommendation 1

**The Government of Canada should continue its sanctions against Russian and post-annexation Crimean officials, those responsible for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine, as well as those involved in the abduction and illegal show trials of Ukrainian citizens in Russia and Crimean Tatars and others within Crimea. The Government of Canada should also engage with the Russian government on the need to respect international law and Ukraine’s sovereignty.**

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33 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

34 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

35 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

36 For more information, see: House of Commons, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, *A Coherent and Effective Approach to Canada’s Sanctions Regimes: Sergei Magnitsky and Beyond*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, April 2017.



### **Recommendation 2**

**The Government of Canada should continue to support multilateral efforts, including through the OSCE, NATO, the UN and other international organizations, to bring about a resolution to Russia’s military invasion and illegal annexation of Crimean territory and logistical and military support for the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine. In support of this objective, the Government of Canada should continue its commitment to Operation UNIFIER.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Government of Canada should continue to ensure that Canadian international assistance to Ukraine benefits the most vulnerable populations in the country, particularly the indigenous Crimean Tatars, and those who have been internally displaced by the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**The Government of Canada should work with its allies in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and elsewhere to improve collective defence mechanisms against cyberattacks, as well as proactively monitor disinformation campaigns and develop counter measures to minimize damage inflicted by information warfare. This should include continued financial and personnel support for the NATO Centres of Excellence for Co-operative Cyber Defence (Estonia) and for Strategic Communications (Latvia).**

### **Recommendation 5**

**The Government of Canada should continue to show leadership on security issues by ongoing deployments through Operation REASSURANCE, including air policing in Eastern Europe and the Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroups in the Baltics and Poland.**

## **DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION**

Over the last 25 years, many of the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia have made significant progress in strengthening their democratic institutions and systems of governance. In several instances, this advancement has been the result of meeting the commitments and criteria to join or partner with NATO, the EU, the OSCE, or other international institutions or organizations. Despite this progress, however, witnesses told the Committee that the gains have been uneven across the two regions. The Committee



heard, for example, that challenges related to good governance, judicial independence, the rule of law, corruption and transparency, freedom of the media and assembly, as well as civil society engagement continue to persist in many countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Samuel Charap, Senior Fellow for Russia and Eurasia, International Institute for Strategic Studies, discussed the results of several indices that measure and compare the quality of democracy and governance worldwide, including in the four countries the Committee visited. According to Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2017* survey, which looks at respect for political rights and civil liberties, Poland and Latvia were classified as "free," whereas Ukraine was "partly free," and Kazakhstan was classified as "not free."<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, on Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index 2016* – a report that assesses countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be – Poland is ranked 29<sup>th</sup> and Latvia 44<sup>th</sup>, compared to Ukraine and Kazakhstan, which both placed 131<sup>st</sup> out of a total of 176 countries.<sup>38</sup>

The Committee heard that there is a divergence in terms of reform, democracy, and quality of economic governance between countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia that is rooted in their different historical experiences.<sup>39</sup> One explanation offered by witnesses for these variations is the different pre-Soviet experiences with democracy and independence of the countries. The Committee was told, for instance, that the legacy of the Soviet Union has been more enduring and difficult to overcome for those countries with a longer Soviet tenure. In this context, Ukraine and Kazakhstan's more negative rankings reflect in part their longer experiences as Soviet-controlled and occupied states relative to that of Poland and Latvia.

## Recommendation 6

**The Government of Canada should work with the Canadian business community to engage with government officials, civil society and business leaders in all countries that were adversely affected by Soviet occupation and control on best practices to combat corruption in both the public and private sectors.**

Samuel Charap presented another perspective from his research as to why countries such as Ukraine, which is not a member of NATO or the EU, are less advanced than

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37 Freedom House, "[Populists and Autocrats: The Dual Threat to Global Democracy](#)," *Freedom in the World 2017*.

38 Transparency International, [Corruption Perceptions Index 2016](#).

39 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.



Poland and Latvia in their democratic consolidation.<sup>40</sup> He explained that tensions between Russia and the West have prevented countries such as Ukraine from decisively being in one camp or the other. Anders Aslund, Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council, illustrated this situation vis-à-vis Ukraine. He noted that Ukraine is at a “tipping point” in its democratic transition, having evolved over the last 25 years into “an open society with extraordinary transparency” while continuing to face significant corruption challenges.<sup>41</sup>

Many witnesses provided examples of Ukraine’s democratic achievements, but cautioned that key areas, especially related to anti-corruption and judicial reform, required continued effort. They also pointed to a sense of “fatigue” that has emerged within some segments of Ukraine and the international community as a result of the country’s mixed progress on governance reform.<sup>42</sup> Olga Oliker of the Center for Strategic and International Studies spoke to this point:

Ukraine's history over the last quarter century is a repetitive one, as a genuine commitment to and impetus for reform run aground on corruption and cynicism. This has happened multiple times in every sphere of governance, leaving many who work with the Ukrainians to burn out, then creating room for those who haven't had that experience of disappointment to repeat their efforts.<sup>43</sup>

Others pointed out that Ukraine’s path to democracy has been hampered by having to simultaneously fight a war on its territory, while at the same time struggling against corruption and vested interests that resist further democratization.<sup>44</sup>

More broadly, several witnesses highlighted recent trends in government policies that are having implications for regional dynamics and democratic traditions. For example, the Committee heard concerns about the Polish government’s direction relating to women’s rights, judicial independence and the rule of law.<sup>45</sup> Some concerns were also

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40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

43 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

44 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16-26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

45 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

raised about efforts to curtail the work and independence of Poland’s Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, the Committee heard testimony that the Government of Poland adopted a restrictive refugee policy in the wake of Europe’s migration crisis. According to some witnesses, the lack of action by the EU in response to policies adopted by the Polish government was evidence of the EU’s internal challenges and declining credibility.<sup>46</sup>

With respect to Central Asia, Paul Stronski argued that the region has historically been “very poorly governed, with populations that have been misserved by their leaders since the collapse of the USSR.”<sup>47</sup> Mr. Stronski said that many of the region’s problems are related “as much to the challenges posed by the governments and the political elites in these countries as they are to external threats, whether that be Russia or international terrorism.” Indeed, the Committee heard concerns about how the Kazakh government, and other Central Asian governments, were managing the risk of Islamic extremism. For example, the Committee was told that, although these countries have been largely immune from Islamist extremist movements, authorities routinely use anti-terrorist and anti-radicalization laws to maintain stability and control anti-government dissent.<sup>48</sup> According to Olga Oliker, “[T]hings are termed radical Islamist violent attacks when in fact they might be something else, because it’s an easy way to make sure you get rid of these folks.”<sup>49</sup> Likewise, Mr. Stronski stated that the governments of Central Asia and Russia “all exaggerate the [problem of Islamic extremism] in order to justify authoritarian rule.”<sup>50</sup> Some witnesses in Kazakhstan pointed to the newly established Ministry of Religion and Civil Society as another tool for controlling dissent and the activities of non-governmental organizations.<sup>51</sup>

Other witnesses suggested that anti-terrorist efforts were a function of mounting government concerns about the region’s porous borders and the risk that biological and chemical weapons-making facilities and material – a legacy of the Soviet era – could be accessed by terrorist groups. For example, Margaret Skok, Senior Fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation and former Canadian ambassador to Kazakhstan,

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46 Ibid.

