TOWARDS AN ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE

Greens-EFA note / adopted by the Greens/EFA Steering Group International (17 November 2026)

Background

Following the EU-Canada Summit that took place in Montreal on 29-30 October 2026, negotiations will take place at technical and political level to define the content and the, including a possible College-to-College meeting in March 2027, the participation of Canada's Prime Minister Carney in the European Council of June 2027 and Summit in Autumn 2027 expected to announce the content and structure of the Alliance for the Future between the EU and Canada.

Ahead of these negotiations, the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament wishes to share its views on how Canada and the EU could maximise the current momentum to step up a new Alliance for the Future .

The EU and Canada count already with various political, cooperation and trade arrangements, namely EU Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), both provisionally applied since 2017. The EU and Canada have also in the meantime set up various thematic cooperation frameworks, such as a Green Alliance, Digital Partnership, Security and Defence Partnership. An overarching association agreement under Article 217 TFEU could provide a coherent framework for deeper cooperation, with clearly defined reciprocal rights and obligations, while preserving EU institutional autonomy.

The potential of an EU-Canada Alliance for the Future does not limit itself to the pure bilateral relationship. Canada and the EU should therefore, from the very outset, define its renewed partnership as a stepping stone for closer alliance between democracies, such as the UK, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan or Mexico, to foster plurilateral partnerships among middle powers on key strategic areas. Such an alliance should increase the collective power of the EU, Canada and their allies, by preventing outside powers from coercing or threatening its members, while building global public goods and helping shape a more equitable and effective international system.

1. TOWARDS AN EU-CANADA ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT

The EU and Canada should give priority to areas where their respective strengths and shortcomings can complement each other. The association should provide for regular parliamentary scrutiny, transparent reporting on implementation and expenditure, and meaningful

participation by civil society, social partners and Indigenous representatives where matters affect their rights. Joint bodies must not bypass legislative procedures or parliamentary consent.

- **Strengthening people-to-people links** by negotiating full Canadian association to Erasmus+, with a fair financial contribution and inclusive opportunities for students, apprentices, teachers, youth workers and other learners and increasing the opportunities for Canadians and EU citizens to study, work, conduct research in the EU and Canada, by negotiating new work and study arrangements and enhanced mobility frameworks for people and building on Canada's existing association to Pillar II of Horizon Europe to seek broad participation in successor EU research programmes, subject to their rules and agreed financial contributions. Mobility arrangements should provide clear residence conditions, equal treatment and strong employment protections. More efforts should be made to reach agreements on mutual recognition of professional qualifications, beyond the existing mutual recognition agreement reached for architects under CETA. The EU and Canada could also put together EU-Canada Citizens Assemblies with randomly selected citizens to work on recommendations on key challenges faced by the EU and Canada and facilitate exchanges between youth organisations across the Atlantic. .
- **Climate, nature and clean energy:** Put the EU-Canada Green Alliance into practice through concrete implementation plans, adequate funding and, where appropriate, binding commitments. Prioritise renewable energy, grids, storage, energy efficiency and industrial decarbonisation, alongside ecosystem protection and restoration. Align joint investment with the 1.5°C objective and a just fossil fuel phase out, with support for affected workers and communities. Avoid new long term fossil fuel infrastructure and dependence on Canadian LNG or oil. Concrete initiatives could include a joint investment facility for decarbonisation projects, with agreed financing, governance and environmental and social safeguards; cooperation with developing country partners on climate resilience and support for people displaced by climate impacts; and support for Indigenous led conservation and climate action, respecting Indigenous knowledge, rights and priorities. Establish a joint methane action plan covering monitoring, reporting, independent verification, leak detection and repair, and reductions in venting and flaring. Methane reductions must complement the fossil-fuel phase-out and must not justify additional fossil fuel investment.
- **Critical Raw Materials:** Strengthen resilient and diversified supply chains through joint investment in responsible extraction and processing, alongside material efficiency and substitution. Circularity should be particularly strengthened, including on recycling, repair, reuse and recovery of critical minerals from batteries, electronics and other products. Partnership supported projects must meet robust environmental and human rights standards, including respect for Indigenous land and treaty rights and free, prior and informed consent where their lands and resources are affected. Ensure fair benefits for local communities, strong workers' rights, effective access to remedy and adequate financial provision for environmental restoration. The new partnership should therefore aim in the long-term to reduce the need for new extraction as well as making unavoidable extraction more sustainable.

