

**Canada-China Friendship Society (CCFS) Webinar with H.E. CONG Peiwu,
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Canada on
*China-Canada Relations***

**September 10, 2020 (Thursday)
7:30pm – 9:00pm EST**

Q&A

1. TWO MICHAELS AND MADAME MENG

“Canadians and the Canadian Government are deeply concerned about the arrest and detention of the Michael Kovrig and Michael Savor. In Canada their detention is widely viewed as being in retaliation for the arrest on December 2018, of Madame Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of Huawei Technologies, at the request of the United States. The Chinese Government has denied any link between these 3 arrests. However after an extensive interview last week between you and the Editorial Board of La Presse they have concluded that no progress on the release of the two Michaels is possible without the release of Madame Meng.”

Questions:

- a) Would you please comment on the cases of Meng Wenzhou, Michael Kovrig, and Michael Spavor?
- b) Can you clarify whether the detention conditions of the two Michaels can be improved and ultimately released in the absence of the release of Madame Meng?
- c) Taking the Chinese Government at its word that there is no link the arrest of Madame Meng and the two Michaels, what actions are available to Canada to improve the two Michaels conditions of detentions and increase the likelihood of their release?
- d) Likewise, how Madame Meng in Canada is being handled seems to have become a key factor for recovering Canada-China's friendly ties. What is your perspective on the impact of these cases on Canada-China relations?
- e) How could we break through the existing situation?

2. CANADA-CHINA TRADE

“I’d be grateful if Ambassador Cong can brief us on China’s economic situation and what are the prospects of economic and trade cooperation between Canada and China?”

3. STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGIES, HUAWEI AND 5G

“The United States, in a rare move for the Trump administration, is seeking international support to isolate China, particularly in strategic technologies such as 5G and the design and manufacture of advanced microchips. This includes restricting Chinese access to US information technologies. It is also banning Huawei products from its telecommunications systems on the grounds that it would allow for spying and vulnerability to disruption of service. Canada is the only member of the 5 Eyes intelligence community that has not, as yet, banned Huawei equipment from its 5G telecommunications system.”

Questions:

- a) Some people think that Canada has actually excluded Huawei from its 5G network construction. What’s your comment on this?
- b) In China’s view, why should Canada allow Huawei equipment into its 5G system?
- c) What can China and Huawei do to neutralise concerns about the potential risks which, if not addressed, could lead to serious adverse responses from Canada’s 5 Eyes Partners?

4. COVID-19

- a) Why are passengers on flights from Canada to China required to provide a COVID-19 negative certificate of nucleic acid test before boarding?
- b) What **sort of** cooperation have Canada and China carried out in fighting against the pandemic? What are the latest developments in vaccine cooperation between our two countries?

- c) *“A joint venture between Canada’s National Research Council and CanSino Biologics of China is focused on creating a vaccine for COVID. The agreement provided for clinical trials in Canada for the candidate vaccine, and if successful, production in Canada. In May, it was reported that the Chinese customs authorities blocked the shipment of the vaccine to Canada for the agreed clinical trials.*

At the international level, WHO’s COVAX initiative to find and distribute a COVID Vaccine to the world’s most needy includes 2 potential vaccines from China.”

Questions:

- i. If the CanSino vaccine proves to be safe and effective, will China honour its agreement and allow the vaccine to be produced in Canada in a timely manner?
- ii. **Given the current tense environment**, why should Canada trust China on this matter?
- iii. If one or more of the Chinese vaccine candidates in the COVAX initiative prove safe and effective, will China make this vaccine widely available to the developing world without charging intellectual property fees?

5. XINJIANG

“Many Canadians have misunderstandings about China’s policies on ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and other places.”

Question: How do you respond to this?

6. WOLF-WARRIOR DIPLOMACY

Question: Do you think that China is carrying out “wolf-warrior diplomacy”?

7. SOUTH CHINA SEA

“The tension in the South China Sea is increasing.”

Question: How can China and the US avoid confrontation on this issue?