47 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

48 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

49 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

50 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

51 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.



Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, described how weapons labs in those countries are, “not terribly secure.”<sup>52</sup>

## A. Social and Ethnic Cleavages

The Committee heard that the uneven consolidation of democracy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has aggravated social cleavages and intolerance in some of these countries. For instance, the Committee was told that in Poland the promotion of equal rights and the investigation of hate crimes based on sexual orientation were not priorities for the current government.<sup>53</sup> Witnesses also raised concerns about violence and discrimination against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community in Ukraine.<sup>54</sup>

The Committee was also informed about the roles played by the sizeable ethnic Russian and Russophone populations in Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. According to one perspective, these countries are at greater risk of internal destabilization because some populations feel marginalized by government policies and various anti-Russian undercurrents.<sup>55</sup> The history of Soviet occupation and Russification efforts are at the root of such tensions. Joan DeBardeleben commented that such perceptions of marginalization have strengthened the ties and loyalty between these communities and Moscow. She further noted that these growing linkages present a potential avenue for Russian influence in domestic affairs and increasing threats to national security.<sup>56</sup>

With respect to the situation of Russian minorities in Latvia, witnesses noted that, although its support has been declining, a pro-Russian political party actively promotes the interests of the country’s Russian minority, which also has regular access to Russian-based media.<sup>57</sup> Olga Olikier testified, “The less they’re trusted and the less they’re integrated the more they will turn to Russian sources of information and Russian media because they don’t have domestic sources of media and information.”<sup>58</sup> She remarked,

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52 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

53 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

54 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

55 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

56 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

57 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16-26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga.

58 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

“It’s incumbent on those governments [in the Baltic region] to do more to integrate those populations.”<sup>59</sup>

## B. Changing Political Leadership

Witnesses told the Committee that ensuring a peaceful transfer of power has become a priority for consolidating democracy and building stability in Kazakhstan and other parts of Central Asia.<sup>60</sup> The Committee heard that several regional leaders have sought to legitimize their claims to office through elections that the international community, notably the OSCE, has regarded as falling short of democratic commitments.<sup>61</sup> Kazakhstan and many of its neighbours have each been ruled by a single, aging individual for the last decade. Indeed, President Nursultan Nazarbayev is in his late 70s and has ruled Kazakhstan since even before its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

The process by which eventual leadership change in Kazakhstan could take place may have significant implications for regional stability. The primary concern is that the authoritarian and highly centralized system in Kazakhstan is too rigid to withstand an inevitable change in leadership. Indeed, witnesses explained that Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries are vulnerable to internal disorder, and even a popular uprising, in the form of a “coloured revolution” against the continuation of autocratic rule under successor leaders.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly, Paul Stronski testified that the potential for misunderstanding and misperception, and therefore political instability and Russian interference, increases if the “right” successor with a non-Western outlook is not found: “I think that if there’s ever an indication that Kazakhstan might look unstable, or if it’s pivoting too close to the west, that’s a time when Russia might do something and just to go in.”<sup>63</sup>

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59 Ibid.

60 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16-26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

61 For access to the reports prepared by the OSCE election observation missions to these countries, see: [Elections](#), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, OSCE.

62 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

63 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.



## C. Supporting Democratic Consolidation

The Committee believes that Canada can enhance its engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including with Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, by supporting good governance and social inclusion in these countries. As witnesses pointed out, Canada is in a strong position to provide support and assistance in this regard. Its international leadership and reputation in supporting democratic principles, tolerance and diversity, as well as good governance, offer valuable advantages for such engagement. Moreover, as Joan DeBardeleben emphasized, the EU is focused more on its own internal challenges than on supporting democratic consolidation in these regions, especially countries such as Poland and Latvia that have graduated from its development programs.<sup>64</sup>

The Committee underscores the leadership role that Canada can play in sharing best practices regarding social inclusion. Witnesses routinely referred to the respect that the international community has for Canada's achievements in building unity out of social diversity, even in the face of challenging global forces.<sup>65</sup> In addition, they noted Canada's recent leadership in refugee resettlement that was undertaken in part to alleviate the pressures facing European countries.<sup>66</sup> Joan DeBardeleben remarked, "Canada, as a successful federation with a multi-ethnic society, should endeavor to offer assistance and service in addressing this problem."<sup>67</sup> Margaret Skok testified that countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are looking for models to improve integration and social inclusion.<sup>68</sup>

Witnesses noted that multi-ethnic societies with sizeable ethnic Russian populations, such as those in Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, would benefit in particular from engagement that promotes best practices regarding the accommodation of minorities.<sup>69</sup> Olga Oliker emphasized the role that education and media can play in the accommodation of minorities, including policies that promote linguistic and cultural inclusion.<sup>70</sup> As witnesses explained, such initiatives would help build the resilience of

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64 Ibid.

65 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

66 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

67 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

68 Ibid.

69 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

70 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

these societies against negative influences – foreign or domestic – that sow discord and distrust.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, Joan DeBardeleben stressed that security “depends on the integration of the population in the political structures of the country involved to build the best defence against [soft power] intrusion, and that’s something we can try to contribute to.”<sup>72</sup>

The Committee believes that, to be more effective, Canada’s support for democratic consolidation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia needs to extend beyond the capital cities. In other words, to have enduring results, Canadian initiatives should also target the political, economic, and social capacities of outlying regions. Such an approach is all the more critical as it links directly to the devolution priorities of Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the latter as part of its preparations for a leadership transition. It also links to the accommodation of Russian minorities that tend to be concentrated outside of the capital cities.

