

### Message from the Chair

Distinguished Members of International IDEA's Council of Member States,

It has been a tremendous privilege to work closely with all of you in our year as Chair of International IDEA's Council of Member States.

In 2022, Canada **focused on the challenge of disinformation** – its negative impact on governments as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups and Civil Society Organizations. Disinformation is a challenge that has been growing, enabled by the rapid development and deployment of digital technology. Our work placed particular emphasis on the **impacts of disinformation on democratic processes** and on broadening the dialogue on **resiliency to disinformation**. Throughout the year, Canada sought to: raise awareness on disinformation and its impacts on democracy globally; create opportunities to strengthen and promote democratic and inclusive governance; and support IDEA in its work and its many initiatives.

A special thank you to the Secretary General, Kevin Casas-Zamora, the Secretariat, and our two Vice-Chairs, Cabo Verde and Finland, for their support and close collaboration. Canada is pleased to pass the torch to the Netherlands as the incoming Chair of International IDEA.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with IDEA and its Member States to advance democracy.



Jason LaTorre  
Ambassador of Canada to Sweden

### Key Highlights of Canada's Chairship

#### 1. Raise awareness on disinformation and its impacts on democratic processes

- **April 26, 2022:** On the margins of IDEA's Council meeting in Stockholm, Canada hosted, in collaboration with IDEA, a hybrid panel on "[\*Disinformation and its impacts on democratic processes\*](#)".
- **September 20, 2022:** Canada and the Netherlands co-hosted a UN General Assembly High-Level Week side event entitled "Upholding Democracy and Human Rights in the Face of Rising Disinformation". Bringing together experts from Canada's chairships of the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC) and International IDEA, as well as its co-chairship of the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC), the panellists called for a democratic, multilateral and multi-stakeholder approach to addressing disinformation. *(Picture of Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly and the Netherlands' Minister of Foreign Affairs Wopke Hoekstra)* The event recording can be viewed [here](#), Passcode: 5cu.&MeN.
- In partnership with IDEA's local office, Canada's Embassy to Panama contributed to the funding of a two-day event on September 16-17 on democracy, political expression and polarization, with a significant component on disinformation.



- Canada is providing \$250K in institutional support to IDEA in order to expand the institute’s capacity to address global trends in digitalization and democracy, from October 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023.
- **December 1, 2022:** Canada and Finland (as Vice-Chair) co-hosted a working breakfast event in Stockholm for IDEA’s members on “*Gendered Disinformation: Its Impact on Our Democracies*”. The objective of the event was to facilitate a conversation among IDEA Member States on this issue with Alexa Pavliuc, an expert on gender and disinformation and Senior Data Analyst on the [G7 Rapid Response Mechanism](#) (RRM) at Global Affairs Canada. Also participating were Sweden’s Psychological Defence Agency and Rauno Merisaari, Finland’s Ambassador at-large on Human Rights and Democracy.

## 2. Leverage the Board of Advisers’ expertise in our activities to learn best practices when promoting and protecting democracy

- **December 1, 2022:** Canada and Cabo-Verde (as Vice-Chair) held a joint session in Stockholm on “*Enhancing Gender Balance in Politics*” to facilitate knowledge-based exchanges and sharing of good practices between International IDEA’s Member States representatives and Members of the Board of Advisers. The Prime Minister of Cabo Verde, H.E. Dr. Ulisses Correia e Silva, presented a keynote address to share Cabo Verde’s experience on the issue. The session was concluded by the Ambassador of Ghana to Denmark and Sweden, the incoming Vice-Chair of the Council of Member States in 2023.

## 3. Support IDEA’s efforts in developing its institutional strategy (2023-2027) and membership criteria

- Canada helped champion the process from its role as Chair and engaged with Member States in all meetings and workshops on the development of IDEA’s institutional strategy.

## 4. Call attention to the need to countering the threats to democracy while promoting and protecting global democracy

- **March 16, 2022:** The Embassy of Canada to Sweden, in collaboration with International IDEA, hosted an extraordinary virtual Member States discussion dedicated to the invasion of Ukraine. The event included a presentation of the key data and analysis of Ukraine’s democracy prior to the attacks and the impact the war is expected to have on the neighbouring countries’ democratic development.
- **September 14, 2022:** On September 14, Canada’s Embassy to Ethiopia hosted an event to bring Members States, and the IDEA Africa & West Asia team, to discuss the work of IDEA globally and in the region and explore areas of mutual interest. IDEA’s Secretary General, Kevin Casas-Zamora, provided remarks virtually, and the event was well- attended, with representation from multiple Member States and IDEA team members, including Roba Sharamo, Regional Director, Africa & West Asia Programme (*see picture*).
- **September 15, 2022:** To mark the International Day of Democracy, Canada’s Embassy to Sweden hosted a well-attended reception with 50 high-level attendees, including representatives of IDEA Member States and civil society organizations. The event provided an important opportunity to reflect on the state of democracy around the world



and recognize our shared responsibility to advance democratic values and reinforce the resilience of our democratic institutions.

- **November 15, 2022:** The Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations co-hosted with IDEA a briefing on “*Making sense of Myanmar’s Constitutional Journey and Myanmar’s Representation in International Law*”. Participants included Dr. Marcus Brand, Head of Programme, Myanmar, International IDEA; Ms. Wai Wai Nu, Democracy and Human Rights advocate; Sujit Choudhry, Head of Chambers, Hāki Chambers Global; Dr. Phoebe Okowa, Member, Hāki Chambers Global; and H.E. Ambassador Bob Rae, Canada’s Ambassador to the United Nations.

## 5. Encourage the creation of linkages between IDEA and Canadian experts -- such as institutes, governmental departments, think tanks and civil society organizations-- to increase awareness about IDEA within Canada’s community of experts on democracy

- **March 23-25, 2022:** The Secretary General visited Ottawa and met with Canada’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mélanie Joly; the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Anita Vandenbeld; and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Oliphant. Mr. Casas-Zamora also met with the Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Canada, Members of Parliament, Canadian Civil Society Organisations, as well as representatives of Privy Council Office-Democratic Institutions and Global Affairs Canada.

## 6. Seeking opportunities to strengthen and promote democratic and inclusive governance

- In Peru and Chile, Canada’s embassies partnered with IDEA’s local offices to champion initiatives to support Indigenous electoral and constitutional rights.
- **June 2, 2022:** The Embassy of Canada to Sweden and IDEA co-hosted an event on “*Youth Civic and Political Participation: Shaping our Democracies and our Fight on Climate Change*” which took place as part of the Stockholm +50 Conference and served as an important opportunity to show IDEA’s leadership on inclusive democracy and climate change, as well as our commitment to the full political empowerment of youth in all aspects of civic life, including decision-making. (see picture on right)
- **October 27, 2022:** The Mission of Canada to the European Union and IDEA co-organized a roundtable discussion on “*Women at the Nexus of Recovery and Reconstruction: Driving Global Political Participation*”. The event included the participation of various experts and high-level officials such as Massimo Tommasoli, Director of Global Programmes and Permanent Observer for International IDEA to the United Nations; Jonna Naumanen, Senior Adviser to the EU Ambassador for Gender & Diversity at the European External Action Service (EEAS); Maryna Yaroshevych, Member of the Board of Directors and Head of Advocacy at Promote Ukraine, and Director of the "EU and Ukraine" Programme at the Foreign Affairs Council "Ukrainian Prism"; Ambassador Jacqueline O’Neill, Canada’s Ambassador for Women, Peace, and Security; and Ambassador Ailish Campbell, Canada’s Ambassador to the European Union.

