



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches 17 December 2021

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate of defence and security issues.

Dispatches is a weekly collection of news of interest, including posts to social media by the Institute. Links to articles are checked at the time they are put into *Dispatches* but may be unavailable at a later date or in some countries other than Canada.

Everyone is encouraged to submit links and other content to be included in *Dispatches*. Submissions and feedback are welcome anytime. Email to RUSINSDispatches@gmail.com. Comments to articles can be from members or non-members of RUSI(NS). Any comment in *Dispatches* is the sole opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of the Canadian Department of National Defence or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia.

If you wish to receive *Dispatches* at a different address (i.e., not your work address), please inform RUSI(NS). Past editions of *Dispatches* may be requested by contacting RUSI(NS).

*Have a Happy & Safe
Holiday Season!*

Events:

To list an event in *Dispatches*, email RUSI(NS) by noon Thursday. RUSI(NS) events are by invitation. If you are interested in attending and have not been invited, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice – email RUSI(NS) if there is a question of an event occurring.

Save the date: 26 January 2022, Wednesday – planned date for Distinguished Speakers, presenting on Arctic operations. 1300-1500. Via Zoom.

Save the date: 16 February 2022, Wednesday – planned date for Distinguished Speaker, presenting on RCAF strategy. 1300-1500. Via Zoom.

Publications:

Except where otherwise indicated, publications are available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

RUSI(NS) presentation “Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Region – Implementation and Successes” by Assistant Commissioner Neil O’Rourke, 29 November 2021
https://rusi-ns.ca/ccg_arctic_region/

RUSI(NS) presentation “Royal Canadian Navy – Globally Deployed for Strategic Effect” by Rear-Admiral Brian Santarpia, 27 October 2021
https://rusi-ns.ca/royal_canadian_navy/

RUSI(NS) presentation “Casualty Identification Program” by Dr Sarah Lockyer, 20 October 2021
https://rusi-ns.ca/casualty_identificaton_program/

New: Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*, 15 December 2021 edition
https://send.successbyemail.com/prvw_message2.aspx?chno=31ae3090-a6e8-4916-a569-d757b7edc2ca

Edmonton United Services Institute President’s *Enews*, December 2021.

Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*, Volume XL, Number 1, January 2022.

New: Naval Association of Canada presentation "NORAD Modernization and Renewal" by Dr Andrea Charron, 6 December 2021
<https://youtu.be/Vtf4g3qh26Q> (slides at https://nac-o.wildapricot.org/resources/OTTAWA%20BRANCH/Documents/Meetings/2021-12-06-NORAD-Modernization_Charron.pdf).

Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*, December 2021.
<https://rausi.ca/component/acym/archive/88-rausi-dispatches-december-2021>

Royal Alberta United Service Institute *News* October-December 2021
<https://www.rausi.ca/news/publications>

Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*, December 2021 Edition.

Royal Canadian Naval Reserve *Link*, Vol 29, No 1, 2021
<https://issuu.com/lencre-reservenaval-link-navalreserve/docs/link-2021-vol29-navalreserve>

Royal Canadian Navy *Your Navy Today* - Volume 4 Issue 9
<http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/news-ynt/2021/11-your-navy-today.page>


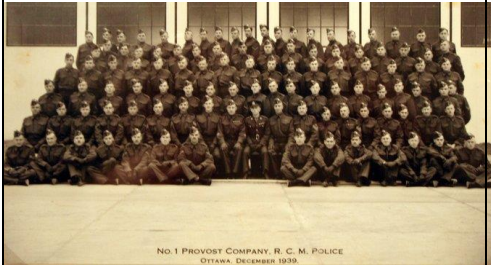

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*, Volume 20, Issue 3, October 2021.

New: Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*, Volume 9, Issue 7, 13 December 2021.

Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*, December 2021.

