

Panel Discussion on Canada's Campaign for a UN Security Council Seat

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LOCATION/ENDROIT: Westin Hotel, Governor-General Ballroom III, Ottawa, Ontario

PRINCIPALS/PRINCIPAUX: Former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Yves Fortier

Former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Paul Heinbecker

Nancy White, Executive Director, United Nations Association of Canada

Nancy Wildgoose, President, United Nations Association of Canada

Allan Gotlieb, Senior Advisor, Bennett Jones

Steven Edwards, Correspondent, CanWest

SUBJECT/SUJET: Allan Gotlieb chairs a panel discussion on Canada's Campaign for a UN Security Council Seat.

Nancy Wildgoose: Good afternoon et bienvenue à tous et toutes. This is an important event for us, the first event in our 64th annual general meeting. The United Nations Association in Canada is just one year younger than the UN itself and we're part of a family of organization sin other UN countries that sometimes called the people's UN. So we're glad to see people here to engage in this debate.

We're going to have speakers, panelists present their views and engage but there's going to be ample opportunity and I invite all of you to participate this afternoon. Je continuerais en anglais mais je vous invite de poser vos questions, de faire vos remarques soit en anglais soit en français. Welcome to everyone.

One of the ways we set about fulfilling our mandate which is to engage and inform Canadians about the UN itself and about international issues particularly as they touch upon the interests of Canada. We do it about by fomenting debate. We do it by writing op eds. We do it by running programs and sponsoring model United Nations for young people. We're particularly interested in engaging young people.

This isn't just done out of a national office. Far from it. We have 20 chapters right across the country, two in Quebec and a brand new one up in Yellowknife which is a very active group. We're hoping to grow our organization so if anyone of you is from Halifax and would like to start a chapter there, we invite you to bring your name to our attention. We're very interested in expanding our reach.

Our reach is considerable however. We have, can count some 20,000 Canadians as supporters or members of the United Nations Association today. This is really remarkable. We are in fact a membership organization and it's our members that are important. We believe deeply in the United Nations and who wouldn't because after what's at the UN table today is in fact some of the most important issues to Canadians as well.

That said, we recognize that the UN is facing many challenges. It has evolved and will continue to evolve. This afternoon's panel is going to be discussing the issue of Canada's bid for a seat on the Security Council of the United Nations and it's going to be led by Allan Gotlieb. You'll know that Allan is a distinguished member of Canada's Foreign Service and he had a number of fabulous postings, including that of Ambassador to Washington and as Deputy Minister of the Department of Foreign Affairs amongst others.

Today he is Senior Advisor for Bennett Jones, a law firm in Toronto but you probably know him as an outspoken participant in the public discourse. In fact, it was just after our last AGM he had a major one page op ed in the Post about this very topic so we knew he was both knowledgeable and interest.

After that AGM Kate and I took an opportunity to sit down with Allan because he has wise counsel on a number of things and we were looking at the strategic direction of our organization. We had a little trouble

getting his attention initially, partly because he had a terrible toothache and his next appointment was with the dentist. However we did capture him when we started talking about our numbers and about our programming and our interest in youth.

He gave us a number of pieces of really sound advice that afternoon and I remember one in particular as relevant to today. He said, move to the controversial. Be sharper. Be more controversial. So I'd just like to pass the challenge back to you, Allan and invite you and the panelists today to be sharp and controversial and explore this topic fully with our participants. Thank you very much.

(applause)

Allan Gottlieb: Thank you Nancy. It's a pleasure to be here and to chair a panel of such great distinction on a topic of such great importance. I will in a minute introduce briefly the panel, you are well aware. If I could, now that I have the floor, make a few preliminary comments about the Security Council and why Canada should be doing all it can to procure a seat.

I think that there is a failure on the part of the public in this country and maybe this is something that the UN Association should be concerned with, to appreciate how truly significant and important the Security Council is. It is absolutely a unique body. It isn't just another Council of the United Nations. It isn't another group of people who come together, whether it's the bank, or the IMF, or the World Trade Organization, or ECOSOC in Geneva.

It is unique. It is unique because it has the power to compel the members to dictate legal obligations which become formal legal obligations on the part of sovereign states. The sovereignty of every state in the world is capable of being compromised. It is subject to the fact that they create legal obligations. That is what Chapter 7 is mostly about of the UN charter and that Charter provides that if there is found to be, if the UN Council determines under Article 39, that there is a threat or breach of the peace, it can dictate enforcement actions.

This is a remarkable body. You would never – you know you're reading a lot on the current economic crisis. It takes a crisis to produce change. Well it took two World Wars to produce an extraordinary ... you will never, never I think in the lifetime of any of you ever see anything like that created again. So this is a body of unique standing in the world and for that reason it's a unique opportunity and privilege to be able to participate in it as one of the non permanent members.

The second thing I'd like to say and the Security Council ... first I say people understand its unique power. It's not like any other body. But secondly the notion is that it's out of date. That somehow it's not representative. Well, it isn't completely representative but it is very representative. Look at the permanent members. Whatever they did in 1945, there was some foresight there. You have China. You have Russia. You have the United States and you have over-representation from Europe.

You've got France and Britain. But you have there in the permanent members the great central forces, powerful forces in the world. It is not an inappropriate body. It is not unrepresentative. It should have perhaps increased representation from non permanent members, particularly in terms of representation from Africa and the third world. That's important. It was achieved once when some years ago the Security Council went from 11 to 15 members and maybe it's achievable again.

We shouldn't focus simply on that point. We should focus on the fact that this is a body of supreme power and unique power in the world and in its corridors, in its councils, in its chambers they can broker to a large extent and deal with the great issues of our time. The right countries are there. There should be others maybe but the right countries are there.

Having said that, I can't imagine any country and that includes my own whose people, whose citizens who have any ambition to influence the course of world affairs, to contribute significantly to the big issues,

I can't imagine them not wanting to be on that Council whenever they can, as Canada has been a number of times. Of course Canada was responsible I think as has been pointed out – the contributions we made in San Francisco were to provide for that equitable representation for the non great powers in the Security Council.

That was I believe the most significant Canadian initiative. When we discuss today whether Canada is doing enough or making a sufficient effort to be on that Council, let me say just this. Ultimately that question will be decided by Canadian public opinion. If Canadians don't give a damn whether we're on the Council or not, I think it's unlikely that any government of Canada is really going to put it at the top of their priorities.

This is the role for public diplomacy. This is the role for public opinion, to say that it's unthinkable that we should not make the greatest effort to be successful – first to seek it and then to make the right effort. So this seems to me, if there's any message from the UN Association to the people of Canada, which is of critical importance, it's that. The Council is unique and we should seek membership. It should be within our grasp.

What are the chances? What does it look like? We have a very distinguished panel. In fact we have aside from former Ambassadors in the audience, we have two Ambassadors sitting up here – Paul Heinbecker and Yves Fortier who I've had the honour to work with both of them in different times of their career and mine. They both have a very special experience. They've both been Ambassadors for Canada at the United Nations.

They speak from a direct knowledge which is very rare and I think we're very privileged. Thank you to the UN Association for bringing us together here today. I won't bother you with their curriculum vitae. You know enough about them. Steven Edwards is a correspondent in the United States, in Washington, in New York for CanWest. He's had a great deal of experience in dealing with crises and issues in his distinguished career. He has exposed a number of situations where he has thrown light on and he follows very, very closely the international scene and the issues of the day and the Canadian role in them.

