

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

May 16th, 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to express my grave concern and frustration about the decision of the Department of National Defence (DND) to support and sponsor the Institute for Peace and Diplomacy (IPD) in organizing the “Middle East Strategy Forum (MESF 2022)” held on May 11th and 12th, 2022 in Ottawa’s Delta Hotel, just a stone’s throw from your office.

A summary of the activities, positions, and ties of IPD which have been a major source of concern for those of us who have been following this organization follows.

- The IPD’s funding is completely opaque. This organization refuses to publicly disclose the source of most of its funding. We have been able to track the questionable ties of one of their sponsors (see Appendix I).
- The IPD has a long history of policy positions which are entirely friendly to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Russia, and the Islamic Republic regime in Iran.

Individuals who associate with IDP have deeply questionable ties to totalitarian regimes. Their invited guests have in the past included persons with ties the CCP (e.g. Victor Gao) or the Islamic Republic of Iran (Hossein Mousavian), and their fellows include individuals with ties to pro-Vladimir Putin think tank Valdai Club, whose spread of openly dictator-friendly disinformation is in stark contrast to Canada’s national interests and values (see Appendix II). It is very disconcerting that the DND, which we, as Canadian citizens, have to trust with defending our interests and safety at home and aboard, has failed to conduct due diligence before awarding the organizer \$50,000 of Canadian taxpayer money.

The timing of this funding, as we are facing unprecedented levels of inflation, placing additional financial strain on all governmental departments, and when the focus of the government of Canada should be on assisting Ukraine against the Russian invasion, has only added to my shock and dismay.

I hope you will order an inquiry into the DND’s decision to sponsor the IDP’s latest forum. Our national security and our interests at home when our values are under unmatched assault must be taken seriously and any negligence in this regard must be treated with utmost rigour and urgency.

I thank you for your time and considerations and look forward to hearing back from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely Yours,

APPENDIX I

The Institute for Peace and Diplomacy has hosted several events in collaboration with InterVISTAS consulting, an aviation/airport consulting firm.¹

InterVISTAS is owned by RoyalHaskoning DHV, a Dutch consulting firm whose subsidiary, Netherlands Airport Consultants (NACO), was awarded a major project for building Imam Khomeini Airport City (near Tehran), which started in 2015 but has been suspended since 2018. NACO has three local partners in Iran, who call themselves Naco+3T.

The now defunct website of NACO+3T Consortium described it as “an Iranian-Dutch joint venture, formed by three Iranian consultant companies: Tadbir Omran Iranian (TOI)², Tarh-e-NowAndishan(TNA)³, Tana Energy Group(TEG)⁴ and Netherland Airport Consultants (NACO)”.

At least two of these companies are owned by former senior government servants, Deputy Minister, and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)'s Commanders.

Anyone slightly familiar with Islamic Republic of Iran's politics would know that being awarded such major projects would not be possible without close ties to IRGC, on the US list of terrorist organizations and responsible for numerous terrorist activities, including the January 2020 shooting down of flight PS752 where 55 Canadian Citizens and a further 60 Canadian residents were murdered.

¹ <https://peacediplomacy.org/2020/11/16/november-25-a-global-roundtable-on-the-future-of-aviation-policy/> and <https://peacediplomacy.org/2021/03/08/panel-summary-report-privacy-and-passenger-biometrics/>

² <http://tadbiromran.com/en/project/IKIA-Master-Consultancy>

³ <http://www.tna-co.ir/default.aspx?la=en>

⁴ <http://www.tanaenergy.com/tana-energy#4547-members-of-board>

APPENDIX II

Victor Gao has been an invited guest to IPD events. Mr. Gao is a former translator for Deng Xiaoping and works at the Center for China and Globalization Department, an institution directly overseen by CCP's Central Committee.

Hossein Mousavian who is a contributor to IPD and appeared on their panel discussion⁵ is the Islamic Republic of Iran's former ambassador to Germany in the 1990s when the assassinations of four Iranian opposition figures in a Berlin restaurant, "Mykonos" by Islamic Republic's intelligent agents took place.

Piotr Dutkiewicz, an IPD's Senior Fellow, is a member of Moscow-based Valdai Discussion Club⁶, a Think Tank which Carnegie Moscow Center's Nikolai Petrov has called "a project used as blatant propaganda by the Kremlin"⁷ and Lilia Shevtsova describes as "a faithful army of Kremlin propagandists"⁸.

The members of the club meet Vladimir Putin in their annual meeting⁹. Various researchers and journalists look into Putin's remarks at these meetings to understand his policies and visions.

⁵ <https://peacediplomacy.org/2021/02/12/panel-summary-report-prospects-for-iran-gcc-rapprochement-in-the-biden-era/>

⁶ <https://valdaiclub.com/>

⁷ https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/20181211_MLI_Russian_Disinformation%20PAPER_FWeb.pdf

⁸ https://carnegieendowment.org/files/RussiaXXI_web_Shevtsova.pdf

⁹ <https://valdaiclub.com/events/posts/articles/vladimir-putin-took-part-in-the-valdai-discussion-club-s-plenary-session/>