Tweeted by @RUSI NS:

RUSI(NS) tweets may also be viewed by clicking on the Twitter icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something tweeted or retweeted, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

<p>Canadian Armed Forces Operations @CFOperations 10 Dec tweeted: Royal Canadian Air Force Detachment Goma transported Nepali soldiers last week in support to #MONUSCO on #OpPRESENCE part of the #CAF contribution to #UN peace efforts in DRC. @MONUSCO @RCAFOperations</p> <p>RUSI(NS) retweeted: Good example of flexibility of #AirPower, contribution CAN🇨🇦@RCAF_ARC can make to global operations whether humanitarian, peace, confrontation or conflict #OpPRESENCE = @CanadianForces contribution to Govt of CAN peace operations strategy</p> <p>https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/op-presence.html</p>	
<p>RCMP Heritage Centre @RCMPHC Dec 10 tweeted: On this date in 1939: A contingent of RCMP members set sail for Europe as the No.1 Provost Company to serve as military police during the Second World War. Photo: The Canadian Provost Corps Association</p> <p>RUSI(NS) retweeted: .@RCMP_GRC "were accorded the status of a regiment of dragoons in 1921. As a cavalry regiment, the RCMP was entitled to wear battle honours for its war service as well as carry a guidon, with its first guidon presented in 1935."</p> <p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Mounted_Police</p> <p><i>See also:</i> RCMP and military connections</p> <p>https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/rcmp-and-military-connections</p>	 <p>NO. 1 PROVOST COMPANY, R. C. M. POLICE OTTAWA, DECEMBER 1939.</p>
<p>The Naval Association of Canada @navalassn 10 Dec tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Lots of recent talk about the need for Canada to rethink its foreign and defence policy. Today CGAI looks at Rethinking Canada's Security Strategy: How Canada Can Graduate from the Kids' Table? (Rethinking Canada's Security Strategy: How Canada Can Graduate from the Kids' Table</p> <p>https://www.cgai.ca/rethinking_canadas_security_strategy_how_canada_can_graduate_from_the_kids_table)</p>	

DRDC-RDDC @DRDC_RDDC 10 Dec tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: The Digital Acoustic Surveillance Array (DASA) is DRDC's longest underwater acoustic array to date. This line of hydrophones lays across 1.6 km of sea floor and contributes to research to enhance surveillance of Canada's Arctic. #ArcticScienceMonth



David Pugliese @davidpugliese 16 Dec tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: My latest....Analysis: F-35 bid gives Canada a weapon in brewing trade war with the U.S. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/analysis-f-35-bid-gives-canada-a-weapon-in-brewing-trade-war-with-the-u-s> via @ottawacitizen



"Report of the SAREX nearby the North Pole, on September 7th 2021, with LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT & Russian, Norwegian, Greenlandic/Danish, Canadian, US SAR" https://pame.is/images/03_Projects/Forum/SAREX_Report_Le_Commandant_Charcot_September_2021_V3.pdf #Arctic #SearchAndRescue #SAR





"Skyrocketing shipbuilding costs continue as estimate puts icebreakers costs at \$7.25B" <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/skyrocketing-shipbuilding-costs-continue-as-estimate-puts-icebreakers-costs-at-7-25b/ar-AARSy09> RUSI(NS) retweeted: "The Polar Icebreaker Project: A Fiscal Analysis" <https://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/en/blog/news/RP-2122-024-S--polar-icebreaker-project-fiscal-analysis--projet-brise-glace-polaire-analyse-financiere>



CNA @CNA_org 26 Nov tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: New on #InDepth: "Four Psychological Mechanisms That Make Us Fall for Disinformation," by Megan McBride. <https://www.cna.org/news/InDepth/2021/11/four-psychological-mechanisms-of-disinformation> #disinformation #disinfo #technology




RCAF Operations
@RCAFOperations 10 Dec
tweeted and RUSI(NS)
retweeted: Thank you to our
Air Task Force members in
Abbotsford who have
concluded their support to
#BCFloods relief.
@MARPAF_FMARF
@CFOperations



Air Task Force - Op Lentus, BC

- 9 RCAF rotary and fixed wing aircraft
- 20,000 lbs of flood response equipment flown
- Reconnaissance flights and damage assessments of affected areas
- Airlifted 39,200 lbs of Red Cross supplies from Calgary to Abbotsford
- Transported vaccines to Alberta for redistribution to eastern BC
- Flew healthcare workers between Abbotsford and Chilliwack to sustain hospital operations



Posted on Facebook Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia:

RUSI(NS) postings may also be viewed by clicking on the Facebook icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something posted or commented, email RUSI(NS) by noon Thursday.