I'd like to welcome them all and suggest we just go down this direction. Paul, if you'd like to kick off this panel.

Paul Heinbecker: It's more informal if we sit. Can you hear me? I don't have a very strong voice even with a microphone. I'd like to pick up where Allan left off and talk a little bit about the basics which I'm sure some people will be very familiar with and others perhaps less and some may have forgotten. 192 members I think, or 193. I think it's 192. You have to get 120 votes to get on to the Council.

Last time we got if I remember correctly about 133 and we won on first ballot against Greece and the Netherlands. The Netherlands came second and I think they won on a second ballot. We run as part of the Western European and others group. The elections are, the nominations are made on a regional basis. The Western European and others group never run clean slates. We're always contesting with each other and that will be the case this time. We're running against Germany and Portugal. I'll come back to that in a moment.

Why would people vote for us? We have some advantages, some assets. One is a history of constructive engagement at the UN that goes back a long way. Pearson is one of the names that will come to mind but a lot of other things, for example, there was the Convention on the Rights of the Child when Mr. Mulroney was Prime Minister and Yves was in New York.

The whole human security agenda is basically attributed to Canada, a responsibility to protect the land mines treaty of international court, protection of civilians in armed conflict, all of that is relatively recent history. The other thing that I think people don't realize is that we're elected also for who we are, not only what we do, the contribution we make.

People around the world look at us and they see that we have managed to integrate people from every corner of the earth. They don't know but I can tell you that Toronto is the most diversified city in the world. About half the population of Toronto over 15 was born in another country according to the statistics, which I don't quite believe but that's what they say. So we get a hearing because we integrate this diversity and we harness this diversity as well or better than anybody else on earth does. We get respect for that.

I always thought that I was getting a hearing partly because of who we were as much as what we did. We have some disadvantages and I'm not quite clear how they're going to play out. On performance – peacekeeping we rank 51st in the world, even if you counted Afghanistan and our true contribution in Afghanistan, we may not crack the top ten. We may only be in the top 15 troop contributors. On aid we're at 0.33. Part of our aid policy is to concentrate.

First of all whenever you concentrate and you narrow it down, you are not adding people who will vote for you. You are subtracting people who might vote for you. The connection they feel with you is less. We're narrowing that down. We're shifting our focus from Africa to Latin America. We already had Latin America pretty much sewed up for these votes. It's not the same with Africa.

We've followed a Middle East policy which has disappointed, I think is not too strong a word, the 57 members of the Islamic group. If you take the 57 members of the Islamic group and you take the 49 members or whatever it is of the African group, or 50 members plus or minus, you're starting out with a lot of question marks, bearing in mind you've got to get to 132. How many of those are you going to have lost in the process? It's not a linear calculation by any means but it is part of the consideration.

Our policy with China has not been the kind of thing that would encourage the Chinese to vote for us. They may or may not influence others. Our policy on climate change has disappointed some. You take all of that together and my guess is that we probably have a harder run at it than we did the last time. It will be more difficult.

There are a couple of issues that cut both ways. Our relationship with Washington, especially with this Washington, is probably a plus. But we run into the question of whether we're in US pockets or not, which is always a question people ask about us. Afghanistan probably cuts both ways as well, pluses and minuses. The strongest comment we can make, the strongest argument we can make on our campaign is how many Europeans do you actually need on the Security Council. You've got two as Allan said but there are two more non permanents basically running for this Council. That would make it four if they all got elected.

Bosnia is a candidate member for the EU. That makes five actual and potential EU members on the Council out of 15. It's not the case this time but one can imagine that even Cyprus counts as part of the Asia group, could be another EU member. You could end up with six EU members on the Council. So it's very easy for us to say, come on, does it have to be 4, does it have to be 5, does it have to be 6? Is there no room for anybody else in this? That's our strongest argument.

We're running against the Germans who are a powerhouse; lots of money to spend and willing to spend it. Against the Portuguese who are the little country making the argument, does it always have to be the big countries that get on the UN? When do the little countries get a chance? It's a persuasive argument. So to boil it down to the end and I want to say I endorse everything that Allan said about how important it is to get on, what are our chances of getting on?

It's not a slam dunk. It's not a three-pointer either. It's kind of a jump shot in traffic I would say but one that we can make but we'll likely have to get it on the rebound. Thanks.

Yves Fortier: I'm looking for another basketball analogy and I don't have one that springs to mind but I also agree with everything that Allan has said and I agree with everything that Paul has said. It is important, very important for Canada to be in the Security Council with 192 members at the UN today, 15

on the Security Council, the Council is really like the Council of Ministers in Ottawa, like the Cabinet. The difference between being on the Council and not being on the Council is the difference between being a backbencher and being an influential Minister.

I think it is extremely important for all the reasons that Allan has recited. What are our chances? I think Paul has canvassed the issue very well. I would say bottom line I think our chances are very good. If I may, to be slightly different from my two friends who have preceded me, let me talk a little bit about my situation, my personal situation.

I was not, contrary to Paul and Allan, a career diplomat. I was and I remain a practicing lawyer in Montreal. How did I come to go to New York? Very simple. I had a former partner called Brian Mulroney who has been in the news recently. Brian is a good friend of mine. We're not of the same political ilk. He was and remains a good friend of mine. After he became Prime Minister he very generously offered me a few positions which I turned down.

One day, in the summer of 1988, he rang me and said I'd like you to come to Ottawa, 24 Sussex. I've got something to present to you that I think you may be interested in. I got into my car and came to Ottawa and went to 24 Sussex and that's when he dangled the UN position and he said, Canada was running for a seat on the Security Council for a two year term starting on the first of January 1989 and he said there were, Canada had excellent career diplomats but he wanted someone he knew, someone that he was on a first name basis with, someone that he wouldn't have any trouble phoning at 2:00 in the morning and someone who would not shy away from ringing him up at 2:00 in the morning if necessary.

He said I'd like you to be our man in New York. This was an offer I could not refuse. I had always been interested in the UN, always been fascinated by the UN. I thought that an opportunity to serve my country in that capacity was an offer that I could not pass. So I accepted and I've never, never, never regretted it. I arrived in New York in the thick of the campaign, in the fall of 1988.

There are three focal points in a campaign for a seat on the Security Council. There's a lot of action takes place in Ottawa, in the Pearson Building, a great deal of action. There's a lot of action that takes place in the capitals of member states, a great deal of action. And there is action that takes place in New York and the point person in New York is obviously Canada's Ambassador.

Shortly after I arrived you had to go present your credentials to the Secretary General. In those days it was Javier Perez de Cuellar, an outstanding Peruvian diplomat. Presenting your credential, you come with a piece of paper that says this is Yves Fortier and he is the new Canadian Ambassador. Perez de Cuellar said something. After the official presentation you have a tête-à-tête with him in his office and you have a glass of champagne.

I was quite as you will appreciate quite impressed by the fact that I was alone in the office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, with the great man himself. He said en français because our language of communication, de Cuellar and I, was always French. He said Mr. Ambassador, M. l'Ambassadeur, this was in the days when I was called M. l'Ambassadeur I still turned around to see who my interlocutor was talking to. There was no-one else in the room except me so I figured he was talking to me and he said, you know, when I want to present a country as an example of what a UN member should do, I always serve Canada as the model country.