- **Arctic**: First and foremost, it is essential to work together to protect the Arctic from geopolitical threats by third countries, such as Russia and China. Prioritise climate adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity protection, scientific cooperation, sustainable livelihoods and resilient infrastructure. Jointly pursue a moratorium on new Arctic oil and gas exploration and extraction and on Arctic seabed mining, through measures within the parties' respective competences and relevant international processes. Ensure meaningful participation by Arctic Indigenous peoples, including Inuit and Sámi representatives where matters affect them. Respect their knowledge, land and resource rights, and require free, prior and informed consent for partnership supported projects affecting their lands and resources. Support Indigenous led conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Maritime cooperation, including connectivity with Asia, must comply with international law, protect fragile ecosystems and avoid prejudging differences over the legal status of Arctic passages. It must not encourage environmentally damaging expansion of Arctic shipping. Support environmental and sustainable development cooperation through the Arctic Council, respecting the Ottawa Declaration's exclusion of military security from its mandate.
- **Defence and Security:** Building on Canadian defence companies' participation in SAFE-funded procurement, the EU and Canada should deepen cooperation on defence capabilities and industrial supply chains to strengthen collective security and strategic autonomy, while making joint procurement the preferred approach where it meets shared capability needs and provides security of supply and value for money. Prioritise cyber defence, maritime awareness and protection of critical infrastructure, and space systems, while ensuring parliamentary oversight, transparent procurement, anti-corruption safeguards and compliance with applicable arms control and arms export rules. Provide predictable opportunities for Canadian participation, subject to the eligibility, origin and security requirements of the relevant EU instruments and agreements. Strengthen civilian crisis management and conflict prevention alongside defence cooperation. Establish structured security consultations and explore Canadian participation in any future European Security Council or comparable cooperation format, subject to agreement on its mandate, composition and accountability, while preserving EU decision making autonomy.
- **Ukraine:** A short-term defence and security priority for EU and Canada should be to continue and step up their cooperation in supporting Ukraine, against Russia's war of aggression, both in terms of financial support but also in terms of cooperation of sanctions towards Russia. Special efforts should be made to facilitate the integration of Canadian, EU and Ukrainian defence industries more closely.
- **Foreign interference, transnational repression and democratic resilience:** Deepen EU-Canada cooperation on countering foreign interference, hybrid threats and transnational repression (TNR), both bilaterally and at G7 level. Canada has developed national measures to counter foreign interference, developed Rapid Response Mechanism Canada to monitor foreign information threats and coordinate international responses as permanent chair and secretariat of the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism. Build on Canada's leading role and experience in those areas to exchange best practices, learn from Canadian solutions and create synergies between existing initiatives,

particularly in the context of the EU Democracy Shield. Strengthen practical cooperation under the European Democracy Shield, including information sharing, protection of targeted individuals and communities, and support for independent media and civil society. Cooperation must safeguard freedom of expression, privacy, lawful political activity and effective judicial remedies.

Opportunity to move on from CETA

The EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) has been provisionally applied since 21 September 2017 but has not fully entered into force. Ten EU Member States have yet to complete ratification.

After more than nine years of provisional application, the Commission should address the substantive concerns underlying this impasse rather than simply reiterating calls for ratification. This solution should address concerns about privileged investor protection, the enforceability of environmental and labour commitments, the protection of public services and outstanding specific geographical-indication issues. CETA's Investment Court System is not covered by provisional application. The Greens/EFA should seek a future framework without privileged investor-state dispute settlement, with binding and enforceable climate and labour commitments and effective protection of the right to regulate in the public interest. Article 30.2 permits amendments agreed in writing, subject to the parties' applicable internal approval procedures. An association agreement would not automatically amend or replace CETA; their relationship must be expressly negotiated. Any amendment or replacement must follow the applicable EU and national approval procedures and provide an orderly legal transition. A new partnership must not be used to bypass parliamentary scrutiny or unresolved ratification concerns. If the EU and Canada wish instead to ignore this political problem, the building blocks of a new EU-Canada partnership risk not being stable enough. The EU and Canada should therefore use the current momentum to replace the problematic provisions of CETA with something better. The proposed EU–Canada association agreement provides an opportunity to do so.

Non-regression on climate and sustainability

Canada is a relative very high emitter of CO2 emissions. Per person, Canada is 2nd worst amongst G7, 5th worst in world for large countries. Yet PM Carney's government has abandoned the previous government's 2030/2035 C02 emission targets.