A Slavish Devotion to Forward Presence Has Nearly Broken the U.S. Navy

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2021/december/slavish-devotion-forward-presence-has-nearly-broken-us-navy>

In a manner of speaking one can say that the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) has forward presence but in an episodic way. So the costs are not as evident.



One of the better articles this year on the evolution of naval strategy. Suggest one can see echoes of these US policy and strategy shifts in our own RCN history since the cold war. Also a good set of lessons identified for the resource decisions that will be needed over the coming decades.

- - -

Lots of truths in this article but it misses some of the benefits of forward presence. RCN ships that are deployed get more planned maintenance done because sailors are onboard 24/7, they get more high end training done because they have allies with assets, and they learn about the regions, allies and potential adversaries they may have to face in a fight. In effect, being forward is good for readiness. Many readiness challenges are related to resourcing which limits sea time and possible experiences.

Anticipating Future Directions of Tech-Enabled Terror

<https://www.lawfareblog.com/anticipating-future-directions-tech-enabled-terror>

'Drone wars.'



China Seeks Atlantic Ocean Military Base

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/china-seeks-atlantic-ocean-military-base/>

Naval strategists have long recognized the importance of well-located ports throughout the world as part of great (and not-so-great) power sea power. Democratic states need a global co-operative perspective as the 'game of global go' is played. It is important to build partnerships and alliances broadly, with trade and other soft-power approaches balancing with (dominating?) military activities.



What would a Chinese Atlantic military base mean for Canadian grand strategy?

Minister of Transport announces a National Supply Chain Summit

<https://www.canada.ca/en/transport-canada/news/2021/12/minister-of-transport-announces-a-national-supply-chain-summit.html>



"The National Supply Chain Summit will serve as an opportunity to convene a broad range of supply chain stakeholders to discuss challenges, strategies, and next steps that will enable a swift recovery of Canada's transportation supply chain."

Hopefully, too, the summit will consider the security of the Canadian supply chain, especially from cyber and financial threats of state and non-state actors.

It would be interesting to know whether there is an analysis of the supply chain infrastructure, current and necessary/desired, in the Canadian Arctic/North.

See NATO Association of Canada "The Port Of Iqaluit (Or Kimmirut): Nunavut's Lifeline" (<https://natoassociation.ca/the-port-of-iqaluit-or-kimmirut-nunavuts-lifeline/>).

Every Country's Top Export and Import

<https://businessfinancing.co.uk/top-export-and-import/>

Maritime trade is something about which naval officers should know. Freedom of the seas to trade is part of the rationale for navies. Sometimes simple depictions are a good start. Interesting that vehicle engines is Canada's top import. Understandable, what with how cars are manufactured in North America. Probably minimal effect on maritime trade. Not surprising is that oil is Canada's top export. Probably a fair amount of that goes by sea. Okay, next, to determine what that amount is.



Canadian defense minister: We will always ensure our military is ready, willing and able

<https://www.defensenews.com/outlook/2021/12/06/canadian-defense-minister-we-will-always-ensure-our-military-is-ready-willing-and-able/>

It will be interesting to read the Minister's mandate letter (whenever that comes out) and compare how it relates to her words (interesting to read them in a US source).

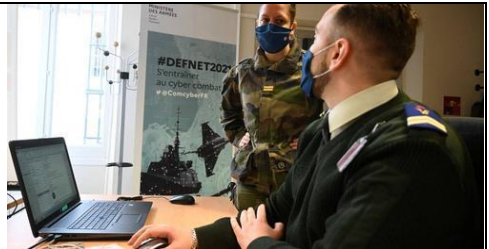


NATO looking at holistic path to boost cyber defense arsenal

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2021/12/14/nato-looking-at-holistic-path-to-boost-cyber-defense-arsenal/>

"The alliance has a multi-pronged approach to boost its cyber defenses via modernized and refreshed capability investments, , new policies and strategic concepts, and by strengthening information sharing and situational awareness between its 30 member nations."

Good to read about Exercise CYBER COALITION 2021. Need lots of such exercising. There's a cyber war ongoing now.