8. HONG KONG – NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

“Hong Kong was under the British colonial rule since 1841 during the First Opium War. Since its return to China in 1997, HK has continued to enjoy its freedom, prosperity and its title as the world’s freest economy which it held for 25 consecutive years while operating under the “one country two systems”, but very unfortunately, Hong Kong lost its title after the social unrest that happened last year. The protests in Hong Kong turned into riots which have been seriously disrupting the lives of people. There have been lawless and massive destructions of both public and private properties including assaults and killing of civilians who don’t share with the views of these rioters. These rioters severely threatened the freedom and lives of civilians, yet did so in the name of their so-called “democracy”. We have ~300,000 Canadians currently living and doing business in Hong Kong.”

Questions:

- a) Can you please tell us more about the new National Security Law in HK, and how it will help or impact the HongKongers and the Canadians who are living or working there?
- b) Despite the legitimacy of any sovereign country to protect itself, why do you think are some countries strongly opposed to this law, especially considering how they themselves have long implemented and enforced many forms of security law in their own countries. What is your view on this?

9. BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

Question: What are the outcomes of the “Belt and Road” cooperation? Can you also please talk about how Canada can participate in it?

10. ENGAGEMENT VERSUS DECOUPLING

50 years ago the agreement to establish diplomatic relations between Canada and the Peoples’ Republic of China was an international landmark. That agreement set a pattern for other countries, including the USA, to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC. One of the key Canadian policies behind that agreement was “engagement”. Canada and ultimately other countries, including the USA, engaged and supported China to fully enter the global community of nations and provided a wide array of support.

Today in many nations, best exemplified by the USA, the concept of engagement has been replaced by decoupling, isolation, separation and potentially a cold war.

President Xi has been widely quoted as responding with a “dual circulation” strategy whose goals are to reduce China’s dependence on foreign markets for its exports and its dependence on key imports to China including food, energy and advanced technology. In essence building a society and economy that would be better able to “go it alone”.

Next month will be the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Canada-China relations. Many would agree that Canada-China relations are at their lowest point since the establishment of diplomatic relations 50 years ago.

Unlike 50 years ago, the strongly negative and deteriorating Canadian public opinion about China appears to leave Canadian politicians with few options for leading an improvement in Canada-China relations.

Questions:

- a) Given the global and Canadian context, does the Chinese government have any plans to adapt its policies and programmes in ways that would facilitate building international trust and positive re-engagement with Canada and the global community?
- b) Do you anticipate that China's relations with the West and Canada will continue to deteriorate over the coming decade?
- c) Do you see any forums where Canada could contribute to easing and perhaps reversing the decline in these global tensions?
- d) If President Trump loses the upcoming US presidential election do you anticipate a significant improvement in the nature of US – China relations?
- e) In your view, how should the intricacies of the Canada-US-China relationships be constructed, considering that Canada has its own featured relationship with China, such as establishing a diplomatic relation before the United States with whom it has traditional relationships especially economic and trade ties.
- f) In what other areas do you think the two governments (**Canadian and Chinese governments**) can engage in joint projects and initiatives?
- g) Would you still encourage Chinese students to come to Canada to study and for Canadian students to study in China?

11. RACISM

There is evidence that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased racist and discriminatory rhetoric and behavior against Asians and those of Asian descent, including Chinese.

Question: What do you think the Canadian Government in particular and Canadians in general can do to deal with this situation?

12. *“It’s a tough time with unfair attacks on China on the international stage at present. My regards and best wishes to the Leaders of China and the diplomats who are working on the front lines.”*

Question: What is the best way to face off the negative propaganda and how can I help?

13. CANADA-CHINA PROVINCIAL LINKAGES & SISTER CITY LINKAGES

“Since you arrived in Canada in spring 2019 (I think it was March), were you able to travel across the country, before Covid-19 greatly limited internal Canadian travel. There have been some long-standing formal and very active provincial linkages between Canada and China, for example between Ontario and Jiangsu since 1984, and Saskatchewan and Jilin. Such linkages also encompass dozens of Canada – China sister city linkages.”

Question: What is the state of such Canada-China provincial linkages during recent years?