2026 年 10 月 31 日

國際與時事 | IELTS / TOEFL / KAOYAN / CET-6 | 839 詞

Canada and EU announce new alliance open to like-minded countries

加拿大與歐盟宣布成立向志同道合國家開放的新聯盟

難度 高階 · IELTS 7-8 · TOEFL 5-6 · KAOYAN 65-80 · CET-6 500-550+

Canada and Europe have announced a new alliance of like-minded nations to serve as both a “protective canopy under which our citizens can thrive” and a powerful hedge against the unpredictable nature of geopolitics, while welcoming other countries to join.

Speaking to reporters on Friday from Montreal, the prime minister, Mark Carney, and the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen , called the new partnership the Alliance for the Future and said the “deepest possible partnership between Canada and the 27-member bloc had the potential to offer unprecedented stability and opportunity”.

“Our societies have been shaken by new storms,” Carney told reporters, referring to the damaging effects of the climate emergency but also the “erosion of democratic norms” and “the weaponization of trade”.

As they concluded their two-day summit, Canada agreed to contribute to a €90bn support loan for Ukraine. Leaders also said future discussions would lead to a more integrated market worth tens of billions of dollars, reduced trade and travel restrictions, and new educational opportunities for both sides.

While a trade war between Canada and the United States has seen Carney go hunting for new geopolitical partners, an over-reliance on American companies - especially for defence - has also given Canada pause.

Last week, Elon Musk throttled the speeds of Starlink and Starshield over Ukraine in mid-October, severely disrupting Ukrainian military and defense operations.

Carney has repeatedly raised the concern that Canada’s defense technologies could be at the whim of political actors or companies with opposing interests. Musk, a dual Canadian citizen, is a critic of Canada’s governing Liberal party and has advocated for provinces to separate.

Carney pointed to a planned merger between the Canadian artificial

重點詞彙

16 詞條

hedge*
n 防範手段

friction*
n 摩擦；不和

unprecedented*
adj 前所未有的

erosion*
n 侵蝕；削弱

disrupting*
v 擾亂；中斷

advocated*
v 主張；倡導

stake*
n 股份；利害關系

lofty*
adj 崇高的；高遠的

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intelligence company Cohere Inc and Germany's Aleph Alpha GmbH as a step to lessening reliance on American AI giants. The tie-up will see the newly formed company have dual headquarters in Berlin and Toronto, and Canada's federal government has announced a stake in Cohere worth up to C$1.6bn.

"We are not waiting for the future of AI to be decided somewhere else by those we don't know, or by whom we don't trust," Carney said on Thursday.

Brussels and Ottawa also announced an agreement on Friday that would bringing Canada into Europe's supercomputing network, giving Canadian access to European machines to train AI models.

In addition to lofty promises of helping to reshape the global order, or giving safe harbour to like-minded nations looking to weather uncertainty, Canadian and EU leaders also pitched their new, deeper relationship as one that addressed key sources of anxiety for residents, including the cost of living.

"When trade becomes a tool of economic pressure, it's the families that pay the price, from the supermarket shelf to the cost of a new car," Von der Leyen said, noting that previously trusted suppliers of energy, critical minerals or semiconductors "are increasingly turned into instruments of pressure".

"More competition, more choice," Carney said earlier in the day, suggesting the alliance could find ways to build certainty around supply chains and "withstand shocks, together".

The leaders once again brought up the prospect of Canada becoming an associate member. The designation is uncharted territory, said Von der Leyen, who added: "We have the ambition, trust, and creativity to shape it together.

"This [associate membership] is a partnership not against anyone else, but for our common strength."

While the leaders committed to the idea of associate membership, they said a clearer scope of the role would come at a 2027 summit. Some EU members had bristled at the idea of Canada being given a legally meaningless designation that they fear confuses other nations looking for membership. Germany and other states had worked behind the scenes to remove the phrase from a draft of the summit statement. But Von der Leyen, who first floated the term, and Carney both again referred to "associate membership" at the summit.

European Council president Antonio Costa, meanwhile, said earlier that Canada was "by far the most European of the non-European countries", a sentiment that reflected a belief that despite geography, there was a collective sense of shared values.

重點詞彙

16 詞條

pitched*
v 推銷；推介

withstand*
v 抵御；承受

floated*
v 提出；試探

sentiment*
n 情緒；看法

integrated*
adj 一體化的

throttled*
v 限制；減速

uncharted*
adj 未知的；未探索的

bristled*
v 惱怒；反感

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Costa said the two sides would pursue “the most closer, the most deepest, the most stronger association ever between European Union and a non-European country”.

Still, the mere fact of the summit has caused friction in the province of Quebec, where the separatist Parti Québécois was recently elected to a minority government. The premier, Paul St-Pierre Plamondon, skipped the event after Ottawa’s refusal to let him speak publicly at it.

“The federal government would have us believe that the premier of Quebec being granted permission to serve shrimp cocktails at a reception constitutes an acceptable and sufficient form of influence for representing Quebec’s interests,” St-Pierre Plamondon wrote in a social media post earlier in the week.

He said an invitation to sit at the head table was the federal government asking Quebec “to get back in line, with the vassalization and invisibilization of Quebec which that implies, in exchange for obtaining better seats to watch the party”.

重點詞彙

16 詞條

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詞彙復習

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