America's TV News 'Desert' Is a Problem With Global Implications

<https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/30189/america-s-tv-news-desert-has-global-implications>

"What has almost entirely disappeared from the airwaves is any kind of purposeful or energetic coverage of the world. Regular world news segments have long ago disappeared from most programs, and viewers of primetime news in the U.S. can go days on end without learning a single interesting thing about what is happening elsewhere on the planet."

Military personnel and others (police, decision makers) have to have a global appreciation. If television (and can the above statement be made about Canadian TV?) can fairly be accused of being a desert, what can/should be done about it? Can they not depend on the (admittedly commercial) media?

Eastern Canada's most versatile seabed technology platform

https://www.covstellamaris.com/?mc_cid=3f6afaddf4&mc_eid=4b755eb110



"Stella Maris is an accessible marine instrumentation test bed."

"Stella Maris" is also the name just announced by the Royal Canadian Navy for the fourth of four vessels being built under the Naval Large Tug project (see: "Royal Canadian Navy announces names of Naval Large Tugs" <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/news/2021/12/royal-canadian-navy-announces-names-of-naval-large-tugs.html> and "New large tug boats honour Canada's maritime history" <http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/news-operations/news-view.page?doc=new-large-tug-boats-honour-canada-s-maritime-history/kwewhadj>). Let's hope the tug never has occasion to meet up with the platform in its operating environment 10 metres before the sea surface!

Trollfare: How to Recognize and Fight Off Online Psyops

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2021/12/trollfare-how-recognize-and-fight-online-psyops/359777/>



"It starts by understanding common tactics: distort, distract, dismiss, deny, and dismay."

Trollfare is going on within Canada. Canadians, especially government departments and agencies including the military, need to know the techniques and to operate within the information domain. Even (especially) when it is domestic.

U.S. Navy Tests Unmanned Sailboat Off Jordan

<https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/43487/u-s-navy-tests-unmanned-sailboat-off-jordan>



"... Saildrones leverage machine learning and artificial intelligence to enhance maritime domain awareness, extending the digital horizon with a sustainable, zero-carbon solution."

"... potentially ideal platform for persistently monitoring littoral and open-ocean areas."

How might these vessels perform in northern/rougher waters? Would environmental conditions make saildrones less useful for the Royal Canadian Navy? Hmm, our Navy 'Sailors' could once again become real sailors!

Security of the vessels, and ship avoidance in cluttered waters, are going to be challenges.

US Navy fires laser weapon in Mideast amid drone boat threat

<https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-iran-dubai-united-arab-emirates-yemen-15630a25f448cb6100818286bc9c9de5>

"... tested a laser weapon and destroyed a floating target in the Mideast, a system that could be used to counter bomb-laden drone boats deployed by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea."

Lasers increasingly becoming a shipboard capability. There may be strategic messaging in trialing the weapon in the Mideast. Certainly laser weapons are employable wherever ships are that carry them - it's a matter of whether there are engageable targets.

Will the Royal Canadian Navy warships to be built under the Canadian Surface Combatant project be 'fitted for' laser weapons?



Other Sources:

#Arctic

Bring Back the Sightseeing Sixth: The Case for an Arctic Division

<https://mwi.usma.edu/bring-back-the-sightseeing-sixth-the-case-for-an-arctic-division/>

#Canada Border Services Agency

CBSA Atlantic Region: Operational and enforcement highlights from 2021

<https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/news/2021/12/cbsa-atlantic-region--operational-and-enforcement-highlights-from-2021.html>

#environment #readiness

Assessing Canada's Climate Change Response & Challenges to Military Readiness

<https://cdainstitute.ca/john-conger-assessing-canadas-climate-change-response-challenges-to-military-readiness/>

#information operations

On the Report of the Aspen Commission on Information Disorder

<https://www.lawfareblog.com/report-aspen-commission-information-disorder>

China's Fake Twitter Accounts Are Tweeting Into the Void

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/12/15/china-twitter-trolls-ccp-influence-operations-astroturfing/>

#professional military education

Introducing #Scharnhorst: The Military Society and the Concept of Continuous Education