The Committee believes that strengthening democratic consolidation in these regions has important short- and long-term implications for Canada’s priorities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The Committee underscores that Canada should build on existing multilateral and bilateral efforts that support the enhancement of democratic values and principles in these countries. Some witnesses highlighted the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives as an effective mechanism for doing this. In particular, the Committee believes that enhanced partnerships and exchanges with these countries related to best practices in multiculturalism as well as migration and refugee policies would be beneficial. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that:

#### **Recommendation 7**

**The Government of Canada should build on existing multilateral and bilateral efforts that support the enhancement of democratic values, good governance, participatory democracy, the rule of law, and social inclusion of marginalized groups such as women, the LGBTI community, and indigenous populations, through ongoing discussions with government officials, parliamentarians and members of civil society in all countries that were adversely affected by Soviet occupation and control.**

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71 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

72 Ibid.



## COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee heard during its fact-finding mission that Canada's commercial ties with countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and specifically with Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, have significant potential for growth. As an illustration, the Committee was made aware of the current levels of trade and investment between Canada and each of the four countries.<sup>73</sup> In 2016, Canada's two-way trade with Poland totalled \$2.5 billion, which ranked as Canada's 27<sup>th</sup> largest trading relationship. In 2016, Kazakhstan was Canada's 53<sup>rd</sup> largest trading partner with total two-way trade totalling \$773 million; that same year, Ukraine ranked 70<sup>th</sup> with \$373 million, and Latvia ranked 76<sup>th</sup> with \$260 million.<sup>74</sup>

Witnesses described the numerous challenges which they believe have stunted Canada's commercial ties with these countries. They include perceptions on the part of the Canadian business community that these markets are too complicated, too corrupt, and geographically too far compared to more accessible, transparent and proximate ones in the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>75</sup> In addition, some witnesses raised questions about the impact of the uncertain political environments in Poland and Kazakhstan on their continued economic growth.<sup>76</sup>

Some witnesses also pointed out that the living conditions in these countries have not kept pace with their economic development. In other words, despite the economic growth these countries have experienced over the last 25 years, the Committee heard that equal opportunities for economic advancement, gainful employment and social protection remain wanting within many segments of the population.<sup>77</sup> As Olga Oliker testified, "[T]he problem is that even when you have economic growth year on year, if you look at it over time, people are living worse than prior generations did. People's buying power has gone down."<sup>78</sup>

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73 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16-26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Astana.

74 Global Affairs Canada (GAC), [International Commerce – By Indicator/Rank](#); GAC, [Annual Merchandise Trade](#); GAC, [Canada-Poland Relations: Fact Sheet](#); GAC, [Canada-Latvia Relations: Fact Sheet](#); GAC, [Canada-Ukraine Relations: Fact Sheet](#); GAC, [Canada-Kazakhstan Relations: Fact Sheet](#).

75 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

76 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

77 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Kyiv, and Astana.

78 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.



Recent events in Ukraine and Kazakhstan have aggravated these economic conditions, particularly for the most vulnerable groups such as seniors and women. For its part, Ukraine's economic ties with Russia, its traditional commercial partner, have significantly declined since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and military invasion of Eastern Ukraine.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, the valuable steel, mining and heavy industries of Luhansk and Donetsk have been seized by pro-Russian separatists and no longer contribute to Ukraine's economy.<sup>80</sup> Samuel Charap underscored this challenge, commenting that "Ukraine's underperformance is particularly striking. In GDP per capita, Ukraine has gone from a higher figure than Poland to a figure one third less."<sup>81</sup>

The economies of Kazakhstan and other countries in Central Asia have also suffered in light of the collapse of the global commodity market. Paul Stronski highlighted some of the current economic challenges facing Central Asian countries in his testimony:

Central Asia's main exports are all natural resources, things like oil, natural gas, cotton, gold, and other minerals, all of which are at historic low prices. Remittances from Russia are down, and high levels of corruption in the region are hurting the investor climate. We have a bad economic environment for the entire region, and the governments of central Asia are slashing budgets, devaluating their currency, leading to high inflation and growing poverty. This is pushing some people much below the poverty level.<sup>82</sup>

Several witnesses told the Committee that a lack of economic opportunities in parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia could be described as contributing to a rise in populism, xenophobia and other social intolerance.<sup>83</sup> The Committee heard that economic hardship also perpetuates the informal economies operating in these countries and increases the temptation to participate in illegal activities, such as illicit trade in drugs and arms, among other modes of organized crime.<sup>84</sup> It bears noting that such conditions have fuelled a prolific network of human smugglers who illegally transport individuals across borders in search of a better life. Other forms of human trafficking exploit the ambitions of migrants by forcing them to work in the sex trade.<sup>85</sup>

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79 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

80 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017.

81 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.

82 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

83 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 21 March 2017.

84 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

85 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga, and Kyiv.



The Committee heard that many of the most skilled and educated citizens have emigrated from countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to the U.K., Germany, Russia and to other parts of the region that are perceived to offer better opportunities and social support.<sup>86</sup> Margaret Skok testified that in Central Asia there can be as many as 7 million people on the move at any one time, many of whom are migrant workers.<sup>87</sup> Many who find temporary work or have relocated for the long-term remit a portion of their earnings home in order to support their families who remained behind. For Latvia's relatively small labour market, such trends are particularly consequential to its demographic base.

Another factor explaining why commercial relations between these countries and Canada are underdeveloped are the strong economic ties these countries have with the EU and Russia. As evidence of these ties, in 2016, Ukraine and the EU agreed to provisionally apply their *Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area*. For its part, Russia's economic linkages with the countries in Central Asia were formalized with the 2014 establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which comprises Russia, and Kazakhstan, as well as Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Belarus. Piotr Dutkiewicz testified that the EEU provided Russia with a "new patronage network" and a "vehicle for this [economic] advancement of Russia into the region."<sup>88</sup> Indeed, the Committee heard that Russia has capitalized on its historic ties with states that had formerly been part of the Soviet Union to strengthen economic linkages among them.

It is also notable that China has sought to strengthen its trade and economic ties in Central Asia. According to Paul Stronski, China has become the most important investor in the region.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, in an effort to promote stability and prosperity, the Committee heard that China is leading an ambitious "One Belt, One Road" strategy across the region. Intended to recreate the ancient "Silk Road," this initiative seeks to guide regional development and cooperation, and connect China to markets in Central Asia, Russia, and Europe, even as far as the U.K. In this respect, China is supporting and financing various high-profile telecommunications, mining and infrastructure projects, including road construction and other transportation networks.<sup>90</sup> In addition, China is

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86 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

87 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

88 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.