Needles to say when I walked back to my mission which was just around the corner in those days, I was on cloud nine. Then I thought well he probably says the same thing to every new Ambassador. In the days and the weeks that followed I was paying my courtesy visits. That's another tradition. A new Ambassador arrives, he visits all of the former Ambassadors, gets to meet them. Of course I used the opportunity, the occasion of my visit, to drum up support for Canada.

I want you to know that I soon realized that what the Secretary General had told me was no exaggeration. Everywhere I went, without any exception, I heard the Ambassador from country X, Y, Z, A, B, C say how they appreciated everything that Canada had done, was doing at the UN in whatever capacity. In those days we were not number 15 and number 20 in respect of peacekeeping. We were in the top five.

Whether it was in ECOSOC or whether it was in the human rights council, we were present and we made a difference. It was very, very, very, very invigorating for me and extremely rewarding to hear these persons representing their countries saying that they thought that Canada had since 1945, the signing of the Charter in San Francisco, made a difference.

I was soon to see when the votes were counted at the end of November and I was in Canada's seat in the General Assembly – you know, Canada had the largest majority, that's in November of 1988, that any other country had ever gathered, which had presented itself as a candidate for a non permanent two year term on the Security Council. That happened because of Yves Fortier? No. It happened because, well partly, yes you're right. (laughs) But it happened because there were a lot of people in Ottawa, there were a lot of people in capitals in the world, who were campaigning and campaigning very hard and campaigning obviously very convincingly that Canada deserved, as had been the case every ten years or so since 1945.

Yes, we should be a candidate and I think we have a very good chance of being elected. It's interesting when I hear Allen say that, no it was Paul, our two competing candidates are Germany and Portugal. In 1988 the two competing candidates were Greece and Finland. Greece came third and Finland came second and we came first. This was a time when we also presented the too many European argument very successfully.

If I may expand a little bit on what Allan has said about the power of the Security Council, the binding effect of its resolutions. I was very lucky. I was extremely fortunate because when I was on the Council in '89-90 there were some very exciting things that happened. You may recall this was when the Berlin Wall came down. This was when the USSR disintegrated. This was when the first Gulf War took place in the summer of 1990. This was when Namibia acquired its independence.

That was during the month that Canada was president of the Security Council. It was pretty heady stuff and things were happening all over the world. We had to pinch ourselves every morning and say, has this really happened. I remember when Gorbachev came to speak to the General Assembly and he talked about the rule of law. There was the former Secretary General of the Soviet Union talking about the rule of law in relationship between sovereign states in the world.

It was, I felt very privileged to be there. The change overnight from the USSR to Russia, same Ambassador, just changed the name plate and this was during the first Gulf War in fact. I remember one day, there is the official meeting of the Security Council which you see on your TV screen but there is a debating room where I've always said the real work takes place, where you remove your jacket and you let your hair down and you don't necessarily say very polite things to the people who are in the room.

I remember listening to an intervention by Juri, I can't remember his last name, who had become overnight the Russian Ambassador and I was listening either in French or in English. I thought to myself, I'm being fed somebody else's speech. This must be the Tom Pickering speech, the American Ambassador, because he was singing the American line from A to Z and that had happened overnight. It was a very, very exciting time to be at the UN and I consider as I said myself very fortunate to have been there at this particular moment.

Another reason, Paul and Allan have touched on reasons why Canada should be there, Canada deserves to be there. One of those, an additional reason, is because we're a member of so many clubs, international clubs. There is no other country that belongs to more international clubs. At least I used to

say that in 1991. I don't know whether this has changed but I think this is still the case, that no other country belongs to more international associations than Canada does.

During the first Gulf War we were trying to get unanimity in the Council and we succeeded more often than not. I remember there was a country Cote d'Ivoire, Africa that was on the Council. I can't tell you how many times the French Ambassador and the American Ambassador would come to me and say, look, you're a member, Canada is a member of la Francophonie, why don't you talk to the Ambassador from Cote d'Ivoire. I think Canada would have more influence over him, certainly at that time more influence than Paris.

Malaysia was a member of the Council. We're of course a member of the Commonwealth. I don't know how many times David Hannay, the British Ambassador would come to me and say, Canada would have a better argument to make with Malaysia than London, than Madam Thatcher. That proved to be the case. We should be in the Security Council. We should not pass up this opportunity. It needs, the campaign needs to be intense and sustained. I believe that notwithstanding some of the weaknesses that may appear on our CV at the moment, I still think that we can make a difference and we should make a difference.

Whether it's a three-pointer or whether it's a slam dunk or whether it's a jump shot in traffic out of a rebound, what matters is the ball should go into the basket and I think it can. Thank you.

Steven Edwards: Can't make any basketball analogies, football, soccer that's all – never played basketball. A few weeks ago I did an article which tried to pick up on probably about the last nine months of criticism or opinions saying why Canada definitely could not get on, criticizing the Harper government for dragging its feet for getting going in the first place and then why Canada could not get on to the Security Council this time, just couldn't muster enough votes and so forth. I think a lot of the criticism can be deconstructed. Although it would be a close tight race for a lot of different reasons even Philip Hanley says probably we'll land the spot in the end.

The first obvious one it is just a harder race this time than ten years ago. Ten years ago it was Netherlands and Greece. Out of those three Canada is the big country and came in first. This time Germany is the biggest and for various other reasons the favourite. That puts Canada in the competition with Portugal. It's harder in itself.

Some of the criticism out there is that Canada's policies now under this Conservative government are just so upsetting everybody and we just can't convince people to vote for us because of that. The UN is 192 countries and almost any policy, left, right, middle is going to upset some or quite a few of them. You've got for example Freedom House which is a monitor of how democratic countries are around the world says that just a bit more than half of the UN members are either less than free or totally not free. That's half of them.

That's why for all that's said about policies of the current government upsetting people because it's not humanitarian enough, it's not this enough or it's not that enough, Lloyd Axworthy's policies would have upset and did upset quite a number of players ten years ago – human security, responsibility to protect, subsequent ICC, International Criminal Court. There are a lot of countries in the UN that sees these as interventionist and picking on their sovereignty. They don't like it.

Then we have the question of, it's sort of said that certain single issues are going to lose us massive block votes. Two big things are the way things have changed with consolidation to Africa and the also this swing to the Conservatives, which started under Paul Martin by the way, on voting on Israel resolutions at the UN. First of all I'd just put forward that many countries at the UN, when they're thinking about who to vote for – as far as I can gather, cause I'm just listening to people like fellow panelists. They've been in the meetings and people like me, we interview them and other people, but as far as I can gather countries don't decide on who to vote for just on any one single issue.

There are a few single issues. Western Sahara might be a single issue if you took a very strong stand on Western Sahara and who should run it, you'd probably upset Morocco or Algeria and one or the other wouldn't give you their vote. But they're more or less rare. So we've got the single issue of let's say Africa which supposedly is going to lose us 54 African votes because the Conservatives have been consolidating, knocking down the number of African countries they're giving direct bilateral aid to.

As it happens it was only from 14 down to 7, so it's only 7 countries that have been affected on that. One of the competitors for example also I'm told by one of the diplomats the other has also been consolidating in recent years their focus of Africa aid – Germany that is. Africa aid actually under this government has been doubled so that's something that Canada, since Gleneagles which started before as well this government. That's been doubled and so that's something that could be argued anyway that money is being spread out through other international institutions, for example Canada is the second biggest massive contributor to World Food Program.

