



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

Dispatches

16 October 2026

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

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

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

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

The next issue will be on 30 October 2026.

Quick links:

[Events](#)

[Publications](#)

[@RUSI_NS on X](#)

[Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia on Facebook](#)

[Other Sources](#)

[Odds and Sods](#)

[SAC Notes](#)

RUSI(NS) on LinkedIn

RUSI(NS) is available on LinkedIn at: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/19653001>. It is a public group, so anyone, RUSI(NS) members and non-members, can join. Everyone is encouraged to submit content to be posted to the group. Email content to: Cdr (ret'd) Ian Wood, Group Page Administrator, ian@idhwood.ca

Writing for RUSI(NS)

The content of *Dispatches* and other RUSI(NS) channels is representative of the submissions by RUSI(NS) members. If you want more published about certain fields and topics, you are encouraged to submit material to RUSIDispatches@gmail.com and RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. The public face of RUSI(NS) is what we, the membership, makes it.



Contributions to RUSI(NS) social media

You are encouraged to send material to be posted to the RUSI(NS) X, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts. For X and Facebook, email to rusinsdispatches@gmail.com. For LinkedIn, email to Cdr (ret'd) Ian Wood, Group Page Administrator, at ian@idhwood.ca. Preferably, send the material ready to post. We are looking for a volunteer(s) to be editor(s) for the X and Facebook accounts in order to keep them active.

RUSI(NS) Website

Good progress is being made on bringing our website back up after it was hacked. Whilst there is still no ETR ATT, it is hoped to have it available soon for posting presentations, commentaries, etc.

Events

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

RUSI(NS) Events: October-December 2026

- October - Naval Modernization Program, TBC
- November - **4 November, Wednesday**, Remembrance Dinner, RA Park, 1830 hrs;
 - **9 or 10 November**, meeting with John Whiteley, Minister Counsellor for Political Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Ottawa, details TBA;
 - **11 November, Wednesday**, Remembrance Day, RUSI(NS) “Parade” at RA Park, 1030 hrs;
 - **25 November, Wednesday**, tour ISL, TBC;

- December - **3 December, Thursday**, Presentation RCAF Modernization, 1300 hrs, (Atlantic Time), Mighty Maroon Room, TBC;
- **10 December, Thursday**, Winter/Holiday Meet and Greet, RA Park.

Proposed Presentations and Events for 2027:

- a. CCG Aircraft Service Delivery, tentative January 27
- b. Industry Canada Update discussion group or presentation, February 2027
- c. CBSA Intelligence Centre Mar 27
- d. Irving Shipbuilding Industries, 2nd tour, April 27
- e. The Future of Maritime Air, May 27
- f. Naval Modernization/Corvette Program, June 27
- g. Canadian Tactical Helo program, September 27
- h. Army of the Future/Equipment Update, October 27
- i. Naval Mine Warfare/Advanced Naval Capabilities, TBC
- j. Canada's International Defence Commitments, TBC
- k. Canada's Commercial Fleet/Modernization/rebuild? TBC
- l. Sanctions Development and Implementation discussion group
- m. Arctic Security Discussion Group
- n. OSINT Discussion Group
- o. European Joint Task Force - Should Canada Join? discussion group
- p. Tour Irving Shipbuilding, TBC
- q. Army Reorg Update, Inflection Point 2025
- r. Canada's Drone Program Update.

It should be noted that these are all proposals and are subject to change. New ideas and concepts are welcome to next year's program. The dates shown are aspirational.

New: 8 October-12 November - Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Ian MacVicar, Instructor, 6 Weeks-Fall Term Course: "North of 60 (Part 2): Mining Minerals or Fueling Fights?" at [Courses Fall 2026 - Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia](#) In-Person: Church Hall - Hope United Church, 3055 Connaught Avenue, Halifax and Online: Zoom.

Registration link: <https://www.thescans.org/registration.html> or hotlink: [Registration - Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia](#)

New: 26 October, Monday - Canadian Institute for Historical Education's free and open to all presentation, "Indomitable Spirit: Robert Borden and Halifax", by J.D.M. Stewart, at Lindsay Children's Room, Halifax Public Library, Spring Garden Road, 1900 to 2030 hrs (Atlantic Time). Reputed historian and one of Canada's foremost experts on Canadian prime ministers, Mr. Stewart will talk about Prime Minister Robert Borden, the Nova Scotian, who led the country from 1911 to 1920. This event is both in-person, at the Halifax Public Library, and available as a live stream webcast through CIHE.ca.

For RSVP: <https://cihe.ca/eventcalendar/indomitable-spirit-robert-borden-and-halifax/>

New: 20 October, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation “Wargaming in the French Army: Duel Tactique” 1-2:30 pm ADT, online. For more information and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-in-the-french-army-duel-tactique-tickets-1994937648208>

Wargaming Events: Georgetown University Wargaming Society long-range schedule: <https://www.guwargaming.org/guwsevents>

Publications

The following publications are received by RUSI(S) from other associations. The latest edition, where not otherwise indicated, may be requested by emailing RUSI(NS). To readers of *Dispatches* from other associations, sharing of your publications is appreciated.

weekly:

RUSI-A Newsletter: <https://rusi.au/Newsletters.php>

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*

Vancouver Artillery Association and Royal United Services Institute Vancouver *Members News*

bi-weekly:

Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*

<https://www.cmisa.ca/cpages/on-watch-current>

monthly:

Canadian Gunner News

Edmonton United Services Institute President's *Enews*

Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*

Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*

Royal Canadian Logistics Service *The Logician*

Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*

Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*

Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*

RUSI-NSW Newsletter (**new:** October): <https://rusinsw.au/site/Newsletters.php>

quarterly:

Naval Reserve Association of Canada *Connexions* (latest: September):

<https://navalreserveassociationofcanada.ca/connexions/>

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*

RUSI-A *United Service* journal: <https://rusi.au/Publications.php#Journal>

other:

RUSI-A monographs: <https://rusi.au/Monographs.php>

RUSI-A lectures: <https://rusi.au/Videos/Videos.php>

RUSI-A podcasts: https://rusi.au/SIG_S/Strategy.php

There are links on the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Australia (RUSI-A) home page (<https://www.rusi.org.au/>) to the seven branches across Australia.

Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Australia

There are links on the RUSI-A home page (<https://www.rusi.org.au/>) to the seven branches across Australia, including New South Wales whose newsletter is also listed below:

RUSI-A United Service (quarterly): <https://rusi.au/Publications.php#Journal>

RUSI-A Newsletter (weekly): <https://rusi.au/Newsletters.php>

RUSI-NSW Newsletter (weekly): <https://rusinsw.au/site/Newsletters.php>

RUSI-A monographs: <https://rusi.au/Monographs.php>

RUSI-A lectures: <https://rusi.au/Videos/Videos.php>

RUSI-A podcasts: https://rusi.au/SIG_S/Strategy.php

Last Week in Canadian History:

- On 3 October 1914, the First Canadian Expeditionary Force, numbering 30,000+, sailed from Quebec to join the war efforts in Europe. The convoy consisted of 32 merchant ships in three columns labelled X,Y, and Z. The ships embarked and carried: 1,547 officers, 29,070 men, 7,679 horses, 70 guns, 110 motor vehicles, 705 horsed vehicles, and 82 bicycles.
- On 5-13 October 1984, Canada's first astronaut Marc Garneau takes flight in STS-41G, aboard the shuttle *Challenger*, as payload specialist. Garneau was a Combat Systems Engineer (new Naval Technical Officer) then seconded from the RCN to the new Canadian Astronaut Programme to begin a short period of rigorous training at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.
- On 8 October 1992, the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries unveil the Peacekeeping Monument in Ottawa.
- On 13 October 1910, Her Majesty's Dockyard, Halifax, is transferred to Canadian ownership by a British Order in Council.
- On 14 October 1942, the SS *Caribou* was a passenger and train ferry that operated in the Cabot Strait between Port aux Basques, Newfoundland and North Sydney, Nova Scotia. The German submarine U-69 sank the vessel, losing 136 lives. It was worst loss of life in Canadian waters during the Second World War. Nursing Sister LCdr Margaret Brooke, fought for her own life hanging onto ropes on a capsized lifeboat while still doing everything she could to save the life of her colleague and friend Agnes Wilkie. Despite her heroic efforts her friend succumbed to the frigid waters. HMCS *Margaret Brooke* is named in her honour.

@RUSI_NS on X 

To have something posted or reposted, email RUSI(NS).

Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 14 Oct posted and RUSI(NMS) reposted:

Black Hawk Down: Trump's Trade War Pauses Helicopter Deal: Sources #cdnpoli #Defence #CanadaUS #TradeWar

(<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/black-hawks-us-military-canada-helicopter-deal-9.7378775>)



National Post @nationalpost 13 Oct posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

A military underfunded, undermanned and underprepared <https://nationalpost.com/news/a-military-underfunded-undermanned-and-underprepared>



Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 13 Oct posted:

Billions more for defence but Canada's military faces an old budget squeeze. #cdnpoli #defence #warfare

(<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/military-spending-budget-cuts-carney-9.7375802>)



RUSI(NS) quoted:

"If you have to make budget reductions, reduce the @NationalDefence. Don't touch the @CanadianForces." Ensure balance between operating elements & support. Ensure operating forces support CAN  foreign/defence/security policies & strategies. Accept more risk, reduce process.

CDA Institute @CDAInstitute 29 Sep posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

Dr. John Walsh argues that Canada should partner with universities to use underused summer campus facilities to expand Army Reserve training capacity and strengthen national defence preparedness.

(How Canadian Universities Can Help Build a Stronger

<https://cdainstitute.ca/how-canadian-universities-can-help-build-a-stronger-army-reserve/>)



RCAF Operations @RCAFOperations 9 Oct posted:

Exercise #AGILEWARRIOR 26-14 is complete! ✈️~70 CAF members from @RCAF_ARC 14 Wing operated from dispersed locations across the Maritimes, putting Agile Combat Employment into practice.

Disperse. Adapt. Sustain operations. 💪

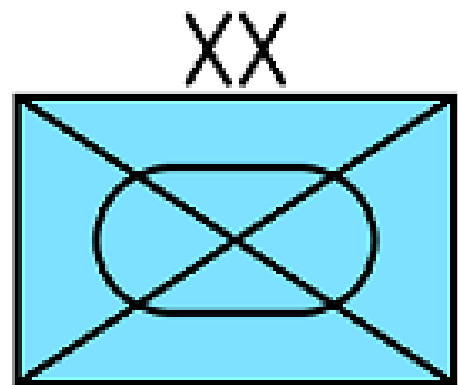


RUSI(NS) quoted:

“ACE (Agile Combat Employment) focuses on dispersing combat air power across multiple locations, including austere and tactical landing zones, to maintain operational effectiveness under threat.” <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/maple-leaf/rcaf/2025/12/agile-combat-employment-rcaf-success-tarassis.html> @RCAF_ARC #airpower

“Canadian Army at a Glance”

<https://www.canada.ca/en/army/news-publications/2026/10/ca-glance.html> “@CanadianArmy shifted from a largely regional divisional structure to one organized around four core functions: manoeuvre operations, defence of Canada, Army support, and doctrine and training.”



