



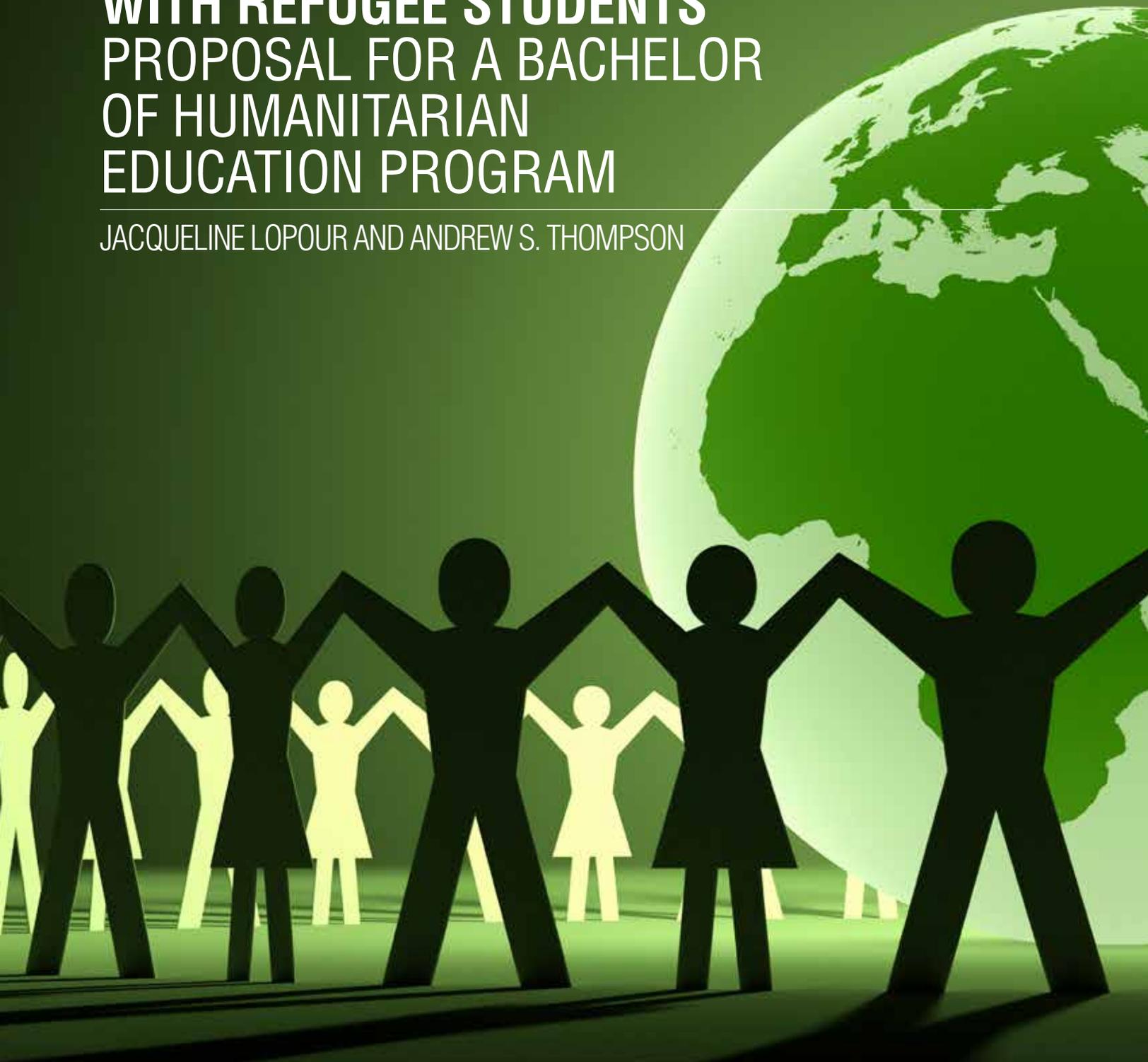
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND COOPERATION FOR REFUGEES SERIES  
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# PREPARING NEW TEACHERS TO WORK WITH REFUGEE STUDENTS PROPOSAL FOR A BACHELOR OF HUMANITARIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM