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2019/6/24/introducing-scharnhorst-the-military-society-and-the-concept-of-continuous-education>

#warfare

An alternative "mass" or "Schwerpunkt" paradigm

<https://defense-and-freedom.blogspot.com/2021/12/an-alternative-mass-or-schwerpunkt.html>

Other:

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis

O Canada

This past week saw the official apology to members of the Canadian Armed Forces for sexual assault and harassment. It was striking that nearly one third of the folks affected were male, meaning there is also another issue than just that against women. We also have another problem and that is the issue of destroying peoples' names without their ability to defend themselves in a court of law or question their accuser. Social media has crucified people who may not be guilty at all - their careers are destroyed. This is also not right. While the apology is deserved and action required, there can be no compromise of a individual's right to a fair trial, not one fought through the very distorted lens of social media. This is not fair to neither the accuser nor the accused.

A look into our most successful war leaders would no doubt cause considerable angst amongst the population. They were not perfect, but they did the job that need to be done. Rear-Admiral LW Murray, the only Canadian officer to command a theatre of war, was hounded through the media for the VE Day riots in Halifax when there were more serious issues such as Halifax closing the bars and liquor commission and not providing an outlet for young serving men and women of the armed forces. He was hounded out of the country and spent the rest of his life in Britain. Canada did the same thing to the Commander of the Canadian Corps, Arthur Currie, and hounded him after the war. Currie was a great man and deserved much better than he got post-war. Our country has never dealt with military leaders well no matter what their deeds. The bottom line is that there must be fair trials and opportunities to defend oneself, and there also needs to be a reasonable statute of limitations.

The new fighter program is horribly compromised now with only two aircraft contesting the competition. Both aircraft are single engine: the Lockheed Martin F-35A and the Saab JAS 39 Gripen are both relatively short ranged. The Boeing offering, the F-18 Super Hornet, was eliminated despite being twin engine and likely to be used by the US Navy and Marine Corps until the mid-21st century and thus compatible with our closest ally's platforms. LGen (ret) Cuppens this week wrote that this government would likely select the Gripen as it would allow the government to keep another promise which is not to buy the F-35 as part of the their campaign promise. It is similar to the Chretien election promise about the 'Cadillac' EH-101 helicopters in 1992. We still do not have a complete working fleet of anti-submarine helicopters. This orphan fleet is only flown by us and it has been plagued by structural and software problems. It will be vastly more expensive than the original EH-101 contract and will be increasingly more difficult to maintain. Finland, a tiny country is signing a contract for 62 F-35s, and most of our key allies have also purchased the F-35. We are likely to "nickel and dime" our defence requirements and therefore compromise our sovereignty and obligations to our allies in North America and internationally. One can hardly wait to see what sort of nonsense will fall out of the Canadian Surface Combatant or the submarine replacement project. One hopes that the Minister will try to resolve the issue of museum pieces versus modern air and naval equipment. One hopes that all realize their main goal is the successful defence of Canadian sovereignty.

Belarus

The husband of Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, Siarhei Tsikhanouski, was sentenced to 18 years in prison for organizing mass demonstrations against the Lukashenko regime. Mr Tsikhanouski was going to run against Mr Lukashenko in the last election but he was arrested shortly after putting "his hat in the ring" for the presidential election. His wife took his place and is widely thought to have actually won the election. Mr Lukashenko declared his own victory for his sixth term and within days had forced Mrs

Tsikhanovskaya to leave the country for her own safety. Mr Lukashenko is using the security forces and the courts to eliminate opposition to his rule.

Belarus is now facing increased sanctions from the European Union and others for attempts to use refugees as a weapon. Belarus has been forced to send many would-be immigrants and refugees back to their place of origin. Mr Lukashenko was not expecting such a hardline from the EU nor the forceful measures taken to stop Lukashenko's attempt to disrupt the workings of the EU. His moves have caused no end of issues for Mr Putin's Russia which is itself on the receiving end of increased sanctions because of Russia's pressure on Ukraine. Belarus is almost entirely dependent on Russia for its economic stability.

