

# Publications



# Publication Types

## Hot Takes

- Blogs on current topics. No limit or precise template. References in hyperlinks (no bibliography).
- English translations of articles published in *Le Rubicon* (Visit [lerubicon.org](http://lerubicon.org) for their submission guidelines).

## Policy Briefs

- Concise synthesis of information aimed at presenting political considerations, analyzing policy options, and recommending courses of action to the Government of Canada.
- See instructions below (p. 2).

## Policy Report

- In-depth analysis aimed at presenting political considerations, analyzing policy options, and recommending courses of action to the Government of Canada.
- See instructions below (p. 4).

## Spotlights

- Short essays that serve to convey recently published academic monographs and university press books.
- See instructions below (p. 6).

## Submission Guidelines

To submit a paper in any of these categories, email [info@ras-nsa.ca](mailto:info@ras-nsa.ca) beforehand to approve the topic and angle proposed. Propositions must be related to one of the three axes of the NSA.

Once approved, papers will be reviewed, translated, and published online by the Network for Strategic Analysis.

## Honorarium

Contributions are voluntary and unpaid. However, the Network for Strategic Analysis may, on a discretionary basis, offer a modest stipend to solicited authors to fulfill specific requests.

# Policy Briefs

## What is a policy brief?

A policy brief is a summary of information that can help readers understand and make decisions about government policies. A policy brief therefore raises an issue of interest, suggests relevant political options or considerations, or even proposes recommendations on courses of action to be adopted by the Government of Canada.

The policy briefs of the Network for Strategic Analysis are aimed at a specific audience: the Government of Canada, and more specifically the Department of National Defence, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Canadian Armed Forces.

## What can a policy brief be about?

It is a clear, concise, and coherent text about an issue or situation related to international security policy. Policy briefs are therefore used to mobilize your expertise in support of issues that are of concern to the Government of Canada. It is imperative to adapt the writing to this particular audience.

Any information in the brief should serve a purpose. The objective of the brief can be to:

- Provide information and analysis on current debates, trends and issues;
- Provide basic knowledge and context on an issue or topic;
- Highlight emerging or underestimated issues, threats or trends;
- Comment on or evaluate government policy and/or actions;
- Filter and/or prioritize the large volume of open source information;
- Present recommendations for policy development.

Policy briefs for the Network for Strategic Analysis should fit into one or more of the strategic challenges guiding the NSA:

- The evolving role of great powers in a shifting world order
- Multilateral cooperation in international security
- The future of defence capacity building for global partners



# Policy Briefs (cont.)

## Format

- Use the NSA template
- Length: 4 to 5 pages maximum
- Hyperlinked references: no footnotes or author-date references, no bibliography or list of references

## Structure

Policy Briefs are divided into three parts:

### 1. Context

- What is the purpose of the policy brief? It is important to quickly state your conclusions or the gist of your argument in this section, as well as to justify the relevance of the question or issue raised by the policy brief.

### 2. Development

- The heart of the policy note, divided into sub-parts;
- Each sub-section must express an idea, an argument or a point of information that you want to raise;
- Get to the point. Remove anything that is not strictly necessary.

### 3. Policy considerations and recommendations

- What are the implications of the issue raised for Canada? Why should Canada pay attention to this? What connection can be made with respect to the situation in Canada, to its foreign and defense policy?
- Recommendations: recommend a decision, one or more actions

## Writing Style

- Use short sentences. Avoid flaunting your knowledge. Get to the point.
- Avoid academic jargon. Use a more direct style, which can be understood by non-specialists.
- Make sure that the facts, ideas and arguments clearly match the conclusions and recommendations of the policy brief.

# Policy Report

## What is a policy report?

Policy reports are topical and innovative analyses on topics of interest and concern to security policy makers, analysts, scholars, and the general public. By exploring a topic in more detail than a traditional policy brief, policy reports use evidence-based research and analysis that provide readers with critical information about the context and key characteristics of a topic, issue, or situation, as well as recommendations focused on Canada and its policies.