In addition, there are fundamental regulatory differences between the EU and Canada. For example, not only Canadian rules on pesticides are weaker than in the EU, Canada's Pest Control Product Act is currently being further weakened, aiming to enable to reverse decisions by the health minister if the economic impact is judged disproportionate. These differences are expected to continue, as Canada is expected to prefer aligning to US standards given the integration of their markets. In this context, it is fundamental that any new Alliance between EU and Canada is

based on a high level of protection for the people, the environment, climate including a commitment to an implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as a commitment not to lower levels of protection of the environment, climate and people, such as on public health and social protection. The Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the UK provides an example of a clause that could be used as reference, includes a commitment not to weaken or reduce their levels of social, labour and environmental protection below those in place at the end of 2020 "*in a manner affecting trade or investment between the Parties*".

Role of the European Parliament

The future Alliance should also include a strong parliamentary dimension, building on existing joint parliamentary bodies like the EU-UK Partnership Parliamentary Assembly and the EU-Switzerland Joint Parliamentary Committee. In addition to reinforcing parliament-to-parliament dialogue, it is important to upgrade the current role of the respective parliaments in the negotiations of future EU-Canada Summits, including formal opportunities to provide input and receive formal responses from the European Commission and the Canadian government, respectively.

The increased role of parliaments should already be applied in the strategic discussions on the content and structure of the future Alliance, rather than be presented with a "fait accompli". The European Commission should therefore timely be informed on the negotiation on the future Alliance and receive negotiation texts, on a confidential basis. The format of the UK Contact Group, set up to enable the European Parliament to be briefed by the European Commission on Brexit negotiations, could be used as a reference.

2. STEPPING STONE FOR MULTILATERALISM 2.0

The EU-Canada Alliance is also an opportunity to move on from the dire situation of today's international order. As Prime Minister Carney argued in Davos in January 2026, powerful states have too often exempted themselves from rules applied to others. Institutions established after the Second World War remain indispensable, but their governance and resources do not adequately reflect today's distribution of population, needs and responsibilities. Past approaches centred on fiscal consolidation, privatisation, deregulation and trade liberalisation have too often given insufficient weight to inequality, public services, ecological limits and countries' differing circumstances. The political momentum for a new Alliance for the Future should not therefore be wasted to simply go back to the old model of globalisation, but instead form the starting blocks of a new fair international order that prioritises people's human rights and that promotes prosperity and wellbeing within the earth's physical limits.

The EU and Canada can help create an international order anchored in a shared set of rules and guided by common principles and ambitions, rather than the lowest common denominator. Together with other democracies, such as the UK, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan or Mexico, they can advance a positive vision of multilateralism built around a more equitable and effective international order, decisive action on climate change, effective and forward-looking regulation of emerging technologies, building global public goods,

common approaches to addressing wealth inequality, taxation and investment policies, and a shared commitment to peace and stability. Through strong, common regulatory standards, they can build a global version of the ‘’Brussels effect’’ (such as privacy, AI safety, passenger rights, or food quality); keeping people’s safety, wellbeing and quality of life at the centre of the economy while rewarding sustainable and equitable practices.

Such an order would strengthen the capacity of democracies to address shared challenges through cooperation, uphold the rule of law in resolving historical conflicts, and address contemporary grievances through dialogue rather than coercion. By coordinating strategic key policies with allied democracies, the EU and Canada can help create an international order whereby military aggression and trade wars are prevented or stopped, by using their aggregated leverages to deter third countries and big corporate interests from imposing their will by military force or economic coercion.

Rather than setting a wide net for new alliances with any country that is not the US or China, this new approach should be strategically astute by being norms-oriented and focused on democracies. The conditions for membership in such an alliance should be strong democratic institutions and adherence to international law. Serious breaches should trigger transparent monitoring and response procedures, including suspension or termination where justified. It would be based not on a coercive, geographic sphere of influence like those of China, Russia and the US but on voluntary cooperation between democracies anywhere on the globe. Any country meeting those criteria should be able to apply. In other words, the EU should not simply seek new partnerships as a passive response to Trump’s America, but instead develop, together with Canada and other democracies, a proactive, positive vision of modern multilateralism.