89 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

90 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16-26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

establishing Confucius Centres at universities and other educational institutions across the region.<sup>91</sup> Officials from Global Affairs Canada testified that “as in all spheres of 21<sup>st</sup> century life, China’s growing economic power, influence and willingness to invest is a factor to be considered and taken into account.”<sup>92</sup>

The economic potential of Eastern European and Central Asian countries is also evident in how some of them fared during and after the 2008 global financial crisis, as well as in the significant progress they have made over the last 25 years. For instance, Poland was the only EU economy not to have fallen into a recession following the global downturn. In many respects, Poland’s economy is by far the most advanced of the countries in question, ranking as the 24<sup>th</sup> largest in the World Bank’s 2015 list of countries according to GDP.<sup>93</sup> Poland’s strengths, highlighted by witnesses, include its large and maturing market, its position as a transit country with good access points, its educated, skilled and competitive labour force, and its openness to investment.<sup>94</sup>

The economies of the four countries that the Committee visited show their potential in other measures. For instance, estimates of the GDP per capita on a purchasing power parity basis for Poland, Latvia and Kazakhstan ranged from US\$25,700 to US\$27,700, higher than those for Chile (US\$24,000), Mexico (US\$18,900), and Peru (US\$13,000) with whom Canada has free trade agreements.<sup>95</sup> According to the World Bank’s 2017 *Ease of Doing Business Index*, Latvia ranked 14<sup>th</sup>, Poland 24<sup>th</sup>, Kazakhstan 35<sup>th</sup>, and Ukraine 80<sup>th</sup>, out of the 190 economies assessed.<sup>96</sup> By comparison, Canada ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> and Mexico 47<sup>th</sup>.

Witnesses also focused on other strengths of these countries as commercial partners. For example, Latvia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that country’s stability, achieved in part by way of its institutional arrangements with the EU and NATO, especially the latter’s recent decisions on deterrence and reassurance policy. Minister Rinkevics stated: “we are probably currently the safest place to invest because that investment is well protected.”<sup>97</sup> Margaret Skok noted the “huge work ethic” in

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91 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

92 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

93 The World Bank, *Gross Domestic Product 2015*.

94 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

95 Central Intelligence Agency, “*Country Comparison – GDP – Per Capita (PPP)*,” *The World Factbook*.

96 The World Bank, “*Economy Rankings*,” *Doing Business*.

97 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017.



Kazakhstan and elsewhere in Central Asia.<sup>98</sup> Kazakhstan also aspires to join Poland and Latvia as members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an important signal of its commitment to economic development. Ukraine and Kazakhstan are also members of the World Trade Organization, having acceded in 2008 and 2015 respectively, following Latvia's accession in 1999 and Poland's longstanding membership in the global trading regime since the late 1960s.

In contrast, the Committee heard about the economic vulnerabilities of countries in the region relating to energy security and resource management. For example, the Committee was told that the four countries it visited are dependent on Russia for oil and gas.<sup>99</sup> Ukraine's uncertain energy security situation is especially worrisome given its broken trade relationship with Russia, the fact that its domestic coal supply is concentrated in its eastern regions and affected by the armed conflict there, as well as residual concerns stemming from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident.

For its part, Kazakhstan's resource vulnerability is aggravated by the geological features of the water shed that runs through Central Asia as well as the competing economic dynamics and poor trans-boundary water management practices involving its neighbours, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>100</sup> A mutually agreeable arrangement remains outstanding and the countries disagree about how to distribute and manage the resource. As a result, Kazakhstan struggles with an inefficient water supply network that remains largely unchanged from the Soviet era. The consequences are particularly significant for its agricultural development, food and energy security, supply of clean drinking water, as well as Kazakhstan's economic advancement more generally.

## A. Expanding Canadian Commercial Partnerships

The Committee believes that Canada should strengthen its commercial engagement with Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan and, more broadly, enhance its economic ties within Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Witnesses routinely told the Committee that these countries are seeking deeper trade and investment relations with Canada.<sup>101</sup>

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98 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

99 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.

100 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

101 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.

In large part, this interest relates to Canada's leadership in priority sectors, such as energy, as well as their ambition of diversifying economic partnerships beyond the EU, Russia, and China. As Latvia's Foreign Minister told the Committee, "I wish now that Canada will buy some big things from us as we buy from Canada."<sup>102</sup> Paul Stronski also indicated that there is, "probably a longing in the region for a greater presence or a greater focus on Central Asia.... They clearly want to have a relationship with the west. They want the economic engagement."<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the Committee was told that as a signal of the importance placed on commercial ties with Canada and its reputation, the Canadian ambassador in Astana serves on the economic advisory committee of the President of Kazakhstan.<sup>104</sup>

The Committee believes that there are opportunities to build on existing commercial partnerships in the region involving Canadian companies such as Bombardier in Poland and Latvia, Semex in Ukraine, and Cameco in Kazakhstan.<sup>105</sup> Witnesses pointed to the following sectors that show the most promise for expanding commercial partnerships: information and communication technology (ICT); innovation, research and development; air transportation links; development of small- and medium-sized enterprises; pharmaceuticals and health sciences; engineering and related services; infrastructure; tourism; and agriculture.<sup>106</sup> Witnesses also noted the potential arising from increased competitiveness of these sectors and the continued growth of a competitive, highly skilled labour market.

The Committee believes that Canada should seek to expand its commercial partnerships with these countries on the basis of Canadian comparative advantages. Canada's status as an energy superpower figures prominently in this regard. Indeed, energy cooperation with Canada could allow these countries to strengthen their energy security by diversifying partners and energy sources. As Leigh Sarty from Global Affairs Canada commented:

... the combination of the geopolitical desirability of reducing this region's dependence on Russian energy and Canada's status as an energy superpower makes for promising

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102 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017.

103 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

104 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

105 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

106 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.



bedfellows. There are challenges in terms of global pricing and global markets, and there are some technological issues to be addressed, but this is certain to be an increasingly important part of our co-operation in the longer term.<sup>107</sup>

Witnesses emphasized the opportunities available to Canada with respect to developing oil refining as well as natural gas capacities in these countries.<sup>108</sup> They also pointed to Canada's leadership in innovation relating to clean, renewable sources of energy, including nuclear, hydro, wind and solar power.<sup>109</sup> More specifically, witnesses highlighted opportunities related to the carbon-capture potential in Poland arising from its salt mines.<sup>110</sup> For its part, Latvia has undertaken important clean energy reforms that target natural gas supplies and infrastructure, as well as nuclear energy.