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JACQUELINE LOPOUR AND ANDREW S. THOMPSON





**PREPARING NEW TEACHERS TO WORK WITH REFUGEE STUDENTS:  
PROPOSAL FOR A BACHELOR OF HUMANITARIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Jacqueline Lopour and Andrew S. Thompson



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## GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND COOPERATION FOR REFUGEES: ABOUT THE PROJECT

There are 65 million refugees and displaced persons in the world, with numbers increasing each year. The crisis has brought out the worst in many countries, with several states restricting or blocking entry to those most in need of protection and other countries shouldering a disproportionate share of responsibility. The current refugee system is unpredictable, piecemeal, and unsustainable. Unaddressed, it will impact the world for generations to come. Yet, with greater international cooperation, this challenge would be manageable — the world's refugees account for less than 0.3 percent of the global population. As a result, the UN Secretary-General has called for the creation of a Global Compact on predictable and equitable responsibility sharing to respond to large-scale refugee movements. To address this challenge, the Global Security & Politics Program at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) has launched the Global Leadership and Cooperation for Refugees Project to develop and advance ideas for a new system of international cooperation that is capable of anticipating mass movements of people and managing them in a way that is politically viable, fair for all states and properly funded, as well as to consider ways in which Canada can provide international leadership on this crucial issue.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**Jacqueline Lopour** is a CIGI research associate, focusing on global refugee policy and international security. Previously, she spent 10 years as an analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency. A leading US Government expert on South Asia and the

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Amnesty International Canada. He specializes in international human rights, civil society movements and fragile states, and is the author and co-editor of five books.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are more than 65 million refugees and displaced persons in the world, and children now make up more than half of the refugee population. The majority of these children are not in school, as rising numbers have strained local education systems to their limits. One of the primary challenges is an acute shortage of trained teachers, and existing teachers are often overstressed, under-equipped and unprepared to handle the psychological trauma and protection challenges faced by displaced children.

What the world needs are teachers trained specifically to work within complex humanitarian situations. Canada — with its reputation for excellent teacher training programs — is well placed to fill the gap. Creation of a new degree, a Bachelor of Humanitarian Education, could provide a holistic education that combines traditional teaching training with classes in international development, addressing child trauma, gender equality, and protection and security. Canada currently trains twice as many domestic teachers as its market can absorb, which suggests an opportunity to redirect resources to a Canadian program to train international students for this unique degree.

A scholarship program for international students, similar to the African Leaders of Tomorrow program, would be critical to ensuring the success of such an initiative. Through a public-private partnership, a donor could fund scholarships while the government administered the program. These new teachers, after graduation, would be expected to spend at least two years teaching directly in refugee settings, with Canada guaranteeing their salaries and partnerships with local actors and governments ensuring appropriate placement. These provisions would allow graduates to give back to their communities and to “pay it forward” to future generations; improve the quality and quantity of refugee children’s education; and demonstrate Canada’s global leadership in emphasizing to the world that education is a basic human right, not a luxury.

## INTRODUCTION

On January 29, 2016, former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations and then President of University of Ottawa Allan Rock and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy wrote in *The Globe and Mail* that a whole generation of Syrians was in danger of being lost as a result of the protracted civil conflict that has ravaged their country and contributed to the largest refugee crisis since World War II. Among their many recommendations, they contended that refugees must have access to basic services, especially access to education (Axworthy and Rock 2016). Rock and Axworthy are by no means alone in stressing the urgency of meeting these needs. State and non-state humanitarian actors have identified the absence of education, secondary education in particular, for refugees and displaced persons as one of the most critical gaps in

the international communities’ protection agenda, and the provision of education as a key component of the larger movement to develop durable solutions that provide dignity to those who are living in camps.