In fact in talking just not Ambassadors but in talking to people who talk privately to Ambassadors, I've been told there has been no groundswell that's going to cost you because CIDA consolidated the number of countries that it's going to, it's sending aid to. In fact, from reports I did a few weeks ago, Canada had already begun to get some promises of African countries. Uganda was one of them. It's always top secret about which ones are which. Of course it's a secret ballet and Richard Bottner (ph) found this when he said Australia lost to Portugal as well in '96 or something and after he'd been promised all these votes, he said, those rotten lying bastards. I think that's Australian language. What he was referring to there, a lot of people had promised the votes but had never actually come through on the day.

Another single issue is Israel. Under Paul Martin, after the Chrétien government after Paul Martin there's a slew of ... oh, can I just finish off one point on Africa? Africa is ... there is the question of does this aid buy votes anyway. Iran perhaps found out, Iran is not Canada of course, but Iran perhaps found out last year that it doesn't. What happens with Canada every year since 2003 they've been running this resolution against Iran, on Iran's poor human rights record, and the Iranians fight tooth and nail to try and get it thrown off the floor because they don't like that.

The last few years they were coming closer and closer to overcoming and beating Canada on this, beating this resolution before it ever comes to the floor. I was reporting last year on how Iran was spending all this money on various projects here, there and everywhere in Africa trying to, we would presume, buy votes. It didn't work for them. In actual fact Canada completely swung the pendulum, swung it around and actually increased its victory over Iran. So buying votes can backfire as well.

On Israel though, we were talking about this other single issue of Israel. It had started under Paul Martin. There are certain resolutions that come up every year on Israel. It's about twenty. They're more or less lead and written by Muslim countries and they're all critical about Israel's position in Palestine, in occupied territories here and there. Often each one of them don't look that bad but as a group you might presume it's pretty anti Israel.

Canada started voting a little bit more in favour along the lines of Israel and of course America on those. This had actually started under Paul Martin a little bit. Under Harper it's swung a bit more although they did halt it this last ... there was no more swing this last year. Is that single issue going to lose all 56 OIC, Organization of Islamic Conference votes? Probably not. Many countries don't vote on single issues. Many Muslim countries are far away from the Middle East for example.

Is Indonesia not going to vote for Canada because they had a liberal swing towards Israel? Indonesia might not vote for Canada but not necessarily for that reason. Even within the Middle East, you've got people like Jordan and Morocco. They themselves actually walked out of Ahmedinajad's speech a few weeks ago in Geneva, the Durban too. They personally walked out.

Canada has all sorts of direct relations with certain other countries, Algeria – cause they don't always like to deal with France. Algerian students and Tunisian students come in fairly decent numbers to Laval. I was there at Laval with them. Lots of connections with UAE, United Arab Emirates, trade and investment back and forward, education again – lots of things to play on there. I know that the UAE have been trying, I don't know whether they've got it yet, but they've been trying over the last few years to get open skies – in other words, rights to be flying all over Canada for their airlines, Dubai and so forth.

On the Israel issue, nobody is more pro-Israel at the UN than the United States. They just got vote on to the Human Rights Council in Geneva and the vote was by the General Assembly. They got 167 votes. There are only 192 countries in the whole place anyway. It was a clean slate but it was still a lot more votes than another clean slate, which Russia was on. They got quite a few less, I can't remember the figure.

Other single issue has been mentioned as well. Canada doesn't do peacekeeping any more. This just reflects the evolution of peacekeeping through the UN these days or in quite some time now. There's been an evolution. The bulk of these mass troops come from these massively emerging economies like India, Brazil and Bangladesh and so forth. They get paid. Perhaps developing countries prefer other developing countries in there instead of troops from Europe or Canada.

So the developed countries have been increasingly just giving out specialized help. So there are these specialist officers going out and Canada has quite a few in a lot of these missions around the world. One of the biggest of course third world peacekeeping missions is that hybrid force in Darfur, where you've got the African Union mixed up with the UN and the UN troops. There's no massive first world representation in that.

There's been an evolution in peacekeeping. First of all troops are going to other places – in Canada's case Afghanistan. Even at the UN, Canada chairs a special meeting on peacekeeping. It's going to have a load of roundtables this year on the challenges of peacekeeping. It's involved in peacekeeping.

Quickly on climate - \$100 million to the World Bank to help these small countries cope from the government would be something the Canadian diplomats would be promoting. Canada is left then, if there are no single issues and they're going to lose suddenly 108 votes, 110 votes all at once, what's left for Canada to tell its story? Its story would vary to different states, cause there's 192 of them.

Obviously the long term story of Canada, and that's the one that's out there, is really successful. Ambassador Heinbecker was focused on it a little bit as well, the multicultural society that works. Canada's been out there for the last 40, 50 years; all sorts of peacekeeping which has evolved but it's been out there. One diplomat's telling me, a German, how just the general reputation still exists notwithstanding that there's been a change of government. In some mission, the German mission or some other, somebody might say let's do some project here and then somebody else would pipe up, no, no we can't do that. Canada's already there. That's the sort of reputation that Canada has already been out there and done this stuff.

So Canada can tell their story. We're in a load of other clubs. They can still their story through these clubs, you know the Commonwealth, the Francophonie and of course this was a theme I understand, saying we're in so many clubs and we've got influence here and influence there and help present cases through these other members – that was something that was pressed I believe in the last competition ten years ago. But that can still be the case and they can tell the story through these clubs, through the Commonwealth, the Francophonie 67.

It's not a member of the EU, and of course Ambassador Heinbecker brought this up as well. It's absolutely true. You could actually have five – I was going to say five, then you pointed out with Cyprus. I didn't think about that. It's true. You could have more than a third of the Security Council, cause it's only 15 members at the moment, EU or EU aspirants, aspiring countries.

One European Ambassador was saying, because you've got these two EU people going against ... Portugal and Germany going against Canada, the thought is the other 25 EU countries would all be supporting them, but one European Ambassador was saying it is realized within the EU that that causes resentment outside in the rest of the world – resentment to see too much EU representation. So that 27 can be broken down. The countries aspiring to get into the EU will not vote for Canada because they would want to be seen playing the game, supporting the EU.

Then again, another European Ambassador said why shouldn't the EU have 6, 7, as many as possible. The EU has arrived. It's big. It's powerful. It's here. It deserves all the influence it can get. I don't know if you can guess which Ambassador on the Security Council might have said that. (laughs)

Of course the two criteria in the UN Charter, says if you're a country the things you've got to consider before you give your vote to this country or this country, is how much has that country advanced the principles of the UN. The other one is geographical distribution. Of course there's the obvious argument that you shouldn't vote for two EU people because you're not spreading the geographical distribution around.

Canada is in the G-7. Canada's got close contacts with the US. These are all things they can put out. Portugal is the opposite, though. They can say don't vote two G-7, Canada and Germany. Vote for us because we're not G-7.

A quick couple of points cause I'm told I'm talking too much. Canada does seem to be good at getting votes. That Iran thing that I mentioned earlier, gathering all those votes to beat Iran year after year is tough. Ambassador Bolton, John Bolton, who's not always liked in every quarter, in his book he actually praised Ambassador McNee, the current Ambassador, about how good he was about going out and getting votes That was helping America get votes to keep Venezuela off the Security Council two or three years ago.