In the field of security and defence, the range of potential topics is wide, and authors are encouraged to use policy reports to inform policy decisions and public debate on any topics they feel merit further consideration – not just those who have dominated recent discourse – and to mobilize conventional or unconventional perspectives on security.

## What are the objectives of a policy report?

Policy reports should meet the following objectives:

- Present evidence-based research, information and analysis on topics of interest in order to amplify the voice of experts and provide a more solid basis for decision-making;
- Highlight approaches and areas of interest to the security community that have been under-researched and require further attention;
- Promote innovation and encourage a multidisciplinary and synergistic approach to research and analysis;
- Present clear and timely policy recommendations and considerations in order to productively contribute to discussion, debate, and decision-making.

The policy reports for the Network for Strategic Analysis should fit into one or more of the strategic challenges that guide the NSA:

- The evolving role of great powers in a shifting world order
- Multilateral cooperation in international security
- The future of defence capacity building for global partners

## Format

- Use the NSA template
- Length: 8 pages maximum
- The policy report should include a summary of approximately 150 words
- Hyperlinked references: no footnotes or author-date references, no bibliography or list of references.

# Policy Report (cont.)

## Structure

Policy reports are divided into three parts:

### 1. Introduction

- Describe the topic, riddle or problem associated with it and the author's argument.

### 2. Development

- Provide general and contextual information on the subject.
- Provide an analysis of the information and outline the potential implications, noting the existing debates and different points of view
- Use headings and subheadings to structure the brief and guide the reader in your analysis.

### 3. Policy considerations and recommendations

- Proceed logically to coherent, Canada-centered policy recommendations or considerations.

## Considerations for the author(s)

- The policy report must provide a clear argument on an easily identifiable subject among the three strategic challenges of the RAS.
- Recommendations are essential. The report is expected to provide Canada-focused policy recommendations that build on the above analysis and are supported by a clear rationale and expected outcomes.
- The report should be based on evidence-based research and analysis, drawing on subject expertise to provide a foundation for recommendations.
- The report can contribute to an existing debate or open a new topic for discussion.

## Writing style

- Make sure that the purpose of the topic covered in the report is clear: the reader should know why this topic is important and what its implications are.
  - A policy report is longer than a policy brief. This extra space should be used to provide more in-depth information and analysis.
  - Avoid academic jargon. Use a more direct style, which can be understood by non-specialists.
  - Make sure that the facts, ideas, and arguments clearly match the conclusions and recommendations of the policy report
- Keep different audiences in mind. Although the information, analysis and policy recommendations should be of particular interest to the Government of Canada and certain departments, notably DND/CAF, the policy report should also be useful to other organizations, institutions, and the general public.

# Spotlight

## What is a spotlight?

Spotlights are short essays of no longer 1500-2000 words that serve to convey recently published academic monographs and university press books in security studies, Canadian foreign and defence policy, international relations, security studies, and strategic studies.

Spotlights are akin to a book review but should not be confused for one since they offer neither 'academic take downs' or 'praise singing'. Rather, spotlights summarize the main argument of the key work in question, explain the significance of its findings to practitioners and informed audiences interested in national security, apply the theoretical framework of the body to illuminate recent or current events, and/or outline the implications for Canadian foreign and defence policy. Spotlights serve to translate, as well as to highlight, the cutting edge in academic research to broader audiences who may not be familiar with the scholarship or do not have the time to consume it in full.

## Format

- Use the NSA template
- Length: 2000 words maximum
- Hyperlinked references: no footnotes or author-date references, no bibliography or list of references.

## Structure

'Spotlights' are open-ended in structure, but the author(s) should convey the basic argument less than two paragraphs into the essay. Headings are useful for signposting the text but should be specific enough to signal to readers the content of the essay, if not parts of the argument.

## Writing Style

Use short sentences. Avoid flaunting your knowledge. Get to the point.

Avoid academic jargon. Use a more direct style, which can be understood by non-specialists.

Be faithful to the original argument. Represent it well without sensationalizing it for effect or ignoring the caveats that come with it. Many authors have to make bold claims up front but then attach important qualifications to them.