The rising numbers of displaced and refugee students have strained local education systems to their limits. Simply put, there are not enough teachers to handle the number of refugee students in need of schooling. Teachers are overstressed and under resourced, and they often lack training in how to deal with the special needs of displaced children who have lived through violence or trauma. In short, there is a need for teachers, but not just any teachers. What the world needs are teachers who are trained specifically to provide instruction in complex humanitarian situations. Canada, with its reputation for excellent teacher training programs, is well placed to fill this gap by creating a Bachelor of Humanitarian Education degree that trains international “humanitarian teachers” to work specifically with refugee and displaced students.

The international community is already addressing the education gap in many ways, including by funding initiatives, offering technological solutions, improving infrastructure — such as bricks-and-mortar schools — and providing scholarship opportunities for refugee students. Creating a specialized Bachelor of Humanitarian Education degree would build on these initiatives, producing the additional teachers needed to support greater enrolment of refugee students, while simultaneously ensuring an emphasis on the quality of education.

## THE RIGHT TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Access to education is rightly considered to be a basic human right and public good. The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 4 recognizes the need to “ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning” (UN 2016). For Goal 4 to be achieved, teachers will need to be “empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems” (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 2015a, 3). Training teachers to work in complex humanitarian situations would also advance the aims of the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 (UNESCO 2015b). Although it is an aspirational document, the declaration commits the international community to “providing meaningful education and training opportunities for the large population of out-of-school children and adolescents” whose schooling has been disrupted by situations of conflict, natural disaster and pandemics (ibid., iv).

The value of well-trained teachers will reach far beyond the classroom. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), untrained teachers can create protection risks for students. In contrast, trained

teachers can provide children with life-saving skills, including self-protection, disease prevention and reduced sexual and gender-based violence (UNHCR 2015b). A quality education for a displaced child can mean the difference between a continued life of dependency on aid and the chance of a better life of dignity and self-reliance.

There is a shortage of qualified teachers, in particular in “crisis situations” (UNESCO 2015a), and sadly, these situations are a growth industry. According to the UNHCR (2016b), there are more than 65 million refugees and displaced persons in the world. Children now make up more than 51 percent of the refugee population, and the numbers enrolled in school are all too low. Only 50 percent of young refugee children are enrolled in elementary school. Only 25 percent attend high school, and only one percent move on to receive tertiary education (UNHCR 2016a). Adolescents, especially girls and students with disabilities, are among those mostly commonly left behind. All estimates suggest that, due to protracted conflicts and climate change, the number of refugees is only going to increase in the years to come.

## THE BACHELOR OF HUMANITARIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM

With the right training, Canadian-trained international teachers could make a real contribution to the protection agenda globally while simultaneously advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the aims of the Incheon Declaration. Specifically, teachers’ colleges across the country could develop a Bachelor of Humanitarian Education program designed to train international teachers to work in refugee and displaced persons’ camps or in urban areas with a large refugee population. In addition to the regular curriculum on teaching skills, humanitarian teachers would receive training in, among other things, international development, gender equality, engaging with marginalized communities and the special psychological needs of children impacted by violence and trauma. A number of scholarships, to be discussed later in this paper, could be provided for qualified international students who are interested in both obtaining an international teaching degree and returning to their home communities to give back.

Language skills will be critical to the success of future humanitarian teachers. Although students would likely need some English or French to function in a Canadian setting, the Bachelor of Humanitarian Education program must be flexible enough to incorporate language training for those who need or require it. Some humanitarian teachers might already be fluent in languages used by refugee communities around the world. Allowing students to “test out” of a language requirement (i.e., waiving it if the student passed a test at the beginning of the program) could be one option. However, many refugee communities

are multilingual. Therefore, humanitarian teachers might still find additional training useful and necessary. For example, a Dari speaker interested in teaching Afghan refugees might need to improve proficiency in Pashto, or vice versa. Similarly, a humanitarian teacher who is already fluent in Arabic and English might need to learn French in order to teach Syrian refugees in Lebanon, where French and English are the mandatory languages of instruction for mathematics and science.