Quick line up as I've made already. As I said, Canada has got some promises from Africa. They're supposed to have South America coming over because of the new focus under Harper towards South America. The Caribbean countries have always been there. Germany tells me that they've got this horse trading back and forward. You vote for us, we vote for you. This is something that's always said to be going on at the UN. Portugal has the (inaudible) countries. There's only 7 of them, or 8 with Portugal.

Final sentence – I think the biggest problem is does actually this government really want to get on the Security Council. You've got to suspect that there's an ideological suspicion of this government of something like the United Nations, the types of compromises that are seen, that you sometimes have to make. I think some people in this government see as rather nauseating, they don't want to make those compromises.

In actual fact, how much can it really get done. Even Robert Fowler, who was the first Ambassador when Canada was last on the Security Council and very much for this application, even he complained that the Security Council as an elected member it's still tough because there's a two tier Council. He was complaining at that time.

Kofi Annan was the Secretary General and the permanent five members, who you know who they are, were always off meeting on their own, making decisions and then coming back and telling the other ten members, this is what we decided. Let's go along with it. There could be the thought, what's the point; if we're just going to sit there and have to listen to what the five say anyway. That's the deconstruction.

Allan Gotlieb: Thanks very much Steven. I'd like to very much hear questions from the floor and discussion with our panel. I think I'll just kind of lead off by throwing out one general question to the panel or an observation and question in case you want to comment, or make any other comments on the presentations we've just heard.

It does seem to me that there is a broad consensus at least among us that the Security Council is a body of supreme importance, although you can't have the same influence on the Council as a permanent member. That's probably true. Nevertheless you do have a vote and you're part of the process and you're there. If you're not at the table all of the time, you're going to be there at the table at the end. There is room for leadership. There has to be.

It seems to me that the government of Canada will be facing the problem that if you go for a position, if you go for a seat and you don't get it – that's a negative from the standpoint of your role. It does raise the question or the argument, why didn't you get it. Well, you didn't try hard enough or you've got the wrong policies. You're not popular. You can imagine the editorial comment that could flow from a rejection.

It does seem to me differently maybe a bit – I don't know how my colleagues would feel about this – in our competition. Although the Europeans are as usual vastly over represented and they're very good at being over represented. They're wonderful office seekers, extremely accomplished at getting elected to office.

We're competing against this time Germany, which is a big power except it's not a great power within the terms of the Security Council. But you're looking at the third or fourth largest economy in the world with a very general presence. So if Germany is serious, this is a formidable opponent. Where does that leave a country such as Canada going after a seat? It seems to me we have only a few alternatives.

One: if you're fighting the popularity contest, you should start trimming or adjusting or changing your policies in order to get votes. I don't know that anybody would really advocate that at this table. I think policies might be good or bad and could be challenged on their own ground, but I don't know somehow or other, the notion of bargaining your principles, even if they're misguided, for getting votes is a kind of dubious proposition that could backfire.

It leaves the room for influence comes here through as you were saying, diplomacy; getting our message across. It seems to me the most key variable. The second which at least ought to be raised is, in a democratic country such as Canada, with so many relationships and players, can public diplomacy help? What about the vast network of NGO's? What about the vast network of Canadians who have relationships? Can they play, given that it's a very serious game, and the losses are, to lose is possibly a step in the wrong direction, a big one, is it only, at this point are we going to rely simply or exclusively on the skill of our diplomacy, getting our story across or are there any other options for us?

Perhaps I could just invite some comments along those lines and then I will, having talked at length, invite everybody to be brief so we can hear from the floor. Yves ...

Yves Fortier: If you put your hat in the ring, you want to win. I'm reminded a story that I lived many years ago when I was courting the lady who became my wife. I was in her parents home one day and I was playing ping pong with her mother, who became my mother-in-law. All of a sudden she looked at me and she said, Yves, you're playing to win. I said yes, of course. Is there any other way?

I think that Canada should set its sight on getting a seat on the Council and that does require, as I said earlier, a lot of action out of Ottawa. It requires a lot of action by the Prime Minister himself in his contacts with other world leaders at various meetings that he will be attending between now and voting day in November. It requires a lot of personal diplomacy at the level of the Canadian Ambassador in New York.

You have to be careful not to speak negatively about Portugal and Germany but there are ways of demonstrating that Canada since 1945 has been a very consistent and a very forceful and a very influential member of the United Nations on a number of fronts. I deplore the fact, I remember my number two at the UN in the last year, I was really spoiled. When I arrived I had Philippe Kirsch as my number two, who is Mr. UN, who was Mr. UN really in the Canadian diplomatic service. Then I had the good

fortune of having David Malone who was also a five star diplomat. They both became very good friends and to this day they are very good friends.

I remember when I was preparing my going away message – I learned a lot during those three and a half years that I usurped a position as an invited member of the Canadian diplomatic service – when you leave you send a report back to Ottawa. I was aided and abetted by David Malone in drafting that report. I said I want to tell Ottawa, and I hope it is spread far and wide, that we are not hungry enough on the world scene.

You see countries like Sweden and the Netherlands and Norway, within the large UN family, you know UN writ large, they're vying for every possible position. Canada, at least that was my perception back in 1992 when I was getting ready to come back to Montreal, was not hungry enough. I made that point and I was told subsequently by a lot of people in Ottawa, thank God somebody who was visiting for three and a half years said to people, and I said it to the Prime Minister himself, we have to be hungrier.

There are ways and means of telling the rest of the world, we have been model UN citizens since 1945. We have done a lot of ... every so often I would get a call from the Chairman of the second committee or the third committee or the fifth committee saying we need Canada's help. If I didn't have the diplomat on my staff in Ottawa, all I had to do was ring up Chris Westall or somebody else and say I need someone.

Within 24 hours somebody was on a plane, arrived in New York, and would go to that committee or that group of people and bring closure. So we have a story to tell. We shouldn't be shy about telling the story. There are trade offs that can be made. I might even offer my services to try and help Canada's case.

(tape switch)

Paul Heinbecker: One of the things you have to be careful about is the fact it's a secret ballot and you have permanent representatives. Permanent representatives tend to have permanent memories about what they don't like about you. Using the RLB factor of Richard Butler, we lost about 30 to 35 votes that were promised to us in writing the last time. So we had promises of votes in the 150 range and we ended up with 132, maybe 150, 160 because I remember we lost about 30 votes.

So it's a secret ballot. The permanent representatives are like the Bourbons. They forgot nothing and learned nothing. Every slight, every insult, every time you've done something you shouldn't have done, every time there's a policy you're pursuing that they don't like – they can remember that and they can vote on it. The numbers are an interesting thing. I think the record is now held by Turkey for getting the most number of votes as a non permanent member last year. They were running a very aggressive campaign and spending quite a bit of money and promising aid. What they also did was they engineered the collapse of the international financial system and Iceland was one of their competitors. Iceland basically went bankrupt immediately before the vote and the Austrians were another one. They arranged to elect some right wing very unattractive political figure just on the eve of the fight. So the Turks just basically sat there and it all came flowing into them.

So there's hope for us. On the issue of bargaining principles, obviously you wouldn't be bargaining principles, although some of us are not sure how much principle is involved in some of those policies and how much political advantage might be being sought from those policies. But you can't take the view, I think, that you can change policies and it doesn't make any difference. It either does or it doesn't and we will find out but the notion that somehow other people will not be paying any attention to what you're doing, I think is probably not correct.