ISED @ISED_CA 1 Oct posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

How big is Canada’s marine industry? 🌊 A new report provides the first comprehensive look at its economic activity, workforce and businesses. Explore the data:

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/research-and-business-intelligence/industry-sector-intelligence/manufacturing-industries/shipbuilding-and-industrial-marine/state-canadas-marine-industry-report>



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook

To have something posted or commented, email RUSI(NS).

Sweden Releases Sanctioned Russian Shadow Fleet Tanker After Seven-Month Detention

<https://gcaptain.com/sweden-releases-sanctioned-russian-shadow-fleet-tanker-after-seven-month-detention/>



Swedish authorities cleared a sanctioned tanker to leave the country after nearly seven months at anchor. Underscores the need for countries (Canada) to have safe and secure locations to hold detained vessels. There is also the arrangements to handle the crew. And concomitant costs need to be considered. The whole process of intercepting, boarding and diverting vessels to holding locations needs to be planned, wargamed and exercised.

“The vessel’s prolonged detention highlights the difficulties authorities face in verifying the registration and documentation of ships operating within Russia’s shadow fleet.”

One can take it that Sweden did not dally in attempting to verify the ship's registration and crew documentation., but this does highlight the need for Canada and others to ensure an expedited process.

The Australian Army’s emerging littoral force needs a northern logistics system

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-australian-armys-emerging-littoral-force-needs-a-northern-logistics-system/>



“The issue is not simply whether Defence has enough infrastructure, but whether the distribution network connects effectively with the civilian and commercial capacity that it relies on. The effectiveness of northern logistics will depend on how these elements work together to move, sustain and regenerate a dispersed force.”

Points for when reflecting on/planning for development of the Arctic?

NATO Theory of Victory war plan aims to cripple invading Russian forces at border

<https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2026-10-06/nato-victory-battle-plan-23069963.html>



It’ll be interesting to read whatever becomes public of this ‘Theory of Victory.’

“Forward-positioned NATO ground forces would first

move to stop an incursion and then bring capabilities developed through its Eastern Flank Deterrence Initiative, which is focused on using drones and artificial intelligence to counter a larger opposing force, according to Ansa.”

Will the Canadian forces in Latvia be equipped to take part in this theory?

“NATO has multinational battlegroups across its eastern flank that are designed to be quickly reinforced under the alliance’s concepts for fighting wars.”

The reinforcement of Canadian forces in Latvia is not getting public attention, indeed, is questioned by some outside observers. And retrograding Canadian forces out of the Baltics, if necessary, is very questionable if the Baltics is as contended as it is likely to be. (Has that been wargamed?)

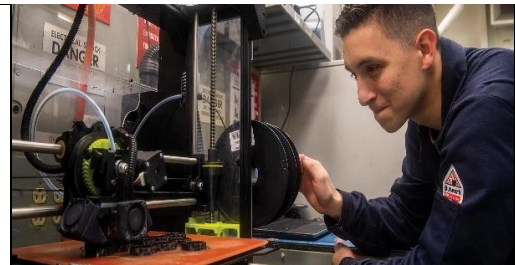
“...multinational NATO forces stationed from Finland to Romania would not have to wait for a political decision in Brussels if attacked.”

Good to read this point. Again, it is not getting public attention.

Other Sources

Additive Manufacturing at Sea

The article explores efforts in the US Navy to “operationalize” additive manufacturing. Benefits of such include reducing maintenance delays and circumventing fragile and extended supply chains to increase mission effectiveness by being able to effect repairs “as far forward as possible.”



It raises some interesting questions that Canada would be wise to consider, beginning with are we looking into deployed additive manufacturing ourselves. Are contracts for components for new ships being written with the consideration of intellectual property rights to enable later additive manufacturing of these parts to take place? What specialized training may be required and for what military occupation classifications? How might this capability be incorporated into deployed elements of the RCN and CAF at large?

Full Report in:

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2026/october/urgent-need-manufacturing-sea>
and available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

#artificial intelligence

UK needs tougher powers over high-risk technology vendors, says RUSI

Ref RUSI(UK): <https://www.computing.co.uk/news/2026/government/uk-needs-tougher-powers-over-high-risk-technology-vendors-says-rusi>

#artificial intelligence

EU's hodgepodge tech policy exposes members to Chinese vendor risks, says think tank

Ref RUSI(UK): <https://www.theregister.com/security/2026/10/01/eus-hodgepodge-tech-policy-exposes-members-to-chinese-vendor-risks-says-think-tank/5300599>

#artime security

Trump Strikes Diesel Deal With Putin to Lower Fuel Prices Ahead of Midterms

<https://gcaptain.com/trump-strikes-diesel-deal-with-putin-to-lower-fuel-prices-ahead-of-midterms/>

“...transactions involving Russian diesel that would otherwise be prohibited under specified U.S. sanctions programs are temporarily authorized.”

Does that mean previously sanctioned vessels are now authorized? Sanctions by other countries still apply, though. Would another country be willing to risk US wrath by boarding a sanctioned vessel transiting their waters (e.g., UK and the Channel)?

#A2R

The article explores efforts in the US Navy to “operationalize” additive manufacturing. Benefits of such include reducing maintenance delays and circumventing fragile and extended supply chains to increase mission effectiveness by being able to effect repairs “as far forward as possible.”

It raises some interesting questions that Canada would be wise to consider, beginning with are we looking into deployed additive manufacturing ourselves. Are contracts for components for new ships being written with the consideration of intellectual property rights to enable later additive manufacturing of these parts to take place? What specialized training may be required and for what military occupation classifications? How might this capability be incorporated into deployed elements of the RCN and CAF at large?

Cyber Intelligence

A Dutch organization that looks for vulnerabilities in software was hacked. Their disclosure was described as ‘brutal honesty’ and acclaimed because it allowed other organizations to learn and take precautions.

Nine South Korean banks were hacked in an AI based campaign. The South Korean Prime Minister demanded a ‘comprehensive overhaul of safeguards’ while warning the hack could spread to other industries.

CyberXero Uses 51 AI Agents to Target Ukrainian Critical Infrastructure and Mass-Exploit WordPress

<https://cyberpress.org/cyberxero-weaponizes-ai-agents/?amp=1>

Russia’s ‘NoName057(16)’ was briefly back in the news when they DDoSed Italy's Foreign

Ministry. The attack appears to have been remarkably ineffective.

Italy's Foreign Ministry Under Cyberattack as Embassy Sites Come Under Review

<https://securityaffairs.com/200650/cyber-warfare-2/italys-foreign-ministry-under-cyberattack-as-embassy-sites-come-under-review.html>

Cybercrime group hits 38 shipping and port groups with data leak threat

<https://theloadstar.com/cyber-crime-group-hits-38-shipping-and-port-groups-with-data-leak-threat/>

Cybersecurity troops know that hackers really don't like getting caught. Here is the latest example.

Ransomware gets personal: 'We-know-where-you-are kind of stuff'

<https://www.theregister.com/cyber-crime/2026/10/14/ransomware-gets-personal-we-know-where-you-are-kind-of-stuff/5302939>

#defence industry

Canada's Submarines: Partner or Customer in the North Atlantic?

<https://www.cigionline.org/articles/canadas-submarines-partner-or-customer-in-the-north-atlantic/>

#drones

Unmanned warfare has now expanded to the high seas. Is the U.S. ready?

<https://defensescoop.com/2026/10/07/unmanned-warfare-has-expanded-to-the-high-seas-is-the-us-ready/>

Interoperability is a big part of readiness.

#drones

Sikorsky's "Black Hawk 2070" Strategy Includes Drones, New Engines, And Flying The Pilotless U-Hawk This Year

<https://www.twz.com/sponsored-content/sikorskys-black-hawk-2070-strategy-includes-drones-new-engines-and-flying-the-pilotless-u-hawk-this-year>

Interesting adaptation, converting a full-sized helicopter into an uncrewed cargo variant (and cool handle: 'U-Hawk').

#drones

Drones are responding to wildfires. Are AI and robots next?

<https://thebulletin.org/2026/10/drones-are-responding-to-wildfires-are-ai-and-robots-next/>

Interesting, UGV to "carry equipment and supplies into areas where conventional vehicles or manual transport may be difficult or unsafe." In addition to UAV to "map fires, detect hotspots, and ignite prescribed burns" and being tested "to drop firefighting foam and water on blazes."

#drones

Robot boat found its way in the Solent without satellites

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/robot-boat-found-its-way-in-the-solent-without-satellites/>

Becoming independent of GPS could be very useful. GEOINT/mapping & charting becomes even more important!

#drones

Drone Warfare on the Front Foot: For a Stronger Defense, Play Offense

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/drone-warfare-on-the-front-foot-for-a-stronger-defense-play-offense/>

“There is no single solution to the challenge of countering adversary drones. But discussions cannot focus on the many constituent parts of drone defense to such a degree that offensive drone operations get crowded out.”

#drones #Russia-Ukraine War

WarMonitor 🇺🇸🇬🇧 @WarMonitor3 3 Oct posted (video <https://x.com/WarMonitor3/status/2106333630536523901>): Incredible video shows a Russian drone attempting to destroy a Ukrainian ground robot but being disabled when the robot deploys an anti drone net and catches it. We literally have robots fighting each other on Ukraine’s frontline.



#Indo-Pacific

China is Not Just Claiming the South China Sea. It is Learning to Govern It

<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/china-not-just-claiming-south-china-sea-it-learning-govern-it>

“Finally, capacity building for the Philippine Coast Guard and its maritime domain awareness systems is essential.”

A role for the Canadian Coast Guard?

#information operations #warfare

Maneuvering in the Narrative Space: Cognitive Isolation as an Operational Imperative

<https://smallwarsjournal.com/2026/10/07/maneuvering-in-the-narrative-space-cognitive-isolation-as-an-operational-imperative/?ref=irregularwarfare.org>

#intelligence

Rethinking Information Evaluation in Civil Affairs

<https://smallwarsjournal.com/2026/10/02/beyond-the-admiralty-code-rethinking-information-evaluation-civil-affairs/>

#maritime security

Dutch Propose Law To Crack Down On Russian Shadow Fleet

<https://gcaptain.com/dutch-propose-law-to-crack-down-on-russian-shadow-fleet/>

“If the bill is passed, shadow fleet ships “sailing under a false flag in the Dutch Exclusive Economic Zone can be detained and required to proceed to an anchorage or port for further

inspection,”...”

Comments:

Does Canada have such legislation now, or now to enact such? Are detentions/interceptions, boards and diversions being planned, wargamed and exercised?

#maritime strategy

Not like the old days: modern sea control will be episodic and local

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/not-like-the-old-days-modern-sea-control-will-be-episodic-and-local/>

“A new combination of surveillance, drones and precision strike is eroding the old assumption that navies could generate sea control through superior ships, vessels, aircraft and operational skills alone.”

