

SFU Press Releases Collection

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

Back on the Map: A New Vision for Canada in the World

Contact:

Shauna Sylvester, shaunas@canadasworld.ca
, [Phone removed] (cell)
Shantini James, shantini@canadasworld.ca
, [Phone removed] (w); [Phone removed] (cell)
Susan Jamieson-McLarnon, PAMR, [Phone removed]

March 10, 2009

A report released today by Canada's World sets out a bold new global vision for Canada, one that is based on the most comprehensive and unique citizen consultation on foreign policy in the country's history.

"For years, Canadian governments have neglected our foreign policy and focused energies and attention on domestic issues," says Shauna Sylvester, the founding director of the SFU-based Canada's World and a fellow at the SFU Centre for Dialogue. "Canada's reputation has withered to the point where it is barely visible on the global stage.

"Canadians want their government to play a global leadership role. They tell us they want Canada's international aspirations to match its actions at home. They believe that in order to regain a foothold in the world, Canada must rebuild its credibility by focusing on those areas where it can be an international role model.

Although many Canadians still believe that Canada is a global peacekeeper and influential middle power, these notions are outdated and bear little resemblance to our current reality, the report shows. 'Through dialogue, rather than partisan debate, citizens have identified the key strategic areas where Canada can focus its energies as a role model, based on Canadian values, interests and assets. They have also suggested ways in which the Canadian government should approach foreign policy given the increasing number of new actors working internationally,' says Sylvester.

Rather than convening foreign policy experts, Canada's World - a collaboration of individuals, organizations, foundations and academic institutions - met with thousands of Canadians across the country to develop a new vision for Canada's role in the world. 'We have reached out to people who are not a part of the foreign policy 'choir' and asked them to develop this new narrative,' says Sylvester. With funding from private sources, Canada's World has used opinion research, deliberative dialogues and social media tools to reach 4,000 Canadians in person and more than 100,000 individuals online.