Margaret Skok highlighted Canada's expertise related to water management and experience with cross-border frameworks such as the Canada-U.S. International Joint Commission. She and other witnesses suggested that Canada's expertise in this area offered valuable opportunities for exchanging information with Kazakhstan and its neighbours as they gather knowledge about more efficient practices in this priority area.<sup>111</sup>

The Committee expects that opportunities for deepening Canada's commercial ties in Eastern Europe and Central Asia will broaden as recent commercial frameworks take effect. These include in particular the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, described by the Latvian Foreign Minister as the "first modern free trade agreement the European Union has signed with anyone."<sup>112</sup> Indeed, as a demonstration of the strong mutual support for the agreement, Canada's Minister of International Trade visited Latvia in February 2017 to witness the first ratification of the CETA by an EU member country. Recent commercial frameworks also include the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA), Ukraine's first free trade agreement with a country outside Europe and Central Asia. Whereas no formal arrangement exists with Kazakhstan, the Committee believes that more advanced trade and investment relations with third countries, such as that between Canada and China, can be leveraged in order to maximize complementary interests and strengths.

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107 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

108 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

109 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Astana.

110 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw.

111 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

112 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 March 2017.

Canada's commercial ties in these regions, however, can be strengthened only insofar as the opportunities available are known to the Canadian business community. Leigh Sarty from Global Affairs Canada testified that commercial engagement "needs to start with the active readiness of Canadian business people to get engaged."<sup>113</sup> The Committee believes that Canadian businesses will become more aware of these regions and their commercial opportunities as frameworks such as CETA and CUFTA are implemented. The role that bilateral commercial associations play in raising awareness in the business community is also critical. To this point, the Committee underscores the important roles played by commercial associations such as the Canada-Poland Chamber of Commerce and the Canada-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce in promoting opportunities and knowledge about these markets.

Commercial opportunities will also increase as economic reforms are prioritized and implemented. In Ukraine's case, these reforms are themselves conditions for its support from the International Monetary Fund. Anders Aslund emphasized that Ukraine's "current reform wave has been enormously impressive," particularly regarding graft, banking, and fiscal management.<sup>114</sup> In this respect, Ukraine's partnership association with the EU is expected to have a positive influence on the country's economic development similar to the influence the EU accession process had on Poland's and Latvia's economic transitions.<sup>115</sup>

The Committee believes that Canada should enhance its engagement with Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and within Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by expanding economic partnerships and building more robust commercial ties. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that:

### **Recommendation 8**

**The Government of Canada should work with the Canadian business community to support and promote commercial opportunities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, particularly in areas that build on Canadian expertise in resource management and other sectors.**

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113 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

114 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017.

115 FAAE, *Evidence*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Kyiv.



## A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

In addition to promoting regional stability, supporting good governance and social inclusion, and strengthening commercial ties, the Committee heard about several other areas where Canada could enhance its engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In particular, witnesses in Kyiv and Astana told the Committee about the challenges their citizens face when applying for a Canadian visa. In Ukraine, the Committee heard that, despite the strong desire for a visa-free regime for Ukrainian citizens travelling to Canada, the conditions for lifting the visa requirement are not yet in place.<sup>116</sup> More specifically, the Committee was told that the rate of refusal of visa applications from Ukraine was 20-25%, much higher than the 2-3% rate for applications from Europe.<sup>117</sup> The Committee also heard about the uneven quality of the necessary supporting documents from Ukrainian applicants that have led to increased scrutiny of such documentation and applications more generally.<sup>118</sup> Witnesses noted that there was room for improvement regarding the visa process in Kazakhstan. The Committee heard that currently visa applications by citizens of Kazakhstan are processed by the Canadian Embassy in Moscow, which can result in delays in the assessment of applications and printing of visas.<sup>119</sup>

In other respects, while witnesses commended the dedication of Canada's diplomats in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, some also raised concerns about the dispersed nature of Canadian diplomatic representation in the Baltics and Central Asia. For instance, Canada's ambassador to Latvia resides in Riga, but is also accredited to Lithuania and Estonia. In Central Asia, Canada's ambassador to Kazakhstan is also accredited to Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic; the ambassador to Russia for Uzbekistan; and the ambassador to Turkey for Turkmenistan. In the opinion of some witnesses, such a network spreads Canada's resources and capacity too thin and makes strategies,

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116 As of 11 June 2017, following approval by the EU and the European Commission, Ukrainian citizens holding biometric passports have been able to travel to the Schengen Zone without a visa for a period of up to 90 days every six months. BBC News, "[Ukraine hails visa-free travel to the European Union](#)," 11 June 2017. Following a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau on 22 September 2017, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko indicated that the parties discussed the topic of visa liberalization, including efforts to reduce the number of visa refusals. For more information, see: President of Ukraine, "President at the meeting with Ukrainian community of Canada: Visa liberalization will facilitate expansion of Ukraine-Canada economic and cultural cooperation," 23 September 2017.

117 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Kyiv.

118 Ibid.

119 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.



particularly the promotion of commercial interests, less effective.<sup>120</sup> While the Committee recognizes that Canada’s financial and diplomatic resources are limited, it also believes that such constraints should not compromise the pursuit of Canadian international priorities.

Witnesses also commented on the infrequent and inconsistent rate of visits by high-level officials, including the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet.<sup>121</sup> In this respect, interlocutors in Kazakhstan pointed out that their country receives fewer high-level visits than the other countries the Committee visited on its fact-finding mission – Poland, Latvia and Ukraine.<sup>122</sup> The Committee was told that Kazakhstan would welcome more high-level visits, which would align with that country’s efforts in recent years to promote its international profile. These efforts have included facilitating the peace processes involving Ukraine and Syria, hosting a Summit of the OSCE, serving as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (2017-2018), and hosting Expo 2017.<sup>123</sup>

Margaret Skok noted the importance of engaging with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries given that they are relatively less known in various Canadian circles.<sup>124</sup> In large part this lack of familiarity is a consequence of the region having been “doubly-closed” during the Soviet era: first, as part of the USSR’s strict controls on contacts with the West, and second, because it was the location of a vast network of labour camps and one of the sites for the Soviet Union’s nuclear and other weapons capability.<sup>125</sup> Paul Stronski testified that because Central Asia is not a priority for the West, engagement with the region needs to be refocused in as many ways as possible to reassure them that they are not forgotten.<sup>126</sup>

Finally, witnesses also highlighted the challenges facing the youth populations in Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan in terms of limited employment and education opportunities.<sup>127</sup> Such challenges are all the more serious because they affect the

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120 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga, and Astana.