Comment:

This is not a new problem at all - interaction with the enemy has always been the problem whether Klingon horde, a monster from the depths of the ocean or a bunch of fuzzy-wuzzies in canoes armed with clubs. The Army has a comment on this” ‘No plan survives contact with the enemy.’ Too true.

There are, as well, naval and military aphorisms tested and proven in war with the above or more conventional foes. ‘The safe and timely arrival of the convoy’ springs to mind, as that is going to be the issue most of our current and future commanders are presented with. ‘Engage the enemy more closely’ – Nelsonian but appropriate. ‘I don’t want you to die for your country, I want you to make the other poor bastard die for his’. Above all ‘L’audace; toujours l’audace!’

The key to success in the above all rests with training, training and more training, so that we become the problem the Bad Guys have nightmares about. Driving heaps of spiffy-looking kit past the reviewing stand on Chang’an Boulevard in Beijing is one thing. Coordinating its effective deployment against Allied forces that have trained until their eyes water by a force that has not won a war at sea since the 14th century is a considerably different challenge – one that their Supreme Leader clearly has concerns about. As we ought to know now, its not always or even principally the technology that counts, it’s the quality of the people wielding that technology.

#NATO

How NATO deters Russia since the Invasion of Ukraine 2022

<https://theatlanticpassage.substack.com/p/how-nato-deters-russia-since-the>

#Russia-Ukraine War

In Helping Ukraine, We Protect Ourselves

<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/helping-ukraine-we-protect-ourselves>

#Russia-Ukraine War

“Supplying Crimea is turning into a nightmare”: Ukrainian drones hit Russian trucks 770 times in September, and winter will make it worse, analyst says

<https://euromaidanpress.com/2026/10/09/counterlogistics-continues/>
Striking logistics lines, a good war to war.

#Russia-Ukraine War #air defence

Ukraine fired its first FP-7 ballistic missile in combat. Its maker says next version will do what Ukraine needed since 2022

<https://euromaidanpress.com/2026/10/03/fp-7-first-combat-use/>

What with the increasing proliferation of ballistic missiles, Canada is going to need to increasingly develop its anti-ballistic missile defence capabilities (yes, we've already started).

#Russia-Ukraine War #armour

How Kyiv cracked Russia's kill zone and got its tanks back in the fight

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2026/10/03/how-ukraine-cracked-russias-kill-zone/>

Available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

#Russia-Ukraine War #artillery

Ukraine's Artillery War Is Changing, and Vulcano Fits the New Fight

<https://www.wesodonnell.com/p/ukraines-artillery-war-is-changing>

#Russia-Ukraine War #balloon war

Mystery Balloons and Ukrainian Drones Disrupt Moscow Air Defences During Putin's Return

<https://defencematters.eu/ukrainian-drones-balloons-moscow-air-defences-putin/>

#Russia-Ukraine War #drones

How Ukraine's Ground Robots Are Changing the Battlefield

<https://www.thecipherbrief.com/how-ukraines-ground-robots-are-changing-the-battlefield>

"Infantry wins wars, but we protect our infantry, which is why the robots go to the enemy first."

Very much a combined arms/air-ground effort.

#Russia-Ukraine War #drones

The Robots Were Cool... But The Big Story of Operation Vivaldi Was How Ukraine Tied Everything Together

<https://www.wesodonnell.com/p/the-robots-were-cool-but-the-big>

#Russia-Ukraine War #electronic warfare

#Russia-Ukraine War #air defence

Ukraine fired its first FP-7 ballistic missile in combat. Its maker says next version will do what Ukraine needed since 2022

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#Russia-Ukraine War #Indo-Pacific

Trump's Diesel Doctrine and Betrayal of Ukraine

<https://mickryan.substack.com/p/trumps-diesel-doctrine-and-betrayal>

#Russia-Ukraine War #Indo-Pacific

Vivaldi, FP-7 and the Long Winter Ahead

<https://mickryan.substack.com/p/vivaldi-fp-7-and-the-long-winter>

#Russia-Ukraine War #land warfare #drones #armour

Armored assaults aren't dead. Robots got the credit, but it was Ukrainian infantry in armored trucks that reversed a year of Russian gains near Lyman

<https://euromaidanpress.com/2026/10/09/operation-vivaldi-mechanized/>

#strategy

Fortification and Strategy, Part I

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/fortification-and-strategy-part-i/>

#training #drones

Drones Hate Us - The Secret Guide to Fighting Metal Birds

<https://substack.com/home/post/p-219366716>

#wargaming

What War Games Actually Teach: Threat Recognition, Not Prediction

<https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/preprints/5/>

#wargaming #space

Wargaming the space domain

<https://www.defence.gov.au/news-events/news/2026-09-29/wargaming-space-domain>

Odds and Sods

“A military underfunded, undermanned and underprepared: Benchmark Canada: “The armed forces of Canada have basically been left to rot,” says ex-navy chief Mark Norman. “I’m not overstating it.”

David George-Cosh, *National Post*, 13 October, 2026

<https://nationalpost.com/news/a-military-underfunded-undermanned-and-underprepared>

#camouflage

Naval Analyses @D_Mitch 12 Oct posted

(https://x.com/D_Mitch/status/2109621889849086078):

Deceptive camouflage scheme applied to #Russian Navy Buyan M-class (pr.22800) corvette Serpukhov (563), photographed on October 8, 2026. Photo: LPX.



Really a disruptive paint scheme, not camouflage per se. Counter-drone measure.

#Canadian Coast Guard

Ready Aye Ready - Royal Canadian Navy #RCN
@ReadyAyeReady 8 Oct posted
(<https://x.com/ReadyAyeReady/status/2108207671669322047>): HMCS ROBERT HAMPTON GRAY's embarked Bell 429 GlobalRanger Helicopter is prepared for flight in the Beaufort Sea during Operation LATITUDE on October 2, 2026.

Photo: Corporal Paquette, Canadian Armed Forces Photo #RCN #Photo #RoyalCanadianNavy



Interesting to see that the CCG helo o/b RHG sports a (logo? badge?) very much reflective of the ship. Not surprising, much an air custom. AOPV have their own air dets!

#drones

US military expands USV patrols of Panamanian waters
<https://www.bairdmaritime.com/security/naval/unmanned-naval-systems/us-panama-expand-corsair-patrols>

“...unmanned surface vessels brought to Panama for an exercise have been retained for an in-country maritime security mission.”



Long-endurance USV deployed “to strengthen security along the Panamanian coast and combat criminal networks operating across borders.” “...intended to maintain a persistent patrol presence along key sea lanes, giving Panamanian forces additional means to detect, monitor and respond to illicit activity.”

Canada should be close to trying long-endurance USV off our coasts for security and safety roles. Our regional weather will probably make it more challenging, though.

#drones

Tiny Drones Help Tackle Shell's Million-Dollar Hurricane Problem
<https://gcaptain.com/tiny-drones-help-tackle-shells-million-dollar-hurricane-problem/>

Interesting idea, ‘leave-behind’ drones, to go active after a major weather event has swept through an area. Definite emergency management use, and parallel to military use (in Ukraine) where strike drones/drone mines are left behind (or emplaced forward) to activate with the passing of enemy forces.

Comment:

Cool logo, too.



#drones

Estonia's KrattWorks crafting Shahed-like dummy drone for target practice

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2026/10/09/estonias-krattworks-crafting-shahed-like-dummy-drone-for-target-practice/>

“Estonian unmanned aerial system producer KrattWorks is developing a new aerial target drone that will mimic the operations of jet-powered Shahed-type drones, enabling militaries to practice shooting down one of the main aerial threats used by Russia in its ongoing invasion of Ukraine.”

Kinda full circle, what with drones originating in the 1930s as anti-aircraft artillery practice targets (*Queen Bee* being a major part of the history).



#drones

What's the silver airship above Halifax, and what does it do?

<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/halifax/silver-airship-in-the-sky-defence-surveillance-nato-conference>

The article raises a question: what is the NATO symbol for a drone dirigible? There is no specific symbol in APP-6 Joint Symbology, but by combining the airship and drone glyphs (allowed per the pub), it'd likely be as depicted to the right.

Would be interesting (is possible) to see this in a command, control and information system.



#drones #Russia-Ukraine War

Ukraine runs first supply mission with amphibious robot

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/ukraine-runs-first-supply-mission-with-amphibious-robot/>

Inside Ukraine's First Combat Deployment Of Robotic Amphibious Vehicles

<https://www.twz.com/land/inside-ukraines-first-combat-deployment-of-robotic-amphibious-vehicles>

Drones are increasingly capable across multiple domains. What would be the NATO symbol for an amphibious logistics drone?



#Drone Seeker

Kraken and Saab UK test USV-mounted radar
<https://www.navylookout.com/kraken-and-saab-uk-test-usv-mounted-radar/>



“It is marketed as a “drone seeker” for protecting shipping and offshore infrastructure, working alone or alongside crewed ships.”

“The standard Giraffe 1X radar has a topside weight of about 100kg, refreshes its picture every second and was designed to pick out small, slow targets, with Saab quoting an instrumented range of 100km for the naval version.”

“With the antenna less than 2m above the waterline, UAS flying at 30m would appear on the radar horizon at no more than 28km...”

Comment:

Interesting picket. Maybe not for long range detection of fast air/cruise missiles/ballistics missiles, but for the role envisioned. Control from a shore station or an inshore/coastal 'picket control' vessel (vessel of opportunity - VOOP?) might be practical.

Further:

A Drone That Goes After Other Drones: Kraken-Saab Puts an Uncrewed Hunter at Sea
<https://nextgendefense.com/kraken-saab-uncrewed-hunter/?ref=irregularwarfare.org>

Comment:

More info on the K3 SCOUT. Again, interesting to see it marketed as a ‘drone seeker’ (‘drone hunter’ and all sorts of other terms could apply), there’s an implication of hunting rather than passive defence. At sea, commanders are going to have to be ready for drone-on-drone warfare. Whether that calls for a dedicated warfare commander is a debate.

#Future Fighter

Dan McClinton @DanMcClinton1 8 Oct posted (<https://x.com/DanMcClinton1/status/2108338297575522385>): The #2 F-35A for Canada was up and flying in Fort Worth today...my pics.

Comment:

Does there need to be an effort to educate people (media) that the aircraft is a CF35A, not a F-35A?

Comment:

LinkedIn (<https://lnkd.in/p/gmytzCWk>) provides some good insight into flying the F-35. During her Focus Talk 29 Sep, Crista-lynn Ferguson, DG Fighter Capability, and staff alluded to how different fifth generation aircraft were over fourth generation. Fourth generation have flight management systems.

(FMS) to lighten pilot workload by synthesizing aircraft system information, e.g., fuel flows, engine performance, temperatures, altitude, radios, flight plans. Fifth generation fuse multiple sensor data in addition to FMS to help provide the pilots (and ultimately commanders) better situational awareness.