While online classes or remote teaching can be useful in certain cases, these modes should not be seen as substitutes for a comprehensive teacher education program. Often, online teaching is “more sizzle than steak.” Completion rates for MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are extremely low, and the quality of the education is inconsistent (Hayes 2015; Yuan and Powell 2013). As well, accreditation of online courses can be problematic. Some local universities will not accept online courses accredited by US or European education centres, and vice versa. Also, many refugees are not interested in uncredited online courses, preferring instead to work toward a diploma or certificate (Woo 2016). Internet-based learning also requires reliable electricity, access to computers and, of course, Internet access — luxuries often not available in refugee camps.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

For the proposed program to be viable, international students would need scholarship funding. The African Leaders of Tomorrow (ALT) program serves as a useful model for such an approach. Established in 2014 to commemorate the death of Nelson Mandela, the ALT program is managed by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) in partnership with the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, and in collaboration with the African Association for Public Administration and Management and the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration. Funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the MasterCard Foundation, the program provides “scholarships based on merit to women and men from sub-Saharan Africa to pursue a Master’s degree in public administration, public policy or public finances in Canada” (CBIE 2016a). The principal objective of ALT is to build capacity, specifically to train young professionals to be effective civil servants.

In addition to the direct costs of the ALT program, the GAC and the MasterCard Foundation pay for the scholarships. Scholarship students receive the following: “return airfare (at the beginning and at the end of the program); tuition fees; monthly living allowances and one time installation allowance; fixed allowance to cover purchase of books and attend conferences in Canada; health insurance coverage; and fees for study permit” (CBIE 2016a). To be eligible for the scholarship, students must meet the following

requirements: “be a citizen and resident of sub-Saharan Africa; be between 22 and 35 years old (at the beginning of the study program); have completed an undergraduate university degree (4 years of university) with a minimum average of B (75%); have two to five years of work experience in the public sector, civil society sector or research and academic institutions in Africa; be fluent in French or English; and meet all the academic requirements of the study program of choice” (CBIE 2016b). The program also includes a practicum, which CBIE helps to facilitate. The total direct costs for the ALT program are not excessive. ALT funds approximately 130 students over a five-year period, with the MasterCard Foundation and GAC each contributing approximately CDN\$5 million over the course of the program (Government of Canada 2014a).

A similar private-public partnership could be developed for training international teachers. Canadian universities, which are currently training twice as many domestic teachers as the market can absorb, could redirect resources to training international teachers; the curriculum would be developed based on UNESCO best practices and allow for tailoring according to particular local contexts. As the MasterCard Foundation does for the ALT program, a donor would provide the scholarships. GAC would process visas, and the CBIE would administer the program. Technology giants such as Google, Microsoft and Amazon already have expressed interest in donating time and resources to address the challenge of improved education for Syrian refugees (Katkhuda 2016); there is much potential for these companies to provide material supports, such as access to virtual classrooms for teachers who are working with refugee and displaced children and youth. Exams, assignments and transcripts or diplomas could all be housed using cloud computing, which would allow refugees and displaced persons access to documents wherever they are in the world, thus removing one of the barriers to post-secondary education that refugees face, namely, the lack of proper documentation.

What sets this initiative apart is the expectation that graduates would spend at least two years teaching directly in refugee communities after receiving their degrees. Canada could guarantee the salaries. These conditions would allow graduates to give back to their communities and “pay it forward” to future generations, as well as provide graduates with at least two years of guaranteed employment after obtaining their degrees. Graduates would be paid local salaries similar to what local public or private school teachers make, so as not to create distortions in the teaching profession. Assuming an average salary of CDN\$25,000 per teacher per year, the total cost would be CDN\$1 million per year (40 teachers each earning CDN\$25,000) in the first year of the program and CDN\$2 million per year (80 teachers each earning CDN\$25,000) in subsequent years. Salaries would be paid

through UN agencies and local development partners. After the two years, teachers would be free to seek employment with the national school systems of their home countries or with international aid organizations; to stay on as humanitarian teachers; or to consider a return to Canada. The initiative could begin as a pilot project involving one or two Canadian teachers’ colleges, GAC and a private sponsor, and then be scaled up, perhaps to a level that is comparable to the Muskoka Initiative on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, a CDN\$2.85-billion initiative (Government of Canada 2014b).