121 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Astana.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

124 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

125 Ibid.

126 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 9 March 2017.

127 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.



preparation of the next generation of leaders and the implementation of political, social and economic priorities with long timelines. In the case of Central Asia, the situation is further aggravated by the large proportion of the youth population in the region; according to Margaret Skok, 40% of the region's population are 30 years old and younger.<sup>128</sup> The Committee heard that many youth from Central Asian countries go abroad to gain experience and pursue their employment and educational interests. A significant number do not return, in part because of the perception of limited opportunities back home. As a result, an important source of human capital for furthering national priorities is forfeited.<sup>129</sup>

### A. Ensuring a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Engagement

The Committee believes that Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia would benefit from a more comprehensive approach that reflects the full range of mutual interests. As officials from Global Affairs Canada testified, "our approach in the region is a holistic one as part of our broader security strategy in the region and our historic and current support to countries' reform efforts."<sup>130</sup>

In affirming the value of a comprehensive approach, the Committee underscores the importance of sustaining people-to-people links between Canada and these countries that have been built over generations. Indeed, the sizable population of Canadians who trace their origins back to Poland, Latvia or Ukraine is a valuable asset in enhancing engagement. According to Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, 1.3 million Canadians identify as being of Ukrainian origin, 1 million of Polish origin and 27,000 of Latvian origin.<sup>131</sup> These personal and historical connections support Canada's reputation in the region. For example, several witnesses told the Committee about the high regard that exists for Canada's commitment to their post-Soviet transition over the last 25 years.<sup>132</sup> Many expressed their appreciation for Canada's strong opposition of the Soviet Union's annexation of Latvia and the other Baltic states and emphasized Canada's early recognition of their independence.

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128 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 14 February 2017.

129 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, and Riga.

130 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

131 Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey: Data Tables, [Ethnic Origin](#). See also: FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2017; FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017; FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, and Kyiv.

132 FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Warsaw, Riga, Kyiv, and Astana.

The Committee believes that these people-to-people links can be leveraged with other mechanisms to further enhance Canada's engagement with these countries. Indeed, the Committee heard that existing initiatives targeting, for instance, the particular challenges of the youth populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia can be reinforced. To take one example, the Committee was told about the achievements of the Aga Khan Foundation and its education partnerships in Kazakhstan and throughout Central Asia, including the establishment of the University of Central Asia which is led and staffed by several Canadians.<sup>133</sup> Other initiatives include the youth mobility agreements that Canada signed with Latvia in 2007 and Poland in 2009, which aim to better facilitate bureaucratic processes for travel, work and study.<sup>134</sup> It bears noting that no such agreement exists between Canada and Kazakhstan, and that the one between Canada and Ukraine is under review.

The Committee also believes that parliamentary cooperation is an invaluable component of Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The experiences gained by way of parliamentary fact-finding missions or by participating in bilateral or multilateral inter-parliamentary fora foster understanding and sustain dialogue on issues of common concern, and strengthen the ability of parliamentarians to make decisions that benefit their constituents. Indeed, members of the Committee have experienced first-hand the value derived from engaging with counterparts at various inter-parliamentary meetings. These include the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE of which these four countries and Canada are participating states. They also include the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (PA) which involves Canada, Poland and Latvia as full members, with Ukraine as an associate member that participates fully in its activities. Although it is not a member, Kazakhstan has in recent years welcomed a NATO PA fact-finding mission and also attended NATO PA sessions. Other experiences are gained by way of relevant parliamentary friendship groups, such as the Canada-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group, the Canada-Nordic-Baltic Parliamentary Friendship Group, the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, and the Canada-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Friendship Group.

A multifaceted approach to Canada's engagement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia complements the efforts undertaken at the government-to-government level. Accordingly, in order to strengthen Canada's engagement with countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in a meaningful and comprehensive way, the Committee recommends that:

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133 FAAE, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 April 2017.

134 Youth Mobility Agreements are now referred to as the [International Mobility Program](#). See also: FAAE, Fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 16–26 January 2017, Meetings in Riga.



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### **Recommendation 9**

**The Government of Canada should consider measures to improve the efficiency of the visa application process without compromising considerations related to Canadian security and national priorities.**

### **Recommendation 10**

**The Government of Canada should engage with Eastern European and Central Asian governments on youth-oriented partnership frameworks, including youth mobility agreements and educational exchanges, that facilitate employment experience for young people.**

## APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
<b>Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development</b>	2016/12/07	40
Kevin Rex, Acting Director General Eastern Europe Relations		
<b>As an individual</b>	2017/02/14	46
Joan DeBardeleben, Chancellor Professor		
<b>Centre for International Governance Innovation</b>		
Margaret Skok, Senior Fellow Global Security and Politics, Waterloo, Ontario		
<b>As an individual</b>	2017/02/16	47
Anders Aslund, Senior Fellow Atlantic Council		
Samuel Charap, Senior Fellow for Russia and Eurasia The International Institute for Strategic Studies - Washington, DC		
Piotr Dutkiewicz, Professor Carleton University, Ottawa		
Christopher Westdal		
<b>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</b>	2017/03/09	51
Paul Stronski, Senior Fellow Russia and Eurasia Program		
<b>Center for Strategic and International Studies</b>	2017/03/21	52
Olga Oliker, Senior Advisor and Director Russia and Eurasia Program		
<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia</b>	2017/03/23	53
Edgars Rinkevics, Minister of Foreign Affairs		
<b>Ukrainian Canadian Congress</b>		
Ihor Michalchyshyn, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer Orest Zakydalsky, Senior Policy Analyst		

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<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<b>Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development</b> David Morgan, Acting Director Eastern Europe and Eurasia Relations Division  Leigh Sarty, Director General European Affairs Bureau	2017/04/06	55

## **APPENDIX B LIST OF BRIEFS**

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### **Organizations and Individuals**