Government of Canada, Department of National Defence, News Release

October 14, 2026

Canadian Coast Guard marks major shipbuilding milestone with keel laying of polar icebreaker CCGS *Imnaryuaq*,

Ottawa, Ontario – National Defence / Canadian Coast Guard

Today, the Honourable Jill McKnight, Minister of Veterans Affairs, on behalf of the Honourable David J. McGuinty, Minister of National Defence, along with Braeden Caley, Member of Parliament for North Vancouver – Capilano, were at Seaspan's Vancouver Shipyards, in British Columbia, to mark the keel laying ceremony for the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) polar icebreaker, the Canadian Coast Guard Ship (CCGS) *Imnaryuaq*.

The CCG's new polar icebreakers represent a major step in advancing Canada's leadership, security, and ability to continue delivering critical services to Northern communities. The keel laying is a significant step in the construction of the polar icebreaker, marking the moment when the first constructed section on the vessel is put in place, and the ship begins to take form. Rooted in centuries of shipbuilding tradition, the important milestone involves placing a coin beneath the keel of the new vessel to symbolize good fortune, strength, and safe passage for its crew.

Able to operate year-round in the high Arctic, the polar icebreaker will reinforce Canada's ability to maintain continuous presence in the North and support the CCG's expanded maritime security role, upholding Canada's sovereignty and advancing responsible

stewardship of the Arctic. As the largest vessel ever built for the CCG, the CCGS *Imnaryuaq* will be capable of icebreaking, search and rescue, environmental response, resupply for Northern communities, maritime security and sovereignty, and Arctic science research.

October 9, 2026

His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Ottawa* returns to Esquimalt following Operations HORIZON and LATITUDE,

Esquimalt, British Columbia – National Defence / Canadian Armed Forces

Today, His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Ottawa* arrived at its home port of Esquimalt, British Columbia, following the completion of a more than four-month deployment to the Indo-Pacific and North American West Arctic regions under Operations HORIZON and LATITUDE.

The ship began its deployment by participating in Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026, one of the world's largest multinational military exercises. HMCS *Ottawa* operated alongside allies and partners and successfully fired two Mark 46 torpedoes in support of anti-submarine warfare training.

Following RIMPAC, HMCS *Ottawa* supported Operation HORIZON, sailing alongside HMCS *Regina* and Motor Vessel (MV) *Asterix* as an all-Canadian task group. The ship conducted engagements with allies and partners throughout the Indo-Pacific, strengthening military cooperation and interoperability.

HMCS *Ottawa* then transitioned to Operation LATITUDE in northern continental waters, where the ship conducted simulated maritime strikes in the Bering Sea in coordination with the United States Air Force, strengthening interoperability with the United States in support of continental threat detection, deterrence and defence activities.

HMCS *Ottawa*'s participation in Operations HORIZON and LATITUDE highlight Canada's commitment to supporting our allies and partners abroad, supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific, while also showcasing our ability to detect, deter and defend against threats to Canadian sovereignty.

Institute for the Study of War (ISW), 2-15 October 2026, Selected Information

Ukrainian forces have defeated the 2026 Russian campaign to seize Donetsk Oblast.

Russian forces intended to conduct a deep encirclement of the entire Fortress Belt from the Lyman direction in the north and the Dobropillya direction in the southwest, linking up near Barvinkove, Kharkiv Oblast. This wide encirclement would have largely completed the seizure of unoccupied Donetsk Oblast. The Ukrainian counteroffensive known as Operation Vivaldi in the Lyman direction has completely disrupted this Russian plan by inflicting an operational defeat on the northern Russian pincer.

Full Report in: <https://understandingwar.org/research/russia-ukraine/ukraine-disrupts-russias-donetsk->

[offensive/?utm_source=constant+contact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=UkraineDisruptsOffensive](#)

Saudi Arabia is reportedly preparing to support a Yemeni government offensive to recapture territory on the southern Red Sea coastal plain from the Houthis.

Yemeni government forces likely have the capacity to successfully execute such an offensive, assuming the objectives are limited. Western and regional officials told Reuters on October 2 that Saudi Arabia plans to coordinate ground operations and provide air support to Yemeni government-aligned forces in an offensive to recapture territory and ports on the Red Sea coast that the Houthis captured between September 9 and 11. The Houthis view themselves as holding the upper hand in the conflict at present and therefore will not accept a ceasefire unless the Saudis accept their demands. Saudi allies Pakistan and Turkey are providing defensive and offensive military support to Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government.

Full Report in: <https://understandingwar.org/research/middle-east/iran-update-october-2-2026/>

3. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) opened its third overseas military base, the China-Laos Military Joint Support and Training Center, in Ban Keun, Laos, on September 29, demonstrating strengthened People's Republic of China (PRC)-Laos ties and expanding the PLA's military presence in Southeast Asia.

This base constitutes the first PLA overseas military facility focused on air power, preceded by naval-focused PLA facilities in Djibouti and Cambodia. The Laotian base contains runways as long as 6,562 feet, allowing it to be used for PLA Air Force (PLAAF) flights. The base is located approximately 40 miles north of Laos' capital, Vientiane, and close to the Laos-Thailand border. The PRC Ministry of National Defense (MOD) stated that the base would be used to train Lao air force pilots and further PRC-Laos military cooperation.

Full Report in <https://understandingwar.org/research/china-taiwan/china-taiwan-update-october-2-2026/>

#kill marks

USS Abraham Lincoln Comes Home With Its Island Superstructure Covered In Kill Marks

<https://www.twz.com/sea/uss-abraham-lincoln-comes-home-with-its-island-superstructure-covered-in-kill-marks>

Cool. Though after a while, with many kills of UAV, it may be necessary to come up with a simpler way to depict the number of kills.



Naval Association Canada (NAC) News, 3-15 October 2026, Selected Information

Canada :

[A Canadian Naval Strategy Reader: Concepts and Capstone Documents.](#)

[Aligning Canadian, Japanese and South Korean Maritime Defence](#)

[Canada ratifies High Seas Treaty and pledges \\$82 million for ocean monitoring](#)

[Government of Canada introduces legislation to accelerate defence procurement, strengthen Canadian industry, and reinforce Canadian sovereignty](#)

[Giant underwater Kelvin wave could 'pack a punch' for B.C. in mid-October](#)

[HMCS Max Bernays and the Kitikmeot Region: A Relationship Built on Trust, Respect and Friendship](#)

[19,000 and counting: How an amateur historian maintains the memory of Indigenous veterans in Canada](#)

[Royal Canadian Navy flies its first uncrewed helicopter](#)

[What Makes Canada an Arctic Military Power?](#)

The World:

[Indian Navy's Global Reach In South China Sea, Atlantic Showcases Blue-Water Strength, Says Defence Minister & Indian Navy Sets Sights On Self-Reliant 230-Ship Fleet By 2045 Amid Rising Maritime Rivalry](#)

[Indonesia reflags a former Italian warship as its first aircraft carrier](#)

[Kazakhstan promises military reforms following deadly sea drills](#)

[Putin appears to be eyeing NATO. The question is, will he actually attack? and Russia Sends Nuclear Warning to NATO as Tensions Rise in the Baltic](#)

[The Black Sea is the most dangerous it's been since the start of Russia's war. And it's choking global grain](#)

[U.S. forces leave Iraq after first arriving in 2003](#)

[Why Japanese Battleships Were So Tall — Pagoda Mast](#)

[Why Taiwan's coastguard vessel transfer to the Philippines has sparked a double outcry](#)

NATO Details Plan to Shield Ukraine's European Allies From Russia

With the Russians intensifying sabotage, arson and cyberattacks against European nations supporting Ukraine, NATO divulged a blueprint, in case of war, to deter the Kremlin.

Full Report in <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/10/12/world/europe/nato-strategy-russia-europe.html>

**Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) International Outlook, 2-15 October, 2026
Selected Information****Canada:**

["HMCS Max Bernays returns to Esquimalt after record-setting Arctic deployment"](#)

The World:

Ethiopia: ["Rebel offensive against Ethiopian army stokes fears of return to civil war";](#)

["Ethiopia and Eritrea cut diplomatic ties as northern conflict escalates"](#)

South China Sea: ["China Claims Expanded Zone Around Scarborough Shoal, Deploys New Drone"](#)

South Korea / Russia: ["Fuel from South Korea being shipped to Russia as Ukraine war grinds on"](#)

Strait of Hormuz: ["Oil tanker costs hit record \\$1.2mn a day as Iran war disrupts shipping"](#)

Yemen / Saudi Arabia: ["More than 200,000 people displaced since fighting in Yemen began, says UN agency"](#)

"Russia's 'Shahed with whiskers' drone threatens winter misery in Ukraine."

Russia has deployed a new Shahed drone fitted with metal "whiskers" designed to snag Ukraine's power lines and blow them up, as it seeks to plunge Ukrainians into darkness this winter. The modification has thin rods protruding from the drone's nose, apparently in an effort to detect and strike high-voltage power lines that would be difficult to hit with a conventional warhead. Russia is believed to have used two of the drones already. The modification is one of several seen in recent days as Moscow sends swarms of jet-powered drones to raze Ukraine's heating, electricity and water infrastructure before the temperature drops. Known as a shaped-charge cutting warhead (KRSN), the modification makes the drone capable of slicing through steel structures, including electricity substations, according to Serhii Beskrestnov, an adviser to Volodymyr Zelensky.

Details in: *The Telegraph* (UK), 2 October, 2026 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2026/10/02/russias-new-shahed-promises-winter-misery-for-ukraine/>

Veterans Affairs Canada *Salut!* October 2026 is now available in

<https://veterans.gc.ca/en/news-and-media/salute/october-2026>

SAC Notes

Observation on World Affairs

Issues to Watch

- The US-Canada Trade War
- The US-EU Trade war
- The US China Trade issue
- US-Iran Conflict including Bab al Mandab/Straits of Hormuz
- The US-Ukraine issues or which side is the US on now?
- Israel- Iranian Proxies increasing international pressure against Israel
- Houthis offensive in Southern Yemen and ongoing attacks against Saudi Arabia
- Russia-Ukraine Conflict development of vastly superior drones and missiles on both sides
- China and the South China Sea, China's attempts to breach the first island chain through diplomatic bribery to island nations
- Trump and Global Tariffs; and
- India and Pakistan and Pak's role in China supporting Iran against the US.

O Canada

Foreign interference is a major problem in Canada. At present, the most concerning is the activities of private US citizens providing money and advice to various separatist movements. They are probably having informal relations with the current US Administration, but nothing is reliably proven. China is a well-known adversary that has conducted various types of operations against Canada since approval of the "Three War Concept" in 2003. These include information warfare (influence), lawfare using a country's own legal system against it particularly in democratic countries and economic warfare, such as we have consistently seen in China's action against our canola crop as an example amongst many. Russia continues to attempt various forms of disinformation campaigns such as support to Alberta's separatist movement. Iran which is mainly oriented towards inflicting problems for the Iranian diaspora in Canada.

Canada has done little substantive to help eliminate the problem. Our internal security organization, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, a capable but toothless organization without the necessary tools to dismantle organizations that are continuing to act against Canada. There are too few agents and employees available to even do this job.