Armenia-Azerbaijan

The two countries conducted talks this past week between the two leaders, Prime Minister Pashinyan of Armenia and President Aliyev of Azerbaijan. The recent conflict was largely a victory for Azerbaijan and its sponsor Turkey. It has caused considerable unease in Iran and that country has moved considerable resources to the Iran-Azerbaijan border as a result. The two leaders have agreed to restoration of rail service and continuation of talks between the leaders.

Turkey has just renewed its troop participation in a peacekeeping effort along with Russia for one more year. Turkey's participation in supporting Azerbaijan is problematic given Turkey's past in regard to Armenians. Turkey has provided Azerbaijan with most of its war-winning assets such as UCAV. More importantly, Turkey has now provided UCAV to Ukraine as well which apparently have been used successfully against rebel targets in the Donbass region. The two moves individually are not an issue but two moves that directly affect the security of Russia is an issue and challenge to Moscow in the long run.

Israel is thought to be negotiating with Azerbaijan for opportunities for the sale of equipment, etc., but also for the use of bases in the area. Why would Israel want to use bases in close proximity to Iran? One can only guess but aerial weapons might be involved as well as long range "training" missions. This may be especially important as the Biden Administration stated that they would not speed up delivery of the newest US tanker, the KC-46. The KC-46 is the newest tanker in US service. It is based on the venerable Boeing 767 airframe but is able to do multiple tasks such as the movement of people and equipment as well as refueling. Israel is not pleased and the fallout will continue to cause further breaks between Israel and the Biden Administration. Israel asked for at least two of eight aircraft to be delivered as soon as possible. The new aircraft would be a major improvement in capabilities. Israel will now be forced to rely on its tried-and-true fleet of KC-135 based on the old Boeing 707 air frame. These aircraft are now 50 years old. The need for a closer set of airfields makes more sense, then.

Russia-Ukraine

Russia has increased the size and capabilities of troops along the Ukraine-Russian border in the area of the Donbass, Crimea, and may have troops in Belarus as well. The use of Belarus troops also may be in play given how Belarus is nearly totally dependent on the Putin regime's good will. Some estimates place the actual number of troops at 175k. Some of the equipment being brought in are specialized air defence missiles and supporting complexes such as the infamous BUK missile system, the one that brought down Malaysia Air Flight 17 during the early part of the "rebellion" by pro-Russian Ukrainian citizens. Russia still maintains that it has no troops in the Donbass despite former troops saying they actually fought there as part of former Russian units. This force within the two "breakaway" republics is a further 40 to 45k more potential troops. What has this achieved for Russia? They certainly have

lost quite a bit as a result of increased sanctions against Russian entities; certainly they have gained the hate of Ukraine's people, and have gained the animosity of the West and potentially the loss of an investment through the Nord Stream 2 project which has yet to receive authorization from the EU. It is a "winning" strategy for the Putin regime.

There was a virtual meeting between President Biden and President Putin at which time Russia drew the US President's attention to Russia's "red lines" such as the Ukraine joining NATO and or the EU, recognition of Russia's sphere of influence, and removal of Ukraine's access to NATO weapons and support. Both Jens Stoltenberg and President Biden made it clear that Ukraine's joining NATO is up to Ukraine and no one else and that any violent move would be met with a significant backlash from NATO and EU countries. Unfortunately, President Biden stated there would be no US troops brought to the Ukraine if Russia did attack, which should have been left somewhat vague instead. What is interesting is that President Putin is demanding talks on security of Russia and the general area as soon as possible. The interesting thing is that Putin is reacting to NATO and not the other way around for a change. Still a very dangerous game is being played on both sides.

In a similar vein, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister, Sergei Ryabkov, stated that Russia will respond militarily to any encroachments made on Russia's western border. He also stated that Russia would deploy weapons previously banned into the theatre and that Russia would respond to each affront. Russia overall doesn't understand the concept of sovereignty of individual nations and still keeps insisting on the concept of spheres of influence which is not accepted by the West. Russia's own actions are responsible for its current predicament, and no one else. Putin has made a complete hash of Russia's position in international affairs and it is now beginning to show more clearly as it finds itself alone except for countries who have little or no choice and not out of loyalty from those countries' populations.