On public diplomacy, I would very much like to see more public diplomacy. Let me go back to the campaign itself. The campaign has been underway since 2000, maybe since 1999 even. People forget how mercantile a business it is. We have been trying, even we were in my time, exchanging in writing

commitments for the Security Council, so this goes back a long way. You don't start a year or two out. We basically ran from the day we stopped being on the Council, in fact maybe even before that.

So there's a certain amount that's already been in the bank. I think maybe the government bit the bullet about a year ago. I think there was a question in their mind whether they wanted to do it, whether it was worth doing. I think they've come to the conclusion two things – one is, if you didn't try for this kind of a seat, given the rhythm with which we've won, you would end up having to explain to the public why you didn't do it.

It may be worse to run and lose than not to run at all from a political point of view but neither of them is terribly good in a Canadian context. There are an awful lot of Canadians that take it for granted that the UN is in their DNA and our DNA and somehow it's our birthright to be on the Council once in a while. It's not good politics not to run and I think the government came to that view.

What we've been seeing, and I want to say this openly, because I don't want anybody to think I'm speaking on behalf of the campaigners, because I haven't spoken to the campaigners about this at all, but I think the government has gone into pretty high gear. There's a lot of things going on. We're counting on Ken's friends to deliver the Pacific for us. We're sending out emissaries a lot.

When it comes to the issue of public diplomacy, I think that there probably is quite a bit that we could do. I could see a lot of advantage in sending Yves abroad. He sounded pretty persuaded to me and pretty persuasive. You can do the Middle East, Yves. I'll go to Europe. I'll go to Turkey. I think we've lost Turkey already. That's another story. But I want to go to Turkey anyway. Somebody has to go.

There is a consensus here that we're going to get on. I think it's just going to be harder than it was the last time. I could be pleasantly surprised but I do think your actions have consequences and sometimes they're measured in votes.

Steven Edwards: Just to say, it's clearly absolutely right. If you start to run and then lose, this is great face loss and of course on the question of principles, Foreign Minister Cannon has definitely said just the other day, and it's been said many times, that there won't be change in any policies in order to try and win votes. Maybe some of the policies pander to minority votes within Canada. Obviously politically that makes sense because if you don't end up with a majority, cause it's still only a minority government, their attitude would be if you don't end up with a majority you can't have a foreign policy at all anyways, as a Party that is.

These are the actions they're taking. Don't forget, by going for the UN and from the Conservatives point of view you would think, by going for the UN and playing into the many traditional posturing that's gone on towards the UN in the past as regards Canada, it's not going to please the sort of vote that might be voting for this government anyway. So they might be just bringing all the equation together.

Allan Gotlieb: Thank you. So can I invite any questions, observations, criticisms from the floor? You might just want to introduce yourself so we know.

Question: What we have heard is very encouraging gentlemen. Thank you. But I keep thinking to a presentation on a similar topic a year ago in which the speaker pointed out that members of the Foreign Affairs Department were discouraged from speaking about the United Nations too often, that R2P (ph) was a bad word and that multilateralism should be the key. That this in fact is the focus of the current government's policy. So where do you think that puts Canada? The focus on multilateralism which I think has been focused to some extent?

Allan Gotlieb: What I'm going to do is I'm going to take a few questions, gather them up and then we'll ask the panelists to comment if they wish.

Question: Douglas Anglin, Carleton University – Steven Edwards has suggested that some of the African states have already promised to support Canada, which some months ago seemed to be a very strange possibility. Some contacts I have had suggest this is due to the awkward dilemma that African states find themselves in with very little leverage. If they vote against Canada to punish it for its policies, that really doesn't give them any leverage whatsoever. It's no particular benefit to them.

On the other hand, if they vote for Canada, it's unlikely to have any benefit but there is an opinion in African circles that there might be some reward from the Canadian government if in fact they do vote for Canada and the vote is close. It seems unlikely that the Canadian government would behave that way, but there's this slim hope and it's about the only thing that the African states can hold on to at this time. I think that is a factor that's quite important with African states at this time.

Question: I'm Michelle Collins. I'm a reporter with Embassy Newspaper and I've been trying to follow this myself at Embassy. You spoke, a few of you, about reasons why ... to not be voted out on single issues. I wanted to know if you might be able to comment more about the campaign that we are working on and what it is Canada is actually offering in their current campaign.

When I've called around New York on of the things I hear a lot is Canada has had no ideas in the last ten years and we did so well on the last campaign to get on the Security Council because of Axworthy's human security agenda, that this was a strong idea being put forward. What are we really putting forward right now? Perhaps in the trades – I've heard similar things with Africa as well, that perhaps they're voting for us by trading again to get aid that they've lost. If you could comment, as I say, on the current campaign.

Question: Hi. My name is Candace Merkel, National Defence. I wonder if you could speak a little bit more to Canada and Portugal, so the various campaigns it will be making and specifically the case that Portugal will be making. You've mentioned a couple of things – Portugal running as a small country, not a G-7 member. I wonder if you have any other thoughts about what kind of campaign they'll be running.

Question: Hi. Laurie Similuk, member of UN Aid Canada and from out west, from Alberta. A question surrounding a little bit more about context. In the last few years we've heard about the high level panel on United Nations reform, expansion of the Security Council. I'd like to hear a little bit more about what have been Canada's positions on the expansion of the Security Council. Secondly, how that plays into their running in the campaign.

Question: Hi. Martin Fisher from the Norman Patterson School at Carleton. All three of you had talked about issues that were brought up on the last Council membership, in particular human security agenda. I remember Axworthy flying down and chairing personally two sessions on the protection of civilians. Let's assume that the current government stays in power . Let's assume that the bid to become a member on the Council is successful. Are there any issues that can foreshadow that Canada would champion if it were to get a seat on the Council?

Question: I am quite amazed with Mr. Heinbecker's approach to the current government human rights stand and taking moral and principle stand on human rights issues. It looks like to me Mr. Heinbecker is advocating an appeasement policy which is the same appeasement policy that brought Hitler and Stalin and Pol Pot to power and committed human rights abuses.

Mr. Heinbecker is being sarcastic, saying that we lost Turkey's vote. If we lose Turkey's vote I wouldn't be upset about it because it is the same Turkish government who is supporting Omar al Bashir in Sudan to perpetrate genocide in Darfur with weapons and political support. Mr. Heinbecker, he has clearly a political agenda here and his agenda way goes back when he was a civil servant and he tried to undermine Mr. Axworthy, his boss, a few times when he tried to bring human rights policies. I think Mr. Heinbecker is the wrong person to be on this panel and to preach us on human rights, thank you.

Question: My name is Jack Scriminger. I'm a member of the UN Association and I live in Ottawa. If we're looking for ammunition, there's a small point that I'd like to make. It might be helpful. There's a new index called the Global Peace Index which they say just came out on June 2nd of this month. It lists the 144 nations that they've covered with some 44 parameters that they weighted and put together to form the index.

The point of all this is that Canada ranks very high on that index. It's based on unbiased information, long term performance and so on. It gives a number that we can quote and say Canada is pretty good. Furthermore Canada at number 8 on that list of 140 nations stands a little bit ahead of Portugal at number 14 and a little bit ahead of Germany at number 16. Of course we're miles ahead of the five Security permanent members. The best of those are Britain and France.