Security clearances remain a major problem, too many agencies with limited understanding of security. It was no secret during the Trudeau years that security was contracted out to third parties within certain countries who apparently were a "mixed bag" of corruption, different levels of competence or facing countries whose civil service was crumbling or incomplete. Several departments have some say or even have the ability to grant security certificates.

Whether these were good ideas remains subject to very different views, Security is not a “hey you” type of activity, but it appears that during this time period it may have become so. Canada needs to investigate this issue in detail. The Carney Government has made strides, but this era of poor security screenings needs to be reviewed and necessary action taken based on the results.

Last SAC Notes, we discussed the various movements towards modernizing the RCAF. This note we will look at the RCN, which to be honest seems to have a much better plan of how it needs to be as a blue water Navy.

A quick look at the Navy’s plan is useful. The Canadian Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS) program has completed its building phase as all six “Dewolfe” class ships are now on their stations with four on the East Coast and two on the West. This program will now enter into an operations and maintenance phase which will continue throughout their operational lives.

Another program nearing completion is the Joint Support Ships (JSS) being built at Seaspan on the West Coast. Both ships are assembled and are due to enter service within the next two years. The Navy still has a contract for the use of Asterisk, a privately owned ship, capable of the same type of work. The company that own Asterisk has also purchased two former British oilers as well with the view of providing logistics service to NATO Navies and others.

The River Class Destroyer (RCD) Program has now started at Irving Shipbuilding in Halifax. The future HMCS Fraser, the first in class, is now under construction. It is early days for this program although many infrastructure projects supporting this program are well underway including improvements to jetties, purchase of key systems, and training facilities are all underway. These non-ship programs are absolutely vital to the program itself. New highly technical ships require highly technical facilities to support them. It is a major part of the program itself. The program is expected to last 25 years.

The submarine program is underway but is at the early stages of the program. A German shipbuilding company, TKMS is in contract negotiations for this project. It sees the construction of up to twelve Type 212CD (Common Design) by the 2040s. The company has agreed to produce four submarines for Canada by 2034.

Other programs being considered are the Continental Defence Corvette program, a program proposed to put more hulls in the water. The program is expected to produce between 8 and 20 corvettes. A second JSS program to ensure availability of suitable support to Canadian and allied vessels. Lastly, so far, is the Base ship concept. The Base ship is the idea of a ship able to provide key support beyond the capability of a JSS in the form of better supply and maintenance capabilities. This is an idea that is being considered as part of our support to operations in the Arctic.

Lastly, new support facilities will need to be built to support an Arctic fleet in a suitably deep port. Infrastructure is not cheap and needs to be well placed to support future operations.

If completed in a timely fashion, it will provide a capable blue water fleet. Areas that need to be considered are the need for drones of all types and a suitable helicopter to replace the orphan Cyclone fleet. The notes have also not covered another vital part of the fleet and that is small auxiliary vessels such as small and large tugs, small utility vessels, barges and floats all of which have to be built with the future fleet size in mind. Nor have we discussed the need for larger facilities to meet a much larger fleet both in numbers of vessels but also the size of vessels.

One last point, the UK has decided to eliminate their Type 83 destroyer program in favour of a hybrid fleet of drones and manned ships. The one issue that is clear, this was a budget consideration and neglects the effects of the North Atlantic as an example. Uncrewed equipment is important, but they still need larger capable vessels to get them into position to be useful. Canadian warships are designed with mission bays that will allow this to be done. The navy has not forgotten this evolution and is actively working towards the future of a balanced capable blue water fleet.

The Australia NTR at this time.

United States

In a discussion with a representative of the US in Canada, they stated during the current administration they are now being required to answer questions almost on a daily basis when in past administrations this a week is now once or even every two weeks or so and usually for more benign reasons. It is a sad commentary about the current state of US-Canadian relations.

It is not liable to change with the results of 3 November 2026, the date of the US midterm elections. In fact, the current administration may see a need to take advantage of the next two and half months to push even harder before a new Congress is sworn in January 2027. It is not going to get better immediately despite good intentions by some US politicians. Tariff relief may not come as even Democrats state that some tariffs will remain. Time will tell how this will play out overall, but the current regime is inclined to take revenge when it can.

The US navy is well and truly stretched. The recent story of the aircraft carrier, USS Abraham Lincoln and its supporting escorts was a true horror story taken out of the 18th and 19th century. If there was ever a need for example of poor leadership and management of resources, this was it. It was not poor leadership of the ship's company but of higher authority which has consistently displayed a level of incompetence that is truly breathtaking. For the ship's company to be well done in difficult circumstances and the US Navy and armed forces in general need better leadership than they have now.

According to the bi-partisan Congressional oversight cited, the US armed forces has lost 81 aircraft destroyed or damaged including fixed wing, rotary and uncrewed systems not to mention severe damage to US and allied forces bases as a result of the US Iran war. It is readily apparent that the lack of planning and basic intelligence tradecraft was not followed. They also clearly did not take the advice of the Israelis when it comes to defence. The US armed forces deserve better leadership than they have had for the past nearly two years and it shows.

Moldova

On 5 October 2026, ISW reported that Russia is increasing its drone attacks on Moldova. Between February 2022 and August 2026, there have been 20 incursions. These numbers have been increasing with ten incursions in September 2026. On 3 October, there were five incursions in a single day. Today, 5 October, a drone hit a Moldovan border crossing damaging a bus and injuring a border control employee at the Palanca-Mayaky-Udobne border crossing. The ISW article suggests that Russia is trying to intimidate Moldova into stopping its cooperation with both Ukraine and the EU. So far their efforts seem to have had the opposite effect. It is likely Moldova will see more of these incursions especially as Russia becomes more desperate.

On a more hopeful sign, Moldova has made steps that will provide an opportunity to join the EU early. It is now completely free of Russian oil and gas with these fuels being provided through Romania. A new power from Romania will also greatly increase energy supplies away from Russia. This also impacted Transnistria, as Transnistria now has to rely on Moldova. Transnistria also has gone from zero exports to the EU to more than 80%. This has been mentioned before in previous SAC Notes.

The population of Transnistria is not Russian. Russians make only 28% of the population; the remainder are a mixture of Moldovans, Ukrainians and other smaller ethnic populations of Moldova. What is more interesting is that a sizable portion of the Transnistrian population works in Chisinau. Russia's entire hold on the breakaway area relies on the 1200 to 1500 "peacekeeping" force, although it still in theory has 6000 local troops as well. The writing appears to be on the wall for the breakaway republic to slowly but surely integrate into Moldova again and away from Russia.

Georgia

Georgia has been under a pro-Russian Government of the Georgia Dream Party since the irregular elections held in 2024. All the opposition parties refused to enter the parliament and since that time, the opposition parties have sponsored major demonstrations across the country. The demonstrations have increased recently as the Georgia Dream Party has halted the ascension process with the EU for membership.

In July 2026, NATO refused to invite Georgia to the NATO meeting in Türkiye as the Georgia Dream party was considered to be too pro-Russian. Today, 12 October 2026, the EU Ambassador held Europe Days in Kakheti, Georgia. The speaker of the Georgian parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, complained bitterly that the EU Ambassador, Paweł Herczyński, created hatred as the governing party was not invited. The relationship between the EU and Georgia has continued to deteriorate as the EU does not endorse the current circumstances surrounding the Georgian government.

While the government is pro-Russian, it has not stopped the Russians from inflicting bans on Georgian products including vegetables, fruit and wine. Russia has continuously used economic coercion as a method to keep former Soviet Republics under their thumb and so this type of action continues. The government has asked the Russian Federation to reconsider the ban with little response. Russia considers even consideration of EU membership to be anti-

Russian and therefore Georgia has to be punished. Like Belarus, Georgia has to increasingly walk along a knife edge with its Russian neighbour.

In recent weeks a neighbour, Armenia, has also received Russian threats. Russia appears to be taking a much harder line towards most of its former republics.

Belarus

The Collective Security Treaty Organization will be holding an exercise in Belarus this month from 12 to 16 October 2026. The exercise will train CSTO troops in “peacekeeping” operations with a biological defence problem. Approximately 1500 troops along with 300 pieces of equipment as well as 80 drones. The exercise involved contingents from five countries including Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Belarus has supported Russian efforts in Ukraine without actually using their own troops. Ukraine and Belarus have been in a verbal conflict over the use of radio repeaters in Belarus used by Russia for more accurate targeting. Ukraine has threatened to destroy the repeaters. This is an ongoing problem.

In keeping with the current situation, Belarus has been conducting a series of readiness checks at the brigade formation level. This is expected to continue; each readiness check appears to be one at a time so there is no appearance of a general mobilization. Again, Belarus appears to be making every effort to avoid the appearance of a general mobilization keeping a credible look of balance between war and peace.

Iran-Israel Conflict

Ongoing operations take a steady toll on the remains of the Hamas leadership. According to Israeli sources, two thirds of the original 7 October 2023 attackers are now dead but Israel has vowed to remove all of the attackers no matter how long it takes. Certain elements within the UN continue to take an anti-Israeli point of view including the latest Nobel peace Prize winner for this year, South African judge Navanethem “Navi” Pillay. It should be noted that South Africa under the current government has a long history of anti-Israeli action. Israel was accused of genocide, but the actual report would deny Israel the right of self-defence against an implacable enemy. It is not a recipe that should be accepted by anyone. The actual genocidal action occurred on 7 October 2023.

Hezbollah is also under considerable pressure from Israel. As Israel conducts its slow meticulous withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, they are also destroying Hezbollah infrastructure built under the observation and responsibility of the UN. It is another black mark on UN forces in the Middle East.

The Houthis have continued actions in support of Iran by attacking Saudi Arabian airports and oil and gas infrastructure. Most recently this week it attacked Riyadh’s main airport, King Khalid International Airport. The airport has been under attack by Houthis for the past several days resulting in 13 dead and over 300 injured in these attacks. Saudi Arabia is now in consultation with allies on creating a way ahead. This is likely to become a major conflict, however, talks with Iran may eventually sort this matter out. There is a small problem in Iran,

who is actually in charge? Are there different factions? Who is willing to talk? These points are not clear at this time.

Russia- Ukraine Conflict

The war continues unabated with the start of the fifth year of this phase in sight in February 2027 and 13 years since the actual start in 2014. The war has changed since its start as we saw videos of vast columns of Russian armour and logistics vehicles. It seemed that the second most powerful Army in the world would easily crush Ukrainian resistance. Ukrainian leadership showed with the President saying I do not need a ride I need ammunition and history will not be kind to President Putin and Russia.

