Canada unveils Arctic strategy

Last Updated: Sunday, July 26, 2009 | 3:15 PM ET

The federal government has promised to assert Canada's sovereignty over its resource-rich Arctic lands and waters while it addresses the need for jobs, housing and a clean environment in the North.

Three federal cabinet ministers released the new spending and a public relations plan, called Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, at a news conference in Gatineau, Que., on Sunday.

"At every opportunity in my discussions with foreign ministers, I have and will continue to have frank discussions, and that includes reiterating, my friends, our country's willingness and continued engagement to reaffirm our sovereignty," Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon told reporters at the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Canada, Russia and Denmark have all tried to strengthen their presence in the Arctic in recent years, but Cannon said as members of the Arctic Council, they've been able to work together on common goals and there's no reason that can't continue.

"We're not going down a road toward confrontation. Indeed, we're going down a road toward cooperation and collaboration. That is the Canadian way. And that's the way my other colleagues around the table have chosen to go as well," he said.

Cannon, who was joined by Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl and Minister of State for Science Gary Goodyear for the policy announcement, said his government has made the Arctic an "absolute priority" and that the needs of northerners will be at the heart of Arctic policy.

Plans to increase economic opportunities

Strahl listed the ways in which the federal government intends to help the North's economy, reiterating plans previously announced.

"We're creating a new economic development agency for the North, shaped by northern realities and poised to respond to northern interests.

"We are supporting important new geomapping initiatives to build our understanding of the North's material and petroleum potential and we're working to improve regulatory processes across the North.

"This will build investor confidence in the North and increase economic opportunities for northerners and all Canadians," he said.

"Our ultimate goal is to ensure that economic spinoffs benefit northerners first," Cannon said.

The foreign affairs minister also said he's hoping the European Union will reconsider a proposed ban on seal-derived products. The European Council of Ministers meets Monday in Belgium to vote on a proposal to regulate trade in seal products.
Members of the EU Parliament endorsed a bill in May that would impose a tight ban on the import of seal products to all 27 member countries as of 2010. Only seal products from Inuit or aboriginal hunts would be exempt under the ban.

*With files from The Canadian Press*

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**Leprechaun1**

2009/07/29 at 8:10 AM ET

simple truths\ You are an American NSA Agent\

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**K-Master**

2009/07/28 at 11:56 AM ET

Let's have a National referendum on officially joining the United States of America. If yes, let the Americans pay those whose families have been here let's say since WWII a large sum of money.

If no, then let's get our country back for God sake!

Agree: Overhaul Canada and become true Canadians

Or

Disagree: To officially join the USA

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**justlikewillyapeliccan**

2009/07/28 at 11:59 AM ET

what about the North, oh, yeah, that big chunk of real estate that WILL make us millions. Until something is needed from the North we are pushed to the back of the
shelf (note: we are a shelved issue, until needed). As 1/3 of Canada, would it not make sense to protect all of Canada; not just the areas that have been raped and pillaged for the resources. Talk lightly about the North, and they just may not pay any attention to the hot air from Ottawa!!!

A Northern Policy that has some content that matters to the North would be good, not mumble, mumble, North, mumble, numble!!!!

Northern Observer

Isn't it time the Harper Government put some money into housing northerners instead of this pie in the sky nonsense? We could house everyone in the three territories properly for the amount being wasted on this surrilous attempt to buy northern votes with these non-existant “defence” projects which only benefit southern interests.

Marco Ramius

Whether Canada will have to defend the north against agressors depends so much on who's in power in the US. If Obama fails and the pendulum swings back to the Republicans, and they get another George Bush elected (Jeb Bush?), Canada is screwed. Some poor Inuit on a snow machine will accidently run over some tourist in snow shoes and a Hawaiian shirt from Florida and that's it, the next thing you know, cruise missiles are crashing down in Tuk.

C'mon, let's get serious, it isn't going to be a shooting war, but an economic war. If the economic assets of the North are sold off to foreigners, they won't have to fire a shot. Majority Canadian ownership has to be mandatory for any enitity to exploit the North's resources.
B.C. journalist released from Iran

Dorothy Parvaz, a B.C. journalist who was detained on her way to cover anti-government uprisings in Syria and was deported to Iran, has been freed, family members say.

Canadians secretly added to U.S. security list: WikiLeaks

Despite the experience with Maher Arar, CSIS continues to pass along to the U.S. the names of Canadians suspected of being security risks, WikiLeaks cables reveal. Neil Macdonald reports.

Baird to get Foreign Affairs in cabinet shuffle

Prime Minister Stephen Harper will unveil his cabinet Wednesday, giving new jobs to at least six members of his majority government caucus, and naming John Baird to another key role.

Slave Lake evacuees complain of little warning

Residents of Slave Lake, Alta., raised questions Tuesday about how little warning they had of the rapidly approaching wildfire that destroyed 40 per cent of their town.

Queen to visit Irish massacre site

Queen Elizabeth will continue her groundbreaking Irish trip with visits to a massacre site, a war memorial and the Guinness Storehouse.

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Surveying Slave Lake aftermath as fires rage on in Alberta

Michael Dick, Ioanna Roumeliotis and Ian Hanomansing
Ian Hanomansing reports on the losses in the fire-devastated town of Slave Lake, Ioanna Roumeliotis checks in with evacuees, and Briar Stewart updates the state of firefighting in the face of over 100 blazes which continue to rage on in the area.
Flooding focus moves to Lake Manitoba

Cameron MacIntosh
As the Assiniboine River crests without further problems from Brandon to Portage, the flood focus has shifted to the southern basin of Lake Manitoba, where high water levels and exposure to north winds have already caused land to be swallowed up by the rising lake.

Tight security in Dublin for Queen's historic visit to Ireland

Susan Ormiston
Despite the threat of violence, the four-day royal visit by Queen Elizabeth II to Ireland — the first since George V in 1911, when Ireland was still part of the British empire — is seen as a strong indication of improving relations between Britain and Ireland. More than 8,000 Irish police are in the streets of Dublin amid the tightest security ever seen in the Irish capital. About 1,000 Irish soldiers are also on stand-by.

Go Public: Dodge Ram steering under investigation

Kathy Tomlinson
Serious safety concerns are being raised by owners of late model Dodge Ram trucks — in complaints to government — over a problem automotive experts and consumers have dubbed the "death wobble." Several owners from Canada and the U.S. have reported they are scared to drive their vehicles after experiencing violent, uncontrollable shaking in their truck's steering system, triggered when their vehicles hit a bump in the road. However, Chrysler has concluded there is "no safety issue" related to this issue. It advises service technicians to check the vehicle's suspension and steering components and adjust the tire pressure.

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The Current

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