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International education as soft power? : the contributions and challenges of Canadian foreign policy to the internationalization of higher education

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of the Canadian federal government in two foreign policy areas: overseas development assistance and international cultural relations by providing a brief history of the federal government's engagement in both policy areas and highlighting the contributions and challenges of Canadian foreign policy to the internationalization of Canadian higher education. More broadly, the paper explores the unique characteristics of the Canadian federal government's role in higher education policy making, and in particular, its relations with academics and the university community. Ironically in a world increasingly characterized by greater international education flows, in Canada, there has been a narrowing of vision, a focus on more short rather than long term objectives and a limited engagement of dialogue between academics and the government to promote both development assistance and international education as Canada's soft power. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Trilokekar, Roopa Desai, E-Mail: roopat@edu.yorku.ca