Russia made some minor gains on the battlefield this week but for the last three months Ukraine has managed to take back more land than they lost. Casualties from both sides now exceed 2M people killed or wounded with the Russians taking the majority with over 1.5 M. Russian attacks have deteriorated into small infantry attacks with heavy losses with few gains. Ukraine has also changed its tactics, with well planned, coordinated assaults using an all arms approach with the new arm of various types of uncrewed vehicles going first but well covered with close air support, armour, artillery and combat engineers backed up by a logistics chain designed for the task. This has led to success in both the Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

The most vicious part of the war is the increasing use of drones, hypersonic and ballistic missiles by Russia but Ukraine is now operating short range ballistic missiles and various types of drones of various ranges. The difference is in targets. Russia has consistently hit civilian targets, including apartment buildings as in the last two nights, hospitals, schools, shopping centres and dual use targets such as power plants. They do occasionally strike military targets such as airfields and military training centres,

Ukraine targets are different. More recently, they have targeted Russian data centres with three recently destroyed including a bot farm that was allegedly being used to support influence operations in the West as the story goes. There has been a strange drop in bot activity sowing disinformation throughout the West. Ukraine stopped hitting Russian refineries based on President Trump's announcement of an energy infrastructure ceasefire, honoured by Ukraine but not Russia. Just this Wednesday morning, the newest data centre for Sberbank was hit by multiple Ukrainian drones. It basically will cripple normal citizens from using their bank accounts in the short term. The facility is estimated to cost more than \$1M USD . Imagery showed extensive government.

The Trump regime displayed its pro-Russian point of view. First, by not consulting the Ukrainians or the Europeans about Trump's negotiations with Vladimir Putin for an agreement to provide 3 M tons of diesel to the global supply. Threatening Ukraine with the cut off of intelligence support for not agreeing to the terms of a ceasefire agreement and third, still not confirmed, failed to provide warnings of ballistic missile attacks on Ukrainian cities two nights in a row. It is hoped this last is disinformation but if true, it would be something close to the actions of another American traitor Benedict Arnold.

Ukraine used the FP 7 short range ballistic missile operationally for the first time this week. The FP 9 medium range ballistic missile (Moscow in range) will also be available before the end of the year.

The Russian disinformation campaign continues as do their not so subtle replies to NATO. They have been helped by the Trump Administration, who have taken some bizarre decisions this past week. It appears that the US administration is willing to throw Ukraine and Europe under the bus. It is also increasingly clear that peace will only occur when the Russian economy fails and the regime falls. This could be a true mess and just the start of an even greater series of problems.

China

The economy of China has relied on three main pillars: property and infrastructure development, exports and consumer spending. China's economy is not based on the market. Under the Communist Chinese Party, the economy is to provide a system to generally keep the overall population as loyal, stable and quiet citizens under a benevolent CCP. As a result, the Chinese economy has differences that make it incompatible with liberal democracies such as "kick backs" fraudulent accounting, overproduction, massive subsidies, a highly manipulated banking system, lack of a decent pension system, and a legal system that is used to the benefit of the CCP and not the individual or Chinese society. Issues with China's financing have been discussed many times before, and the bottom line is that all official figures are suspect at best

Property development continues to be weak and there is limited to no growth potential here in the near term. One figure places the number of surplus homes and apartments at over 80 M units. The entire program was built on what can only be considered a Ponzi scheme which destroyed billions if not trillions in losses which resulted in banks folding under the weight of unsupportable debt. It also resulted in the loss of consumer confidence as families lost their savings in these projects and therefore, consumer confidence is limited at best.

This leaves exports which have been highly successful...too successful. It appears to be a product of over development of factory and laboratory facilities. China has become the manufacturer to the world. It has led to an ability to produce vast quantities of goods. In order to make them viable the CCP has arranged for huge subsidies. Electric vehicles are perhaps one of the most egregious examples. The CCP is alleged to have subsidized the EV production to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars and the large number of start-ups is now down to four winners including BYD. It also includes solar panels and accessories and robotics which allows companies to mass produce articles and products far beyond the actual capacity. It also means that China's products can be sent overseas at very low costs creating an artificially low price. This over production and levels of subsidies create a huge ability to out bid other potential rivals.

China's trade surplus reached an all-time high increasing by 36% over last year with a resulting \$938 B USD cash surplus. This surplus is well known to rivals such as the US and EU. The EU Trade representative has been in Beijing pushing the EU's concerns and expectations this past week. This is only a couple weeks since the Trump visit and discussions on the same issue which has resulted in US tariffs and other non-tariff methods to rein in this

Chinese trade surplus. The US and China did agree to continue the trade truce until the end of January 2027. These are two major entities that take the majority of Chinese exports, but they are hardly the only ones. Measures are likely to be imposed on China in the near future (4 to 6 months). It means that all three major pillars are in difficult circumstances and these issues will not go away. Stability is likely to shift to a level of instability as the Chinese economy deteriorates over the coming year. Is there another way out or will China enter a period of unrest? Time will tell.

Commentary on Central Africa and Africa-Wide Strategic Influence Assessment

SUBJECT: Assessment of Emerging Security, Political, Economic, Military, and Strategic-Influence Developments Across Africa, 1–13 October 2026

REFERENCES

A. Open-source reporting and official documentation collected through 13 October 2026 from the African Union Commission, United Nations, Government of Canada, Global Affairs Canada, Reuters, Nigerian press, Firstpost Africa, African regional and defence reporting, International Energy Agency (IEA), S&P Global, IPP Media, United24 Media, relevant National Governments, and Associated International sources concerning African security, diplomacy, critical minerals, energy markets, and strategic influence.

B. Analytical assessment derived from corroborated open-source reporting (OSINT), official institutional communications, regional security and diplomatic reporting, and international economic, military, and strategic-influence analysis.

PURPOSE

A. This memorandum assesses significant political, security, military, economic, and strategic-influence developments across Africa between 1 and 13 October 2026.

B. Particular attention is directed toward the Sahel, Nigeria, Russia's expanding African relationships, Canada–African Union engagement, critical-mineral competition, and the implications of changing United States, Chinese, Russian, and European approaches to the continent.

C. The assessment distinguishes developments reported during the period from historical background, government allegations, commercial announcements, and analytical judgments. Where independent corroboration is incomplete, conclusions remain provisional

I. EXECUTIVE ASSESSMENT

A. The Sahel experienced a significant reported military development during the assessment period when Malian government forces regained control of Kidal with support from Russia's Africa Corps. The operation represents an important territorial and political success for Bamako, although the durability of government control and the wider implications for insurgent activity remain uncertain.

B. Russia's security relationship with Mali remains central to Moscow's African strategy. Russian military assistance can strengthen partner governments while creating opportunities for longer-term influence through training, equipment, intelligence cooperation, and political relationships. Preparations for the forthcoming Russia–Africa Summit provide a separate diplomatic opportunity to consolidate those relationships.

C. Nigeria's security environment remained a prominent national concern. The fatal crash of a Nigerian Air Force aircraft in Ondo State prompted the postponement of a National Security Summit scheduled for 12–13 October. The development highlighted the interaction between military operational losses, institutional continuity, and continuing debate over internal security arrangements.

D. Canada recorded a significant diplomatic development on 13 October when Ambassador Annika Alman presented her credentials to African Union Commission Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf. Discussions addressed industrialization, access to capital, regional economic integration, domestic resource mobilization, and investment-led development. This provides direct evidence of continuing Canadian diplomatic engagement with African institutions.

E. Competition for African critical minerals and industrial supply chains continued attracting attention from the United States, China, the European Union, and other partners. The principal strategic question is increasingly whether African governments can convert foreign interest in raw materials into domestic processing, manufacturing, technology transfer, and durable economic development.

F. Tanzania's emphasis on non-alignment, economic diplomacy, and diversified international relationships illustrates a broader African effort to retain strategic autonomy while attracting external investment and cooperation.

G. The reported United States–Russia diesel arrangement introduced additional complications into Western policy toward Moscow. Canadian objections, reported on 12 October, reflected concern that commercial energy accommodation could weaken economic pressure on Russia. Although this development is not principally African, its potential implications for international fuel prices, sanctions credibility, and Russian financial capacity warrant consideration.

H. Allegations concerning Ukrainian assistance to armed groups in the Sahel and French support for regional instability continued circulating in political and media reporting. Such allegations require careful separation from independently established operational facts.

I. Assessment. The principal developments reinforce two simultaneous trends: continued competition for military and political influence in insecure African regions, and growing African efforts to translate external economic interest into industrial development and strategic autonomy. Canada's engagement with the African Union provides a timely opportunity to strengthen its position within the second trend.

Confidence Assessment: Moderate to High regarding documented diplomatic, military, and economic developments; Moderate regarding longer-term strategic consequences.

II. MALI: RECAPTURE OF KIDAL AND RUSSIAN MILITARY SUPPORT

A. Reporting published on 7 October indicated that Malian government forces had regained Kidal, a strategically and politically important northern city previously controlled by separatist and jihadist armed groups. Russian Africa Corps personnel reportedly supported the operation through aerial and military assistance.

B. Kidal has long held significance beyond its immediate military value. Control of the city is associated with the Malian state's ability to assert authority in northern territory where separatist movements, jihadist organizations, and competing armed networks have challenged Bamako.

C. The reported recapture represents a meaningful reversal of earlier government losses. Malian authorities presented the operation as a restoration of territorial control, while reporting attributed the opposing forces' withdrawal partly to the pressure created by government and Russian-supported operations.

D. The distinction between entering a city and establishing durable control remains important. Effective consolidation requires secure approaches, functioning administrative authority, civilian protection, and the ability to prevent armed organizations from re-establishing influence outside principal population centres.

E. Russian involvement demonstrates the continuing operational importance of Africa Corps to Mali's security strategy. Its contribution also reinforces Moscow's political position as a principal external security partner of Bamako.

F. Assessment. Kidal represents a significant tactical and symbolic gain for Mali, but the broader strategic outcome remains unresolved. Government control of the city does not independently establish the defeat of northern separatist or jihadist organizations. The principal intelligence requirement is to assess whether territorial gains translate into sustained security and functioning state authority.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the reported recapture and Russian support; Moderate regarding the durability of control and longer-term security implications.

III. THE SAHEL: RUSSIA-UKRAINE COMPETITION AND FOREIGN-INTERFERENCE ALLEGATIONS

A. Russia's war against Ukraine continues to influence diplomatic and security relationships beyond Europe. Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso have increasingly positioned Russia as an important security partner, while their relationships with Ukraine and several Western governments have deteriorated.

B. Reporting during October renewed attention to allegations that Ukraine has assisted armed organizations opposing Russian-supported forces in the Sahel. Malian officials have presented such allegations as evidence that the European conflict is extending into African security affairs.

C. Statements attributed to regional authorities also accused France and other Western actors of supporting instability or armed organizations. These accusations constitute political and diplomatic positions unless supported by independently corroborated evidence of specific activities.

D. The allegations have consequences even where operational details remain disputed. They can influence diplomatic relations, justify security-policy changes, reinforce domestic political narratives, and shape public perceptions of external interference.

E. The Sahel's security environment remains more complex than a direct Russia–Ukraine confrontation. Separatist grievances, jihadist insurgencies, governance deficiencies, local political rivalries, and regional military relationships retain independent importance.

F. Assessment. The Russia–Ukraine conflict has become an additional dimension of Sahelian geopolitical competition. Nevertheless, treating all armed activity in the region as an extension of that conflict would exaggerate external influence and understate local causes. Specific claims of foreign operational support require individual corroboration.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the broader diplomatic confrontation; Moderate regarding reported foreign operational involvement; Low where allegations lack independent supporting evidence.