## POSTGRADUATE PLACEMENT

Operating in refugee-hosting countries and refugee camps poses considerable political complexities, and partnership with governments, local non-governmental organizations and international organizations will be critical. In particular, such partnerships will help ensure that graduates are effectively placed. Placement strategies must be flexible and customized to graduates’ language capabilities, preferences and cultural familiarity. Every effort should be made to accommodate students who wish to return to teach in their home communities.

Such a program would have to support and bolster national education systems, not undermine them, and reinforce each host country’s ownership. In some countries, doing so might involve working with the host country’s ministry of education to place teachers in understaffed local public schools that are inundated with refugee children. For example, in areas of Lebanon and Jordan, the number of refugee students in public schools exceeds the host country’s entire public school population, and many schools have simply run out of space. In other areas, it might be more effective to place teachers in private schools or non-formal education centres for refugee children run by civil-society and non-governmental organizations. Other options include placing teachers within specialized accelerated-learning programs designed to prepare children who have been out of school for years for integration into a formal education system. UN agencies report that lack of preparation for return to the classroom is often one of the major obstacles discouraging these students from attending school.

## CONCLUSION: BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

The proposed Bachelor of Humanitarian Education program complements and significantly expands upon existing refugee teacher training initiatives, including several based in Canada. Some of these projects focus on improving education and training resources for teachers already working within refugee communities. For example, the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) program — based out of York University’s Centre

for Refugee Studies and supported by the University of British Columbia — has partnered with Kenyan universities to provide teacher training programs and diplomas for uncertified teachers working in refugee camps (BHER 2016). An initiative at Columbia University provides training, professional development and mentoring for teachers in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya (Mendenhall 2015). Similarly, the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) has partnered with the government of Afghanistan to develop a teacher certification and accreditation program that strengthens teacher education institutes in Afghanistan (WUSC 2016a).

Other scholarship programs are designed to help individual refugee students obtain higher education degrees, either abroad or within their country of asylum. However, these programs do not necessarily focus on teacher training. The Student Refugee Program, another WUSC initiative, helps registered refugees resettle in Canada and attend Canadian colleges or universities (WUSC 2016b). The UNHCR's DAFI<sup>1</sup> scholarship program, funded by the German government, enables refugee students to study at universities and colleges in their host country (UNHCR 2015a); a separate program run by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD<sup>2</sup>) helps Syrian students study in Germany (DAAD 2014). The Institute of International Education Scholar Rescue Fund has partnered with the Finnish government to implement a similar program to help Iraqi and Syrian students finish their degrees in Finland (Institute of International Education 2016). In the United Kingdom, the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara) has partnered with 113 UK universities to provide support for Syrian scholars who wish to study or work at academic institutions in the United Kingdom, with a focus on helping academics build the skills and networks needed to eventually return home and rebuild their societies (Cara 2016; Hicks 2016).

The proposed Canadian Bachelor of Humanitarian Education degree combines the best elements from all these initiatives into a unique end-to-end solution. It provides refugee students with an opportunity to study in Canada, and ensures that those teaching the next generation of refugee students are better trained and more effective. By training teachers to teach in complex humanitarian situations, Canada would be offering a tangible solution to the problem of the global shortage of qualified teachers, while helping to make local school systems more resilient and sustainable. Above all, it would be increasing the prospects for refugees and displaced persons to not

only realize their full potential as individuals but also, ultimately, to enjoy a life of dignity.