Russia continues its failing battle against the virus with over 10m cases confirmed based on official figures. Anecdotally some Russian medical professionals suggest two to three times this number, inferring that colourful imagination is used to produce official figures. More than a thousand people a day are dying of the disease but excess deaths are now over 800k. Russia is far from being fully vaccinated and there is growing unease over the use of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine, a vaccine that was not properly tested. Later British tests did find the vaccine effective, however, the damage was done.

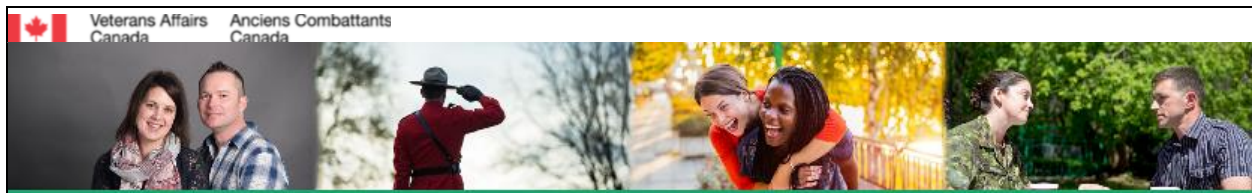
China

The Beijing Olympics scheduled for 4 to 20 February 2022. There is a small diplomatic boycott of the games by the US, Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada so far. Other countries such as New Zealand are considering options such as boycotting the games diplomatically but just not stating anything. The boycott is to demonstrate opposition to China's treatment of Uyghurs and other groups and their loss of human rights. China has done its usual thing and stated that these countries will be punished. One wonders if the actual Olympic spirit is money and perks for the senior representatives who are de facto condoning genocide. What sort of quiet diplomacy condones this type of non-action?

China apparently conducted exercises in Tibet which practiced Peoples' Liberation Army troops in working in chemical, biological and nuclear warfare conditions. Troops involved were from the Western Military Command. Details are limited but it appears they are using this announcement as a scare tactic against India as the exercise area was close to the line of actual control.

China expressed its disapproval of Taiwan being invited to President Biden's Summit of Democracies held virtually, but China was not invited and they have gone on to great lengths about how the Chinese

system is so much better. Mind you, not many folks want to seek refugee status in an authoritarian regime that consistently attacks minorities including acts of genocide. The Communist Chinese Party's platform is one thing, its survival. It is hardly a platform for good governance and all criticism of the Party is severely punished. If you are a wayward authoritarian dictator, the CCP model is an exemplar of how to keep control. The downside of the CCP system is that it is far too fragile for actual democracy where the leadership is removed by the will of the people by a vote that is free from coercion and through candidates being put forward by various parties with different platforms and policies from which the population can chose from freely, as opposed to candidates inflicted upon the population at the whim of a single malignant party in China. It is a model that will eventually bankrupt the system - it will be 'good' while it lasts but it is not one that will last forever no matter how hard it tries, it will fail under the weight of its own corruption. The CCP says it is a "real democracy" despite all its obvious and odious flaws. The bottom line is that one needs a "loyal opposition" to keep things balanced and to provide opportunities for improvements in one's legislation. Democracy is not for the faint of heart or a system that is not robust. The CCP would never survive real democracy now or in the future. It is a product of a failed philosophy. The real problem is that Taiwan has succeeded where the Peoples' Republic has not, and the CCP does not want its own population to understand that there is a better way.



Hello,

Are you a Veteran or family member with experience in our Rehabilitation Program? If so, we want to connect with you to hear how we can improve our rehabilitation services. Please [reach out](#) by 3 January 2022 to share your thoughts and perspectives.

We are looking for a broad group of Veterans and their families including those who identify as Indigenous, members of a racialized group, LGBTQ2+ and/or persons with a disability to ensure our rehabilitation service delivery is inclusive and equitable.

Over the next several months, you will be invited to virtual discussions in the official language of your choice. Our goal is to understand how proposed changes to the Rehabilitation Program would affect program participants. Sessions will last 30 minutes to an hour.

In your email, please include any accessibility requirements you may have so that we can best support your participation.

Know a Veteran or family member who may want to chat? Tell them about this opportunity too, so that everyone has the chance to participate.

Sincerely,
Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Team
Veterans Affairs Canada
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