IV. NIGERIA: MILITARY AVIATION LOSS AND NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITIES

A. A Nigerian Air Force aircraft crashed in Ondo State during the reporting period, resulting in substantial military fatalities. The incident prompted national mourning and the postponement of the Senate's National Security Summit scheduled for 12–13 October.

B. Reporting concerning the precise number and classification of fatalities was not entirely consistent. Some accounts distinguished officers from crew members differently. The loss of the aircraft and the decision to postpone the summit are better established than every detail of the casualty breakdown.

C. The summit had been intended to examine Nigeria's continuing internal security challenges and identify practical measures to improve protection of citizens and national security coordination.

D. Debate over state policing remains relevant to Nigeria's institutional security arrangements. Proposals for decentralized policing raise questions concerning local responsiveness, federal coordination, accountability, funding, and the potential politicization of security institutions.

E. The aircraft loss should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of hostile action or a systemic failure of the Nigerian Air Force. Determining the cause requires an official technical investigation and supporting evidence.

F. Assessment. Nigeria's immediate development is institutional rather than a newly established change in the insurgency balance. The postponement temporarily delays a national security-policy forum while underscoring the human and organizational consequences of military aviation losses.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the crash and postponement; Moderate regarding wider institutional consequences; no attribution of cause pending investigative findings.

V. RUSSIA: MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE THIRD RUSSIA–AFRICA SUMMIT

A. Preparations continued for the Third Russia–Africa Summit expected later in October. Russian reporting indicated that more than 30 countries had confirmed participation, although this figure should be treated as an organizer-reported claim until independently supported by attendance records.

B. Moscow is expected to use the summit to promote bilateral agreements and cooperation involving security, energy, trade, education, technology, and diplomatic coordination.

C. Russia's African engagement should not be measured solely through deployments of military personnel. Equipment maintenance, training relationships, defence-industrial cooperation, political access, and sustained institutional contact can provide influence extending beyond individual military operations.

D. The reported Russian-supported recapture of Kidal gives Moscow a potentially useful example of operational cooperation to present to African security partners. Its value as a diplomatic demonstration depends on whether security gains prove durable.

E. Russia also faces constraints. The war in Ukraine, sanctions, financial limitations, competing external actors, and the requirements of African governments may restrict the scale and sustainability of commitments.

F. Announced agreements and expressions of diplomatic support should therefore be distinguished from funded projects, delivered equipment, functioning facilities, and completed training programmes.

G. Assessment. The summit represents an opportunity for Russia to consolidate political relationships and promote a broader African engagement model. Its eventual strategic significance will depend on actual participation, signed agreements, implementation, and sustained cooperation rather than diplomatic presentation alone.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding preparations and Russia’s broader engagement objectives; Moderate regarding claimed participation and future implementation.

VI. CANADA AND THE AFRICAN UNION: RENEWED DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT

A. On 13 October, African Union Commission Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf received the credentials of Ambassador Annika Alman as Canada’s Ambassador to the African Union. The meeting provided an official opportunity to discuss the direction of Canada–African Union cooperation.

B. The discussions addressed domestic resource mobilization, access to capital, industrialization, value addition, regional economic integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the contribution of African diaspora communities to trade and investment.

C. The African Union emphasized the importance of African states financing their own development, expanding domestic processing of raw materials, creating employment, and strengthening their position within international economic relationships.

D. Additional priorities included girls’ education, women’s empowerment, skills transfer, and stronger institutional foundations for economic development.

E. Ambassador Alman reaffirmed Canada’s commitment to supporting favourable business conditions, regional integration, and investment-led growth. The discussions also recognized the recently launched Africa Credit Rating Agency and the importance of aligning cooperation with the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

F. The diplomatic engagement is consistent with Canada’s Africa Strategy, which emphasizes trade diversification, development finance, critical minerals, diplomatic cooperation, and African-led development priorities.

G. Assessment. The presentation of credentials is a concrete diplomatic development rather than evidence by itself of new investment or financial commitments. Its strategic importance lies in the opportunity to translate established Canadian policy into practical cooperation with African institutions, particularly where Canadian expertise intersects with African priorities for capital access, industrialization, and value-added production.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the meeting and stated priorities; Moderate regarding the eventual scale of resulting cooperation.

VII. CANADA'S AFRICA STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

A. Canada's Africa Strategy remains an established framework for expanding diplomatic, commercial, development, and security relationships with African countries and regional institutions.

B. Its principal mechanisms include stronger diplomatic representation, trade and investment promotion, development finance, support for AfCFTA implementation, educational partnerships, and cooperation concerning peace, security, and human rights.

C. The 13 October African Union engagement demonstrates continuing institutional implementation of the strategy. It does not, however, establish that Africa has become a dominant priority within Canada's overall foreign-policy agenda.

D. Canadian commercial capabilities in mining, critical-mineral development, engineering, education, financial services, agricultural technology, and institutional capacity-building provide potential areas for mutually beneficial cooperation.

E. The African Union's emphasis on domestic processing and industrialization suggests that future Canadian partnerships will be more strategically relevant when they support local employment, technical skills, infrastructure, and African participation in higher-value stages of production.

F. Canada's potential advantage should not be assessed solely through the financial scale of its investments. Predictable regulation, technical expertise, transparent financing, education, and institutional cooperation may provide a differentiated approach where these capabilities meet African requirements.

G. Assessment. Canada's principal challenge remains implementation rather than the absence of an articulated policy. The effectiveness of its Africa Strategy should be evaluated through completed projects, measurable investment, expanded trade, development-finance activity, diplomatic access, and durable partnerships supporting African economic priorities.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the established strategy and continued diplomatic activity; Moderate regarding relative political priority, future resources, and measurable long-term influence.

VIII. CRITICAL MINERALS: GLOBAL COMPETITION AND AFRICAN ECONOMIC SECURITY

A. Competition for African critical minerals continued receiving significant attention during the reporting period. Copper, cobalt, lithium, graphite, nickel, and rare earth elements remain important to energy systems, advanced manufacturing, electronics, defence technologies, and strategic supply chains.

B. The International Energy Agency has identified supply-chain concentration and trade restrictions as important economic-security concerns. The strategic vulnerability involves not only mineral extraction but also the concentration of processing, refining, specialized technologies, and industrial manufacturing.

C. China retains extensive relationships across African mining, infrastructure, industrial development, and associated commercial sectors. Its position reflects accumulated investment, construction activity, processing capabilities, and institutional relationships.

D. The United States is pursuing alternative supply relationships and government-supported investment intended to reduce dependence on concentrated sources of strategic minerals. African projects therefore carry implications extending beyond commercial extraction.

E. European governments and institutions are similarly seeking reliable mineral access while promoting economic partnerships, infrastructure, and supply-chain diversification.

F. African governments face an important policy choice. Increased foreign interest can attract capital and infrastructure, but arrangements concentrated on exporting unprocessed materials may reproduce limited domestic value capture.

G. Assessment. The central strategic competition is increasingly over the structure of mineral supply chains rather than ownership of deposits alone. African governments able to negotiate processing capacity, technical training, reliable infrastructure, and domestic industrial participation may obtain greater long-term economic benefits.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the strategic importance of critical minerals and supply-chain concentration; Moderate regarding the eventual success of individual investment initiatives.

IX. CHINA: INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LONG-TERM ECONOMIC INFLUENCE

A. China's economic engagement with Africa remains broad, encompassing mining, infrastructure, telecommunications, manufacturing, financing, trade, and institutional cooperation.

B. These relationships provide China with commercial opportunities and access to strategic resources while supporting infrastructure and industrial development in participating African states.

C. China's established position in mineral processing and manufacturing is particularly relevant because control over higher-value stages of production can provide greater strategic influence than mineral extraction alone.

D. African governments nevertheless retain negotiating authority and may seek to diversify financing and technology relationships where dependence on one partner creates commercial or political vulnerabilities.

E. The expansion of United States and European interest in African minerals introduces additional competitive pressure. This may increase the range of investment options available to African governments without automatically guaranteeing improved contractual terms or domestic economic benefits.

F. Assessment. China's position should be evaluated through the depth of its existing industrial, financial, technological, and infrastructure relationships. Competing powers may expand their participation, but displacing established supply-chain arrangements requires sustained investment and technical capacity rather than diplomatic declarations.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding China's established economic engagement; Moderate regarding the eventual effect of competing investment strategies.

X. UNITED STATES: COMMERCIAL REORIENTATION AND STRATEGIC SUPPLY CHAINS

A. United States policy increasingly emphasizes strategic supply chains, commercial investment, and access to critical resources as important dimensions of international economic and national security.

B. African mineral producers and processing opportunities are relevant to efforts to diversify supplies required for energy technologies, advanced manufacturing, and defence industries.

C. Greater reliance on commercial mechanisms can create opportunities for African governments seeking investment. Nevertheless, development outcomes depend on whether financing arrangements include infrastructure, employment, domestic processing, and broader economic participation.

D. Changes in international assistance arrangements also carry implications for countries dependent on external support for healthcare, humanitarian services, education, and institutional capacity-building. Commercial investment and development assistance serve overlapping but not interchangeable purposes.

E. The United States must compete with established Chinese commercial relationships and with other international partners offering different combinations of finance, infrastructure, technology, and political cooperation.

F. Assessment. A more commercially focused American approach may strengthen engagement in selected strategic sectors. Its wider influence will depend on the credibility of financing, implementation speed, regulatory arrangements, and the extent to which partnerships address African priorities beyond access to raw materials.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the importance of supply-chain diversification; Moderate regarding the long-term balance between commercial and development objectives.

XI. TANZANIA: NON-ALIGNMENT, ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

A. Reporting published on 9 October highlighted Tanzania's continued emphasis on non-alignment, economic diplomacy, South-South cooperation, African unity, and the protection of national sovereignty.

B. Tanzania maintains relationships with multiple international partners, including China, India, Russia, Western states, and regional institutions. These relationships support different economic, diplomatic, technological, and development requirements.

C. Tanzania's critical-mineral potential increases the importance of managing foreign investment while protecting domestic economic interests. Local processing, technical training, infrastructure, and diversified markets are particularly relevant.

D. The country's historical commitment to non-alignment provides an established diplomatic foundation, although contemporary competition differs substantially from the Cold War environment in which that approach developed.

E. Economic agreements may carry wider strategic consequences through financing conditions, technological dependence, infrastructure ownership, concentrated exports, or long-term access arrangements.

F. Assessment. Tanzania illustrates the distinction between formal non-alignment and effective strategic autonomy. Maintaining relationships with competing powers provides diplomatic flexibility, but genuine autonomy also depends on domestic institutional capacity and the ability to negotiate and implement agreements consistent with national interests.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding Tanzania's established diplomatic orientation; Moderate regarding the effectiveness of future diversification and industrial policies.

XII. AFRICAN INDUSTRIALIZATION, VALUE ADDITION AND ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY

A. African governments and regional institutions continue emphasizing industrialization and domestic value addition as central development objectives.

B. The 13 October African Union–Canada discussions reinforced this position through their focus on domestic resource mobilization, access to capital, employment, regional integration, and the transformation of raw materials into higher-value products.