Yves Fortier: What's the name of that organization again?

Question: It is called the Global Peace Index. Stick that into Google and you'll get it. The people who put it together say it just came out completely in June 2nd. It's been put together by a collection of think tanks around the world and so on who worked on it. We'd look pretty good. So if we want to use a little number, there's one we can use.

Steven Edwards: Over what time period is it?

Question: I'm not sure. I only learned of this about three days ago and I've got what information they have. I do know that for the earlier countries I think they were ranking them by year, like 2007, 2008 and the index that they're now showing is for 2009. Thank you. I hope it helps.

Allen Gotlieb: Thank you very much.

Question: Good afternoon. My name is Mobina Jaffer and I didn't mean to speak today but I just heard the tail end comments on Ambassador Heinbecker and I have worked with him at the UN. The work he did in helping me get the issues of women in conflict zone of Sudan and Afghanistan – we got a voice that we didn't have. So I wanted to share another point of view that his presence there made a big difference for women in this country. Thank you, Mr. Heinbecker.

Question: Hi. I'm Ariel Wood from Calgary UN branch. I'm just curious to hear what you think the UNA in Canada, what we could do and what we should be doing to support the goal to get a seat on the Security Council.

Allen Gotlieb: Thank you. Any other comments before I ... yes, Sir.

Question: My name is Johann Mehl. I'm from the South African High Commission here in Ottawa. Several of the speakers mentioned the question of Africa being underrepresented in the United Nations Security Council. We also recognized that decisions are very much based on perceptions and sentiments. I think the question of policy change does have an influence on the perceptions and sentiments of countries and also when it comes to their decisions.

What I would like to follow up on is the question of Canada's policies for the term, for the two years that is coming up. I don't believe that we've heard much about that, especially on questions of Security Council reform, democratize the Security Council, etc.

Allen Gotlieb: Are there any other observations or comments before I ask the members of our panel to respond or reply or comment on ... shall I start the other end of the table. Steve, do you want to lead?

Steven Edwards: You don't want me to go through all.

Allen Gotlieb: No, whatever you want to comment on.

Steven Edwards: One question asked about the expansion of the Security Council. These long ongoing talks are underway, a second round now. Of course it dates to 2005 when Kofi Annan who was Secretary General then started pushing more for reform and expansion of the Security Council.

Canada's position is sort of modest and sort of progressive at the same time. It's not like many other countries where Britain and France for example throwing its weight around, for new big permanent members. In fact, it doesn't think there should be any new permanent members, no extension of the veto, almost as small as possible an extension of the Security Council but big enough to get in all the regions. Don't forget, all the regions, certain regions are under represented.

So Canada says definitely says no more than 25. You've got 15 now. If you had more than 25 it could be completely ineffective, never come to a decision. It would still probably go on like that, it will still probably go eventually if there ever is a decision made whereby there are big new permanent members. These could be people like India, South Africa, Brazil. Who else? India, yes, South Africa and Brazil and there would be one other. Japan, yes. Oh, and Germany. These are all the big candidates for having a permanent seat.

I was going to comment on something else. It does make sense that there could be, somebody mentioned, to get some of this Africa support it makes sense to me anyway that there could be special promise helped down the road to break up that 53 block and pull in some votes. I think that rings true.

Whether Canada's got no ideas in the last ten years, it's a different period now you've got to figure. You've had these terrorist attacks. Nobody says there's a war on terror anymore but there's a lot of threats out there. There's major threats with North Korea, not threat, but major files on the Security Council – North Korea, Iran. There's all this reform going through, the reform of the wider UN, reform of the Security Council itself.

You've got to figure that if Canada was on that they'd have a much better stand to be speaking up for and giving its opinion on these issues. Because a lot of countries don't go in with these ... they don't all come on with massive Axworthy plans of completing redefining the terms of war and all this and who's protected and who's not. A lot of them just come on and act for their couple of years. I just think it's another period now where there might not be world ... so much able to receive plans like the one we saw then years ago. Still the human security but this is a different world in as much as there were terrorist attacks and there's a bigger terrorist threat out there now that's being answered.

Allen Gotlieb: Thank you. Yves?

Yves Fortier: Not being inside the tent for 15 years, I'm not able to contribute to the question about what is Canada's, what are Canada's principal arguments being put forward this year which would justify its candidacy. I see the Canada versus Portugal contest this year as somewhat akin to both Canada versus Greece and Canada versus Finland contest in the fall of 1988.

As I told you initially, we won that contest hands down and I'm not ... I mean, Germany ... it's very difficult to cast Germany aside I believe for all the obvious reasons. But I don't think that Portugal has been a particular contributor to the UN work since 1945. I don't think that Portugal meets the two over riding requirements which are found in the Charter to which Steven referred earlier which would allow it to campaign and say we've been model citizens of the United nations.

I think Canada can advocate that it has on a number of fronts and in a number of committees. It has been a stellar citizen of the UN. Then, there is the very important comment which my friend Paul made in his last intervention. This is a secret vote. I believe much depends on the relationship which our present Ambassador has with the individual Ambassadors in New York on that building on the East River.

You can gather votes on the ground on the basis of the rapport that he who or she who represents Canada has with his friends and colleagues. That takes a lot of cocktails. That takes a lot of dinners. That takes ... and you only have one liver to give to your country. But two kidneys, yeah. But it can be done and I'm sure that ... I'm not being original when I say this. I'm sure that there are people in Ottawa and I'm sure that our present representative in New York knows that very well.

The results of that Global Peace Index which was put forward earlier – am I surprised? I may be naïve but I'm not surprised, I'm not surprised.

Allen Gotlieb: Thank you Yves. Paul.

Paul Heinbecker: The first time a lawyer of Yves' stature has ever been called naïve by anybody. Fortunately he said it himself, but it doesn't really apply. What are we offering? We're not going to offer goodies, I don't think. I'm not sure what the Canadian government's plan is but that's not what we've usually done. We don't have to do that. We're not very good at doing that.

In past elections when we ran against the Greeks, they had a cultural tour they offered permanent representatives and their wives to go to the Greek islands and imbibe in Greek culture and to come back again. I think we offered a seminar or something.

(laughter).

Steven Edwards: I thought it was tickets to Cirque du Soleil.

Paul Heinbecker: There were tickets to Cirque du Soleil. We did take some people to Cirque du Soleil. This time we have the Vancouver Olympics. If you're talking about public diplomacy there will be lots of people coming to the Vancouver Olympics. We may not actually invite them to come for Security Council reasons although I don't see anything wrong with that, but we can certainly take advantage of their coming to give them our story.

Portugal – I should also say that there have been rumours in the past that the Japanese have paid the arrears of countries who couldn't pay their bills so that they would be able to vote, presumably for Japan. The argument Portugal will make to me is there's two things. One is that they can make the case that they are European and therefore have some say over the largesse of the European Union and how it gets used.

They can make the argument that they're a small country and small countries should get on from time to time. It shouldn't be the case that they never serve. But I think they would lose to us on any consideration of contribution to international peace and security, even in the circumstances we find ourselves in. In fact I think we could very likely make a better case for ourselves than the Germans can make for themselves on that level.