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**Cameco Corporation**

**Ukrainian Canadian Congress**





# APPENDIX C

## TRAVEL TO UKRAINE, KAZAKHSTAN, LATVIA AND POLAND

### From January 17, 2017 to January 27, 2017

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>Embassy of Canada</b></p> <p>Hon. Roman Waschuk, Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine</p> <p>Anne Mattson Gauss, Counsellor Political</p> <p>Jennifer Cooper, Deputy Director Development Section</p> <p>Ursula Holland</p> <p>Belinda Kato</p> <p>Nadezhda Yegay</p> <p>Clint Martin, Counsellor Commercial</p> <p>Karim Morcos, Director Head of Development Cooperation, Counsellor</p>	<p>Kyiv, Ukraine, January 17, 2017</p>
<p><b>Department of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine</b></p> <p>Vadym Prystaiko, Deputy Minister</p>	<p>Kyiv, Ukraine, January 18, 2017</p>
<p><b>OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine</b></p> <p>Alexander Hug, Principal Deputy Chief of Mission</p> <p>Annelise Godber, Rule of Law Adviser</p>	
<p><b>Embassy of Canada</b></p> <p>Col Brian Irwin, Defence Attache</p>	
<p><b>Operation UNIFIER</b></p> <p>LCol Wayne Niven, Task Force Commander</p> <p>CWO James Smith, Task Force RSM</p>	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>Parliament of Ukraine (RADA)</b>  Hanna Hopko, Chair  Committee on Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Volodymyr Aryev, Head  Sub-Committee of Inter-Parliament, Bilateral and Multilateral Relations</p> <p>Svitlana Zalischuk, Head  Sub-Committee of Euro-Atlantic Cooperation and Euro-Integration</p>	<p>Kyiv, Ukraine,  January 18, 2017</p>
<p><b>Anticorruption Action Centre</b>  Daria Kaleniuk, Executive Director</p>	
<p><b>Hromadske TV</b>  Angelina Kariakina, Head of News</p>	
<p><b>Reanimation Package of Reforms</b>  Olena Halushka, Head of International Relations Department</p>	
<p><b>Freedom House</b>  Zoryan Kis, Project Coordinator</p>	
<p><b>Embassy of the United Kingdom to Ukraine</b>  Hon. Judith Gough, Her Majesty’s British Ambassador to Ukraine</p>	
<p><b>United States Embassy to Ukraine</b>  Eileen Malloy, Senior Advisor on Minsk Implementation</p>	
<p><b>As an Individual</b>  Volodymyr Ohryzko, Former Foreign Minister of Ukraine</p>	
<p><b>International Centre for Policy Studies</b>  Vasyl Filipchuk, Chairman</p>	
<p><b>Police Training Assistance Project</b>  Joe McAllister, Canadian Police Advisor</p>	
<p><b>Canadian Police Deployments to Ukraine</b>  Hilton Smee, Canadian Police Commander</p>	<p>Kyiv, Ukraine,  January 19, 2017</p>
<p><b>Police Department in Kyiv</b>  Yuriy Zozulia, Chief of Patrol Police Department in Kyiv  Oleksiy Biloshytskiy, First Deputy Chief of Patrol Police Department</p>	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>Legal Aid Centre # 2</b>            Andriy Vyshnevsky, Head of the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision            Oksana Kikot, Project Manager            Canadian Bureau of International Education</p>	Kyiv, Ukraine, January 19, 2017
<p><b>UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine</b>            Fiona Frazer, Head of Mission</p>	
<p><b>International Organization for Migration</b>            Manfred Profazi, Chief of Mission</p>	
<p><b>UN OCHA Ukraine</b>            Barbara Manzi, Head of Office</p>	
<p><b>NGO Forum in Ukraine</b>            Fredric Larsson, Director</p>	
<p><b>OSCE in Ukraine</b>            Martin Sajdik, Special Representative of OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in Trilateral Contact Group</p>	
<p><b>UN</b>            Neal Walker, Resident Representative</p>	
<p><b>Agriteam Canada</b>            Twania Sandford Ammar, Country Director for Ukraine</p>	
<p><b>Patriot Defence</b>            Marko Suprun, Acting Director</p>	
<p><b>National Judicial Institute of Canada</b>            Don Chiasson, Director, Legal and Education International Cooperation</p>	
<p><b>Ukraine Media Project</b>            Wayne Sharpe, Chief of Party</p>	
<p><b>Police Training Assistance Project</b>            Joe McAllister, Canadian Police Advisor</p>	
<p><b>Canada Ukraine Chamber of Commerce</b>            Zenon Potoczny, President</p>	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<b>KM CORE Company</b>	Kyiv, Ukraine, January 19, 2017
Bohdan Kupych, President	
<b>Ukraine Crisis Media Centre</b>	
Oleg Shymanskiy, Team Leader for Parliament Communications Reform	
<b>Ukraine Business Journal</b>	
James Brooke, Editor-in-chief	
Olexandra Brovko, Senior Trade Policy Expert of CUTIS Project	
<b>Embassy of Canada</b>	Astana, Kazakhstan, January 20, 2017
Shawn Steil, Ambassador of Canada to Kazakhstan	
Ainagul Dussupova	
Assel Zhamanbayeva, Common Services Assistant	
Adam Barbolet	
Brian Arkinstall, Counsellor and Consul Management and Consular Officer	
<b>Mazhilis (Lower House of Parliament)</b>	
Nurlan Nigmatullin, Chair	
<b>Committee on International Affairs, Defence and Security</b>	
Maulen Ashimbayev	
<b>Senate of Kazakhstan</b>	
Kassyn-Jomart Tokayev, Chairman	
<b>Government of Kazakhstan</b>	
Prime Minister Bakytzhan Sagintayev	
<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b>	
Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs	
Konstantin Zhigalov, Ambassador	
Republic of Kazakhstan to Canada	
<b>Ministry of Religion and Civil Society</b>	
Nurlan Yermekbayev, Minister	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<b>International Legal Association</b>	Astana, Kazakhstan
Aina Shormanbayeva	January 21, 2017
<b>Public Monitoring Commission</b>	
Ruslan Ozdoyev	
<b>Public Association “Dignity”, Kadyr Kassiyet</b>	
Anara Ibrayeva	
<b>Public Fund for Protection of Freedom of Speech “Adil Soz”</b>	
Madina Alimkhanova	
<b>Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law</b>	
Yekaterina Kavlis	
<b>Social Fund “Legal Media-Center”</b>	
Gulmira Birzhanova, Media Lawyer	
Diana Okremova, Media Lawyer	
<b>Embassy of the United States of America</b>	
George A. Krol, Ambassador	
<b>Embassy of the United Kingdom</b>	
Carolyn Browne, Ambassador	
<b>Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands</b>	
Dirk Jan Kop, Ambassador	
<b>OSCE Programme Office in Astana</b>	
Ambassador György Szabó, Head of Office	
<b>Aga Khan Development Network, Kyrgyzstan</b>	
Altaaf Hasham, Management and Programme Liaison Officer	
<b>Aga Khan Foundation, Tajikistan</b>	
Yodgor Fayzov, Chief Executive Officer	
<b>University of Central Asia</b>	
Bohdan Krawchenko, Director General	
<b>Nazarbayev University</b>	
Shigeo Katsu, President	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>Condor Petroleum Inc.</b> Norman Storm, Managing Director</p>	<p>Astana, Kazakhstan January 21, 2017</p>
<p><b>Cameco</b> Darryl Clark, President</p>	
<p><b>Kazmed Consult</b> Kevin Freake, Director</p>	
<p><b>Embassy of Canada</b> Hon. Alan Hausser, Ambassador Aija Matule, General Relations and Public Affairs Officer</p>	<p>Riga, Latvia January 23, 2017</p>
<p><b>Protocol Division of the Saeima</b> Kirils Teniševs, Senior Consultant Raimonds Bergmanis, Minister of Defence</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Defence</b> Janis Karlsbergs, Deputy State Secretary and Policy Director</p>	
<p><b>Centre of Excellence, Latvia</b> Jānis Sārts, Director, NATO Strategic Communications Col Aivar Jaeski, Deputy Director, NATO Strategic Communications</p>	
<p><b>Foreign Affairs Ministry</b> Zanda Kalnina-Lukaševica, Parliamentary State Secretary</p>	
<p><b>Foreign Affairs Ministry</b> Andris Pelss, Political Director-Undersecretary of State</p>	
<p><b>Riga Stradins University</b> Māris Andžāns, Researcher at the Latvian Institute of International Affairs Māris Cepurītis, Researcher at the Centre for East European Policy Studies</p>	
<p><b>European Affairs Committee to the Saeima</b> Lolita Čigāne, Chair</p>	
<p><b>Foreign Affairs Committee to the Saeima</b> Ojārs Kalniņš, Chair</p>	