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1 The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Programme (referred to by its German acronym DAFI, Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlingsinitiative).

2 Its German acronym, short for Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst.

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# CIGI PUBLICATIONS

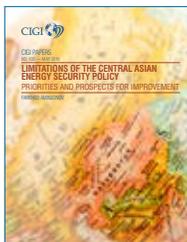
## ADVANCING POLICY IDEAS AND DEBATE



### Misperceptions, Threat Inflation and Mistrust in China-Japan Relations

*CIGI Paper No. 107*  
*Benoit Hardy-Chartrand*

This paper explores the nature of official and non-official discourse and mutual perceptions in China and Japan as they relate to their bilateral relations. Drawing on an analysis of the rhetoric, it examines the elements and sources of both current and past threat perceptions. It argues that government officials, the media and public figures in each country inflate — deliberately or inadvertently — the level of threat posed by the other country, with a significant impact on public opinion, bilateral relations and regional tensions.



### Limitations of the Central Asian Energy Security Policy: Priorities and Prospects for Improvement

*CIGI Paper No. 103*  
*Farkhod Aminjonov*

Canada has achieved remarkable progress in reducing energy loss through efficiency initiatives, engaging in mutually beneficial trade and developing a mechanism to coordinate provinces' energy sectors. After exploring the current state of the Central Asian energy sectors, this paper looks at what Canadian best practices in energy security can offer Central Asian states to improve their prospects for energy security.



### Limiting Dangerous Climate Change: The Critical Role of Citizen Suits and Domestic Courts — Despite the Paris Agreement

*CIGI Paper No. 101*  
*David Estrin*

This paper focuses on the emerging new role of citizen suits, domestic courts and human rights commissions in limiting dangerous climate change. Given the failure of states to stop the almost constant increase in global carbon emissions (and now the worrying practical and legal gaps in the 2015 Paris Agreement), frustrated citizens are increasingly looking to domestic courts to require governments to mitigate emissions and limit climate harm. This emerging role is demonstrated in three important 2015 decisions: *Urgenda* from the Netherlands; *Leghari* from Pakistan; and *Foster v Washington Department of Ecology* from the United States.



### Responding to Security Challenges in East Asia: Three Perspectives

*CIGI Paper No. 99*  
*John Ravenhill*

This paper examines the security context of the Australia-Indonesia relationship. East Asia presents a fundamental paradox for scholars of international relations. It has arguably more sources of interstate tension than any other region of the developing world. However, it has experienced no significant interstate conflict since the end of the China-Vietnam war in 1979.



### Spotlight on Yemen's Forgotten War and Humanitarian Disaster: Preventing the Next Syrian Refugee Crisis

*CIGI Paper No. 97*  
*Jacqueline Lopour*

Yemen's humanitarian situation is arguably the worst humanitarian crisis in the world and the world is looking the other way. The number of refugees is steadily rising and Yemen is seriously at risk of becoming the next Syrian refugee crisis. With Yemen, the past is poised to repeat itself unless the world takes notice. International support for UN-initiated peace talks — to include pressure on Saudi Arabia and Iran, who are both active players in the Yemen conflict — is equally essential to mitigating Yemen's humanitarian disaster, ending the conflict, and ensuring that Yemen's displaced citizens can ultimately return home.



### A Threat to Stability? Islamic Extremism and Fundamentalism in Indonesia

*CIGI Paper No. 95*  
*Jacques Bertrand and Jessica Soedirgo*

While Islamic fundamentalism and extremism are a part of Indonesia's religious and political landscape, they are not on the rise in Indonesia, nor do they pose many risks to its stability as a whole. Both fundamentalism and extremism are symptoms of broader problems in Indonesia — specifically, economic inequality, a disillusionment with democracy and a weak rule of law. Addressing these three broader problems should lead to progress in dealing with the problems of religious fundamentalism and extremism.