The Germans have been stronger on things like climate change and some other important issues and they're bigger than we are economically; although we're not trivial economically. There's a certain disposition on the part of Canadians to think that we don't matter economically but we actually are still around, if you take it straight out GDP terms, we're about ninth in the world. When you're talking about 192 countries, being 9th is a long way from being in the middle. Middle power terms don't help us very much.

Defence spending – we're one of the largest defence spenders interestingly enough. We are contributing. We can make the case that we're contributing in Afghanistan. One of the things that we can make and I forgot about this and I shouldn't have. We can make the case that we didn't go to Iraq. That is the most unpopular decision ever made by an American president I think internationally and with the British support

and that of a few other countries. We put a lot of capital in the diplomatic bank on the Iraq issue by not going. I think that plays largely in our favour.

For Portugal also they will get Brazil but we'd never get Brazil for reasons that are not quite clear to me. There is some level of aversion there on the part of the Brazilians. They don't vote for us very much. I don't think there's much loss on that.

On the Security Council expansion policy, Steven is right. We have been very tough on Security Council expansion. I used to say in the Security Council and in the General Assembly meetings, that adding five new permanent members with vetoes was pouring sand in the UN's gas tank. It was bad enough to have five vetoes. Having ten was going to be ten times worse than five. They would never be able to come to a view.

I think that that's still the case. We made a lot of proposals for better processes, more accountability, more openness. We used on the international criminal court, when the British were trying to shut down discussions because the Americans were discomfited by it and the British were doing their bidding, I wrote a letter to all 192 members of the UN calling for an open meeting of the Security Council.

Those processes are really important. I think what we may end up with is some form of reform which allows some of the emergent countries to serve longer periods of time and maybe consecutively. If they can keep getting elected, they can keep serving. I don't think they'll get much more than that and I don't think there's any problem for Canada on that angle. Maybe that will cost us votes of India but that won't be very much. That will gain Pakistan perhaps.

The UN Association of Canada, what the UN Association can do – it's a difficult one because the votes are votes by states. It's not easy to generate campaigns in countries, bearing in mind that you've got to generate them in a lot of countries. It's not easy but when you are in contact with other people, young people particularly but whomever, putting in a good word for us is probably a good idea. It's not easy to have an impact in, say, Cape Verde or Cameroon or someplace like that.

All in all, I would say that I think we've covered all of these issues, haven't we? What issues would Canada ... Do we have an idea? You'd have to ask the government. It isn't obvious what that idea would be. One of the things and there's been a deprecation of the human security agenda, which I think has been ill advised. We came to the Security Council with an agenda. We had an agenda. We had things we wanted to accomplish.

The International Criminal Court we wanted to get established. We got it established. Responsibility to protect we wanted to promote. We got it endorsed. We got it endorsed by 155 heads of state and 40 approximately foreign ministers. This is not some kooky idea that a bunch of perm reps endorsed. This was a General Assembly meeting in the largest assembly of heads of state of all time. Then it was endorsed also by the UN Security Council following that.

Those are pretty significant achievements. The times are different and Steven is right on that. I would say maybe Afghanistan is an issue we can stand for and the promotion of rights of Afghan people, especially Afghan women. I don't think ... it isn't obvious to me right now that there is an issue which we have particularly to sell. Peaceful resolution of the Arctic might be one but that really only involves five other countries who care about it very much. There's not a lot to that.

I think it's on our overall contribution to international peace and security, our overall contribution to the principles of the UN. I think on that basis we're probably okay but we're in a fight.

Allen Gotlieb: Thank you panel for the philosophical comments. Perhaps I could as Chair of the panel be allowed to make a number of remarks and we can meet our 5:00 deadline.

A couple of remarks: one is Security Council reform. I arrived in the foreign ministry in the early 1950's and one of the big subjects was Security Council reform; the same as the 60's, the 70's, the 80's and the 90's. I'll say this for Security Council reform. It's a very good subject for law schools and for political science. I don't think it's going to play materially. There are some pitfalls to avoid. I think it's more of an academic exercise.

There will be eventually, there might be some marginal reform. It isn't in anybody's interest ultimately to weaken the fact that the only argument that is in favour, the only institution that can be looked to as reflecting the notion of world government is the Security Council because they are a supreme body. If you dilute or weaken ... it's difficult enough to get any decisions, as you know; the Cold War, then the new world order and now today, but still there are prospects, probably a lot better in recent times, of cooperation among the great powers.

Anything in the name of more equal representation, more equitable participation, anything along those lines which would make it more difficult to reach decisions I think has to be looked at very, very carefully and may be counterproductive.

The last point I'd like to make and that I mentioned earlier about whether in civil society so to speak and beyond the hallowed halls of diplomats and chancelleries and whether the vast number of people who are players or engaged in non governmental organizations and others in the promotion of peace and security and development, whether they can play a role. I guess I will just say this. I think they can play a role but I think it would be very difficult to do so without the leadership of government.

When you look at what we're talking about here, a campaign to win votes, to win a seat – you are looking not at a simple ground strategy. You are looking at an accumulation, a multiple of micro strategies. You look at the countries where you think you may have the best chance, which are not committed. Then you look at those countries and you say how can we persuade them.

What are the tools? One of the tools mentioned is terribly important, is the Prime Minister himself, the personal role of the head of the state. That's not going to change. The only way it changes is it becomes more important rather than less. The influence of your Ambassador in the country. In that context it's possible to look ... non governmental organizations as we know are playing a tremendous role in many countries and many of them are very powerful and well financed too.

I think you would want to deconstruct your policy, to look and say, well take this country in Africa, in Asia or wherever and can we influence them. How can we influence them and who are the players? I think in that context it may well be that there are significant players who are nowhere near government, who may have been in government, but no involvement. It might be on the ground doing things in that country.

As none of at this table are in government and so we can provide advice and we can express hope but I have to say I don't think that it's easy for organizations such as those that many of you are identified with to play that constructive role without the dynamism and leadership of the government to do so.

Listen, I want to thank you all. I hope you have found, I did myself, a very informative panel. We appreciate your attendance here and thank you again for your participation.

(applause)

Nancy White: It is my job and my great honour to thank our distinguished panel this afternoon and I have to say as Executive Director of the United Nations Association in Canada I was quite heartened by both the serious debate but by the consensus that in some ways I think we heard here. I'm going to make two points. Allen and I of course will continue to have this conversation.

I'd like to suggest that organizations including the United Nations Association in Canada through such organizations that we're also clubs of, as you mentioned Steven the clubs, which is the World Federation of UNA's that are other civil society organizations in other countries often populated by diplomats and so on. Simply at those opportunities to promote the issue of supporting Canada's candidacy.

Of course the other argument I think the best arguments in fact are probably in front of us here. That is these four people who represent Canada very handsomely when they travel outside of the country. I know Yves has just volunteered but I think our government would be wise to take up that offer.

I guess I would also like to say, first of all, we're launching UNA Canada into our AGM and we'll go and drill down into some of these very serious issues. I want to remind everybody in this room that you have a role to play, that in a way as citizens we can ask our government to make sure that they take these issues seriously. As we started I think you Allen actually made that point, let the government of the day know that in fact Canadians care, that we do want to participate.

Of course the other way that you can do that and I would be remiss if I didn't ask is by becoming a member of the United Nations Association in Canada and helping us build our voice. Thank you all for being here. Again, what a distinguished panel. Thank you all very much.