<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Location/Date</b>
<p><b>Parliament of Latvia</b></p> <p>Rihards Kols, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Atis Lejiņš, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Raimonds Rubiks, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Jānis Dombrova, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Sergejs Potapkins, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Hosams Abu Meri, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Jānis Ruks, Member of Parliament</p>	<p>Riga, Latvia</p> <p>January 23, 2017</p>
<p><b>Embassy of Canada</b></p> <p>Stephen de Boer, Ambassador of Canada to Poland</p> <p>Agnieszka Magiera, Advocacy and Media Officer</p> <p>Malgorzata Kuczyńska, Political and Economic Affairs Officer</p> <p>Jeremy Wallace, Political Counsellor</p>	<p>Warsaw, Poland,</p> <p>January 24, 2017</p>
<p><b>Polish Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman)</b></p> <p>Adam Bodnar, Ombudsman</p> <p>Mirosław Wroblewski, Director, Constitutional, International and European Constitutional Unit</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of National Defence, Poland</b></p> <p>Antoni Macierewicz, Minister of National Defence</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b></p> <p>Marek Ziolkowski, Deputy Foreign Minister</p> <p>Grzegorz Kozłowski, America's Department Director</p>	
<p><b>Polityka Insight</b></p> <p>Wawrzyniec Smoczynski, Managing Director</p> <p>Marek Swierczynski, Senior Analyst for Security Affairs</p> <p>Joanna Popielawska, Senior Analyst for European Affairs</p>	

Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>Sejm European Affairs Committee</b></p> <p>Dominik Tarczynski, Chair Subcommittee on Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership and Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement</p> <p>Marcin Swigcillin, Deputy Subcommittee on Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership and Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement</p>	<p>Warsaw, Poland, January 24, 2017</p>
<p><b>Poland-Canada Parliamentary Group</b></p> <p>Piotr Pyzik, Chair</p>	
<p><b>Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency</b></p> <p>Krzysztof Senger, Executive Vice President</p>	
<p><b>Polish Canadian Chamber of Commerce</b></p> <p>Bernhard Otterstein, President</p>	
<p><b>Adam Smith Institute</b></p> <p>Andrzej Bogacki</p>	
<p><b>Ucan Polska</b></p> <p>Victor Boraks, Director</p>	
<p><b>Bombardier Transportation Polska</b></p> <p>Janusz Kucmin, Chief Country Representative, Transportation</p>	
<p><b>PKN Orlen</b></p> <p>Ewa Pawlowska, Director, Public Affairs, Strategy &amp; Project Portfolio</p>	
<p><b>JS Legal</b></p> <p>Roman Iwanski, Legal Counsel</p>	
<p><b>Embassy of Canada</b></p> <p>Nicholas LePage, Councillor (Commercial) and Senior Trade Commissioner</p>	
<p><b>OSCE/ODIHR</b></p> <p>Katarzyna Jarosiewicz-Wargan, First Deputy Director</p> <p>Marcin Walecki, Head of Democratization Department</p> <p>Omer Fisher, Deputy Head, Human Rights Department</p> <p>Hans Felber-Charbonneau, Associate Web Editor</p>	<p>Warsaw, Poland, January 26, 2017</p>



Organizations and Individuals	Location/Date
<p><b>OSCE/ODIHR</b>            Kateryna Ryabiko, Project Co-ordinator            Jean Pierre Froehly, Head of the Director's Office</p>	Warsaw, Poland, January 26, 2017
<p><b>Polish Sejm Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs</b>            Grzegorz Schetyna, Chair</p>	
<p><b>University of Warsaw</b>            Monika Platek, Associate Professor, Lawyer</p>	
<p><b>Campaign Against Homophobia</b>            Marcin Rodzinka, Board Member</p>	
<p><b>As an Individual</b>            Barbara Nowacka, Politician</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Economic Development</b>            Tadeusz Kosciński, Under Secretary of State            Tony Repa, Advisor to the Minister            Zofia Schnitzer, Chief Expert            Jerzy Kwiecinski, Secretary of State            Plenipotentiary of Minister for European Funds and Regional Development</p>	Warsaw, Poland, January 27, 2017
<p><b>Chancellery of the Prime Minister</b>            Anna Maria Anders, Secretary of State and the Governments Plenipotentiary for International Dialogue</p>	
<p><b>European Union's Representative Office in Warsaw</b>            Marzenna Guz-Vetter, Deputy Director and Head of the Political Sector</p>	
<p><b>Museum of the History of Polish Jew</b>            Barabara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Programme Director            Core Exhibition</p>	



## REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos 40, 46, 47, 51, 52, 53, 55, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76 and 79](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Robert D. Nault  
Chair