# CIGI PUBLICATIONS

## ADVANCING POLICY IDEAS AND DEBATE



### Is Indonesia the Next China?

*CIGI Paper No. 90*  
*Wendy Dobson*

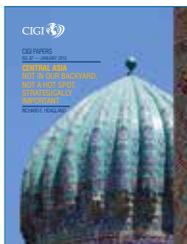
This paper reviews Indonesia's economic prospects and what these imply for a closer relationship with Canada. The author questions what it will take to realize Indonesia's potential, finding the answers to be: human capital development; increased participation in the region's global value chains; meeting the growing middle-class demand for modern services; raising productivity in agriculture and fishing; and increasing use of the Internet. Failure to make these changes will increase the chances of Indonesia's growth in per capita incomes slowing and falling into the middle-income trap.



### Climate Change and Human Rights: How? Where? When?

*CIGI Paper No. 82*  
*Basil Ugochukwu*

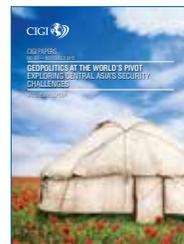
Actions taken to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change must be centred on human rights. This paper analyzes a few examples of national, subnational and corporate climate change policies to show how they have either enshrined human rights principles, or failed to do so. It also examines the challenge of integrating human rights principles in climate change actions. Climate change policies, if they are to respect all human rights, must actually use human rights language to articulate adaptation or mitigation measures.



### Central Asia: Not in Our Backyard, Not a Hot Spot, Strategically Important

*CIGI Paper No. 87*  
*Richard E. Hoagland*

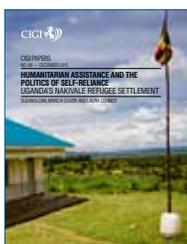
Central Asia is strategically important to the West because of its neighbours, but not immediately. Western governments need to engage in Central Asia precisely to ensure that it does not become a hot spot and instead becomes, over time, ever more firmly embedded in the community of responsible nations.



### Geopolitics at the World's Pivot: Exploring Central Asia's Security Challenges

*CIGI Paper No. 80*  
*Jacqueline Lopour*

This paper introduces Central Asia's geopolitical significance and explores several inter-related security challenges. For each security issue, the author provides a brief overview of the issue, explains why or how it developed and looks at the issue's significance within the broader security environment. The paper then turns to Canada's role in Central Asia and addresses opportunities to expand engagement in the security realm.



### Humanitarian Assistance and the Politics of Self-reliance: Uganda's Nakivale Refugee Settlement

*CIGI Paper No. 86*  
*Suzan Ilcan, Marcia Oliver and Laura Connroy*

Increasingly, refugees residing in refugee camps are living in protracted situations for which there are no quick remedies. Existing attempts to address protracted situations for refugees engage with the concept and practices of the Self-reliance Strategy (SRS). This paper focuses on the SRS in Uganda's Nakivale Refugee Settlement. It draws attention to the strategy's disconnection from the social and economic relations within which refugees live in settlements, and its inability to provide refugees with sufficient access to social support and protection.

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## ABOUT CIGI

The Centre for International Governance Innovation is an independent, non-partisan think tank on international governance. Led by experienced practitioners and distinguished academics, CIGI supports research, forms networks, advances policy debate and generates ideas for multilateral governance improvements. Conducting an active agenda of research, events and publications, CIGI's interdisciplinary work includes collaboration with policy, business and academic communities around the world.

CIGI's current research programs focus on three themes: the global economy; global security & politics; and international law.

CIGI was founded in 2001 by Jim Balsillie, then co-CEO of Research In Motion (BlackBerry), and collaborates with and gratefully acknowledges support from a number of strategic partners, in particular the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Le CIGI a été fondé en 2001 par Jim Balsillie, qui était alors co-chef de la direction de Research In Motion (BlackBerry). Il collabore avec de nombreux partenaires stratégiques et exprime sa reconnaissance du soutien reçu de ceux-ci, notamment de l'appui reçu du gouvernement du Canada et de celui du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

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