Concretely speaking, EU and Canada could be the frontrunners of “coalitions of the willing” of democracies sharing the following goals:

- **Global governance:** Canada and the EU could kick-off a process with other democracies to defend international institutions that are under attack (such as the International Criminal Court) and propose together a review of the governance of the United Nations system, International Monetary Fund and World Bank by lowering the threshold for decision-making in those institutions (in particular refraining from the use of veto in the UN Security Council in cases of mass atrocities, for example), empowering those institutions with more permanent (financial) resources and powers, while supporting developing countries’ aim to allocate larger decision-making power and responsibilities in these institutions to countries in the Global South, to reflect the reality of today, rather than the power balance at the end of WWII. They should also champion proposals for increased democracy, legitimacy and accountability of global institutions, including a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA). The EU and Canada must apply international law consistently, decisively and timely, across conflicts, irrespective of the perpetrator or strategic interests involved. Civilian protection, humanitarian access and accountability must guide their common action. Cooperation among democracies should strengthen inclusive multilateral institutions and meaningful participation by countries in the Global South, rather than create competing spheres of influence. The alliance of the future should

be a champion for initiatives by and from countries in the Global South, and empower their agency. Multilateral institutions should be reformed to be able to deal with today's challenges, such as the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss.

- **AI and digital infrastructure**: Both the EU and Canada face excessive dependence on digital infrastructure and AI services controlled by a small number of providers, including those based in third countries. The EU and Canada could therefore work with other democracies to develop sovereign alternatives in the "tech stack" and to promote responsible governance of AI, while respecting human rights, and promote a plurality of digital infrastructures that enable a healthy and safe space for democratic debate, while promoting cultural diversity and multilinguism. Cooperation should include independent AI safety evaluation, transparency and accountability, protection of privacy and workers' rights, and assessment of the energy and resource demands of digital technologies. Support interoperable systems, open source solutions and digital public infrastructure.
- **Economic Security:** Establish structured cooperation to identify strategic dependencies, diversify supplies and coordinate responses to economic coercion and market distorting practices. Any trade defence measures, countermeasures or export restrictions must follow the applicable legal procedures, be evidence based and proportionate, and comply with international obligations. Cooperation should reinforce resilience and fair competition while supporting efforts to preserve and reform multilateral trade rules. According to recent research (Relearning the Language of Power, Geostrategic Task Force, 2026), the EU does have control on key chokepoints of key supply chains, such as insulin, advanced lithography machines, pharmaceutical intermediates or specialised machinery for agriculture, to name a few. Coordinated export controls with Canada would increase Europe's geoeconomic deterrence capacity vis-à-vis the United States by 138%, for example. The EU should therefore pool its leverage with like-minded partners and transform bilateral dependencies into systemic deterrence, building on the EU Anti Coercion Instrument. In addition, the EU and Canada should consider strategic stockpiles and buffer stocks on key commodities and critical raw materials, which could be freed when the world market prices reaches a certain point.
- **Global Public Goods:** By pooling the resources and strengths of its members, global public goods can be provided that advance high standards of living and sustainability within the societies of its members, while contributing to a better world. These include climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and ocean health and protection, pandemic prevention and preparedness, global science and research into breakthrough technologies, common technical standards, open-source software and shared data commons, ensuring access to space, its sustainable exploitation and its non-militarisation, nuclear non-proliferation, clean technology and sovereign AI. Pursue mobility, cultural exchange and appropriate mutual-recognition arrangements through specific agreements that maintain high protections. At the same time, a joint approach to taxation, investment and financial services would create wealthier and more equitable societies with vastly reduced concentration of political powers in a small group of individuals, while allowing for joint approaches to financial stability and common strategic investments.
- **Environment and Climate Action:** The EU and Canada already count with a bilateral EU-Canada Green Alliance, but this is not enough to promote ambitious environmental

and climate action at global stage. Canada and the EU should, building on existing platforms, provide renewed impetus into environment and climate action by democracies sharing this goal. This could be translated into specific political consultations of the EU and Canada with allied democracies on how to push "environment and climate action" priorities in international processes, such as coordination of positions on key international events like COP (biodiversity, protection of nature and climate), or joint approaches to reforming WTO rules on plastic pollution, fossil fuel subsidies, etc. The EU and Canada should also lead a "coalition of the willing" that continues on global action against methane emissions.