C. Mineral extraction without sufficient domestic processing may generate export revenues while leaving substantial manufacturing, technological, and employment benefits outside producing countries.

D. Greater value addition requires more than contractual commitments. Reliable electricity, transport infrastructure, technical skills, regulatory predictability, access to finance, and viable markets are necessary for commercially sustainable processing and manufacturing.

E. Regional integration through AfCFTA offers a potential mechanism for increasing market scale, reducing trade barriers, and supporting industrial relationships across national borders.

F. External competition may strengthen African negotiating positions where governments have credible alternatives. It may also introduce new dependencies if financing, technology, processing, or export markets remain concentrated.

G. Assessment. The strategic importance of African industrialization extends beyond economic growth. Domestic processing, skilled employment, and diversified supply chains can strengthen national resilience and increase governments' capacity to exercise independent economic and diplomatic choices.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding stated African Union priorities and underlying economic requirements; Moderate regarding implementation outcomes.

XIII. UNITED STATES–RUSSIA DIESEL ARRANGEMENT: ENERGY SECURITY AND SANCTIONS CREDIBILITY

A. On 12 October, international reporting described a United States–Russia arrangement intended to permit additional Russian diesel supplies to reach international markets, with the stated objective of reducing pressure on fuel prices.

B. The arrangement generated criticism from American lawmakers and international partners concerned that renewed Russian energy revenues could weaken economic pressure associated with the war in Ukraine.

C. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney was reported to have criticized the arrangement on the grounds that it could undermine efforts to constrain Russia's capacity to sustain the conflict.

D. Market reporting indicated that the prospective additional diesel supply was limited relative to global demand. The arrangement should therefore not be treated as evidence that international fuel shortages or price volatility have been resolved.

E. The wider energy environment remains affected by Middle Eastern instability, disruptions to maritime trade, attacks against energy infrastructure, and uncertainty concerning Russian refining and export capacity.

F. Although the diesel arrangement does not constitute a direct African security development, its consequences could extend to African economies through international fuel prices, transport costs, import expenditure, inflation, and the financial capacity of external security partners.

G. Assessment. The immediate strategic significance lies less in the announced volume of diesel than in the possible weakening of sanctions coordination and the political implications of renewed commercial accommodation with Moscow. Any assessment of its effect on Russian influence in Africa should remain indirect unless evidence establishes a specific connection.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the reported arrangement and political objections; Moderate regarding actual market effects and longer-term geopolitical consequences.

XIV. AFRICAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND MULTIPOLAR ENGAGEMENT

A. African governments continue operating within an increasingly competitive international environment involving the United States, China, Russia, the European Union, India, Gulf states, Türkiye, and other partners.

B. These relationships are not uniform. Different partners offer varying combinations of military assistance, infrastructure, finance, technology, trade access, diplomatic cooperation, and development support.

C. Tanzania's non-alignment framework and the African Union's emphasis on domestic value creation demonstrate the continuing importance of African decision-making rather than automatic alignment with competing external powers.

D. The reported Russian-supported operation in Kidal illustrates the security dimension of this competition, while the African Union–Canada meeting and critical-mineral investment discussions illustrate its institutional and economic dimensions.

E. African governments may seek security cooperation from one partner while pursuing commercial, technological, or development relationships with others. Such arrangements should not automatically be interpreted as contradictory or as evidence of exclusive geopolitical alignment.

F. Strategic autonomy nevertheless requires institutional safeguards. Diversified relationships can reduce dependence, but overlapping external commitments may also create financial, technological, diplomatic, or security vulnerabilities.

G. Assessment. Africa's emerging international position is better understood as selective engagement within a multipolar environment than as a simple division between Western and non-Western blocs. The ability of African governments to negotiate credible benefits remains a central determinant of future influence.

Confidence Assessment: High regarding the broader diversification trend; Moderate regarding the durability and effectiveness of individual national strategies.

XV. IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA AND ALLIED PARTNERS

A. The reported recapture of Kidal warrants continued monitoring because Russian-supported territorial gains may strengthen Moscow's credibility with African governments seeking external security assistance. The durability of control and the consequences for civilian security remain more important than the immediate political presentation of the operation.

B. Allegations involving Ukraine, France, and armed groups in the Sahel require disciplined intelligence assessment. Political statements should not be converted into established operational findings without independent corroboration.

C. Nigeria's military aviation losses and postponed National Security Summit reinforce the importance of institutional resilience, technical investigation, security-sector governance, and continuity of national security planning.

D. Canada's 13 October engagement with the African Union creates a timely opportunity to advance cooperation in industrialization, investment, education, skills transfer, regional integration, and development finance.

E. Critical-mineral partnerships should be assessed across the full value chain. Extraction, refining, processing, transport, infrastructure, financing, and technical capacity collectively determine the strategic significance of commercial agreements.

F. Russian and Chinese influence should be measured through durable institutions, implemented projects, functioning facilities, trained personnel, and sustained economic relationships rather than individual announcements.

G. United States–Russia energy arrangements may complicate allied sanctions coordination. Canada and allied partners should distinguish the commercial rationale for energy-market measures from their potential consequences for Russian revenue and international policy coherence.

H. African strategic autonomy requires recognition within Canadian and allied engagement. Partnerships that provide measurable domestic benefits, respect African priorities, and support local institutional capacity are more likely to produce sustained cooperation than arrangements focused principally on external strategic requirements.

XVI. CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT

A. High confidence is assigned to developments supported by official institutional documentation and corroborated reporting, including the 13 October African Union–Canada diplomatic meeting, the postponement of Nigeria's National Security Summit, Canada's established Africa Strategy, and the strategic importance of critical-mineral supply chains.

B. Moderate to High confidence is assigned to the reported recapture of Kidal and Russian military involvement, supported by multiple accounts but requiring continued observation to determine the durability of territorial control.

C. Moderate confidence is assigned to future strategic consequences of the Russia–Africa Summit, evolving Tanzanian economic diplomacy, competing mineral-investment initiatives, and the broader geopolitical effects of the United States–Russia diesel arrangement.

D. Lower confidence is assigned to specific allegations of Ukrainian or French operational assistance to armed groups where independent corroboration is incomplete.

E. Promotional statements, political accusations, search-engine AI summaries, and secondary reporting without identifiable supporting evidence were not treated as independently established intelligence.

XVII. CONCLUSION

A. The period from 1 to 13 October 2026 was characterized by a reported military reversal in northern Mali, continued Russia-linked security competition in the Sahel, significant Nigerian institutional security developments, renewed Canada–African Union diplomatic engagement, and increasing attention to Africa’s role in global mineral and industrial supply chains.

B. The reported recapture of Kidal represents the most consequential immediate military development identified in the available reporting. Russian Africa Corps support reinforces Moscow’s importance to Mali’s security arrangements, although the durability of government control and its wider implications for insurgent activity remain uncertain.

C. The Sahel continues to demonstrate the interaction between local conflict dynamics and external geopolitical competition. The Russia–Ukraine confrontation has introduced an additional dimension to regional security competition, with allegations of Ukrainian assistance to armed groups opposing Russian-supported forces. Claims involving Ukraine and France contribute to diplomatic confrontation but should not be treated as established evidence of specific foreign operations without independent corroboration. Local insurgencies, separatist grievances, and governance challenges remain central to the regional security environment.

D. Nigeria’s fatal military aviation incident and the postponement of its National Security Summit demonstrate the continuing importance of military readiness, institutional continuity, and security-sector reform. The cause of the crash requires technical investigation rather than speculation.

E. Russia’s forthcoming Africa summit provides an opportunity to consolidate diplomatic, military, and economic relationships. Its significance should be assessed through actual participation, implemented agreements, and sustained institutional cooperation.

F. Canada’s diplomatic engagement with the African Union on 13 October is a particularly relevant development for Canadian strategic interests. The meeting reaffirmed shared attention to capital access, industrialization, regional integration, skills development, and investment-led growth.

G. Canada's Africa Strategy provides an established policy framework for converting these priorities into practical cooperation. The principal challenge remains measurable implementation through trade, investment, development finance, education, critical-mineral partnerships, and diplomatic engagement.

H. Competition for African critical minerals continues expanding beyond extraction to include processing, manufacturing, infrastructure, technology, and supply-chain security. China retains significant established relationships across African mining, infrastructure, financing, telecommunications, and industrial development. Its established mineral-processing and manufacturing capabilities provide long-term economic influence that competing United States and European initiatives cannot displace through diplomatic commitments alone. The strategic outcome will depend on sustained investment, supply-chain diversification, and the ability of African governments to secure greater domestic economic benefits.

I. African governments are increasingly emphasizing domestic value addition and industrialization as conditions for translating foreign commercial interest into lasting development. These objectives are directly relevant to the structure and credibility of future Canadian partnerships.

J. Tanzania illustrates the broader African preference for maintaining diplomatic flexibility while engaging competing international partners. Effective strategic autonomy will depend on domestic institutions, diversified economic relationships, and the ability to negotiate agreements consistent with national priorities.

K. The United States–Russia diesel arrangement introduces an additional complication into international sanctions coordination and energy diplomacy. Its direct relevance to African security remains limited, but indirect economic and geopolitical consequences warrant monitoring.

L. Overall, the reporting period reinforces a continental pattern of strategic diversification rather than exclusive alignment. African governments are increasingly positioned to negotiate among competing partners, while external influence will depend on the durability of security relationships, access to capital, industrial capacity, technology, and the delivery of measurable domestic benefits.

M. For Canada, the principal strategic opportunity lies in building sustained, mutually beneficial partnerships that combine commercial expertise, critical-mineral development, education, financing, institutional cooperation, and peace-and-security engagement. The 13 October African Union meeting provides a concrete diplomatic foundation from which these objectives may be advanced.

Overall Confidence Assessment: Moderate to High.

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<https://www.armycadetleague.ca/>

Each year an Army Cadet graduate of the Basic Parachutist Course is awarded the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Bursary by The Army Cadet League of Canada. This year is no exception and the bursary will be awarded again, tomorrow (24 July 2026). The Army Cadet League of Canada is able to present bursaries and scholarships to deserving cadets thanks to the generosity of our donors and partnering organizations. If you wish to help support an Army Cadet's pursuit of a post-secondary education, please donate today. See photos:

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1456673866489872&id=100064418180482&mibextid=wwXIfr&rdid=mTKeq300bZezDuFX#

For specific amounts: <https://aclc-lcac.getcommunal.com/donate>

(For generic and directed donations).

<https://www.armycadetleague.ca/donate/>

For ACLC Nova Scotia Branch membership:

<https://ns-aclc.getcommunal.com>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/cadets-junior-canadian-rangers/junior-canadian-rangers.html>

<https://aircadetleague.com/>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/cadets-junior-canadian-rangers/junior-canadian-rangers/runjcren.html>

Serve After Service #Royal Canadian Legion

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<https://legionmagazine.com/remembering-a-kings-message-how-all-civilized-nations-should-live-together/>

- [Richard Foot](#)
- [August 5, 2026](#)