- **Fair globalisation:** What sets EU member states and Canada apart from many democracies is their strong social welfare states, essential pillars of their democratic societies. Public healthcare systems, unemployment programmes and pension systems have struggled to adapt to challenges such as the unpaid care crisis, rapid developments in AI and biotech and an aging population. Cooperation amongst democracies on reform through research and innovation, best-practice sharing, and shared pilot programmes would strengthen and uphold these vital pillars of society across democracies.

3. WHAT THE ALLIANCE IS AND WHAT ARE THE RED LINES

The new EU-Canada Alliance should strengthen democracy and collective security, deepen fair and sustainable trade, promote research and innovation, establish, when possible, common regulatory standards, and accelerate a just ecological and digital transition. It should deliver tangible benefits for people through stronger rights, good-quality jobs, social mobility including greater opportunities to study and work, and more resilient and innovative economies. It should promote a fair and sustainable international order, based on the rule of law, which puts people and the planet before profit.

Whatever the shape of the new EU-Canada partnership, the EU should avoid the following:

1) Interfere with existing EU enlargement and partnership models: No matter which "status" (EU associate membership, partnership, other) is eventually used to define the future EU-Canada partnership, it is important not to confuse such partnership with the EU's enlargement process and existing institutional relationships with EFTA, EEA and with the UK. European states may seek accession under Article 49 TEU, subject to its conditions and the accession process. Canada's association must not weaken commitments to candidate countries. Moreover, the use of the word 'membership' for Canada is not only confusing in this regard. The terminology must not create ambiguity about membership rights or undermine the credibility of the accession process and the commitments made to candidate countries. A broad association could be negotiated under Article 217 TFEU, following the procedures in Article 218 TFEU, including Council unanimity and European Parliament consent. National ratification would additionally be required if the agreement is mixed. The final legal basis depends on its content. Association must preserve EU institutional autonomy and cannot confer membership rights or voting rights in EU institutions. Participation in the wider Alliance for the Future should remain distinct from association with the EU. It should allow tailored cooperation,

with clear reciprocal rights and obligations and consistent minimum safeguards for democracy, human rights and international law. Participation should be compatible with existing international obligations and should not require exclusive geopolitical alignment.

2) Provoke a race to the bottom: Canada and the EU have different regulatory frameworks in various areas (e.g. rules that apply to agriculture products and other products). The Canadian government has also, unfortunately, recently eliminated a consumer carbon tax and weakened a carbon tax for industrial large emitters. Canada's close economic integration with the United States does not predetermine its future regulatory choices. Cooperation should respect regulatory autonomy while encouraging voluntary upward convergence in environmental, social and consumer protection. Difference in such regulatory approaches should not be an obstacle for a closer partnership. While the EU should support its trading partners in complying with EU rules, and use bilateral platforms, such as the Trade and Sustainable Development Committee to discuss implementation of EU rules, the EU-Canada partnership should be based on the respect of each other's regulatory autonomy. For example: There should not be any expectation that a closer partnership will translate either into any change to EU rules on hormones, pesticides, GMOs or the EU Deforestation Regulation, as the Canadian government has so often called for, or into any special treatment for Canada. At the same time, a closer partnership should enable mutual exchanges of best practices in areas where the EU and Canada can learn from each other, given that Canada has more progressive legislation in certain areas, well ahead of the EU (e.g.disability legislation).

3) Replace one dependency with another: Canada is one of our most promising partners across a broad range of policy areas. However, our relationship lacks the institutional and legal safeguards that exist within the EU, and future political shifts could change its direction. We must therefore balance closer structural ties with the need to avoid strategic dependencies that could expose the EU to political pressure or coercion in case the political situation in Canada shifts. The EU needs to learn the lesson that long-term resilience requires diversification of partnerships. Moving away from dependencies should not result in an increased dependency on LNG, fossil fuels or any other export from Canada or any other specific country.

4) Tolerate backsliding in democratic principles: The respect of democratic principles (including human rights) should be a clear red-line for closer cooperation with Canada and other partners around the world. In the fast changing environment, we are seeing that unfortunately, democracies can backslide on fundamental values like the rule of law, human rights or anti-corruption quite quickly. Robust monitoring mechanisms should be established to identify serious breaches of democratic principles or international law by either members of such Alliances, with clear and meaningful consequences, up to and including the suspension or termination of the enhanced partnership with other democracies. Monitoring should be independent, transparent and reciprocal, with meaningful parliamentary and civil society participation. The agreement should provide clear procedures for addressing serious breaches, including corrective action and

proportionate suspension measures, while protecting individuals participating in mobility and cooperation programmes.

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