



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 11, 2011

## U.S. & Canada Agree to Common “Perimeter”

The move toward a North American Union received another big boost last week as President Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper met in Washington, D.C. to hammer out a deal on creating a common “perimeter” around the two countries while diminishing the role of the nations’ shared border and developing a biometric system to track North Americans.



The two leaders, touting the plan as a move toward security and prosperity, signed a [four-page declaration](#) supposedly committing the two countries to working together on a wide range of issues. According to news reports, the final agreement was the product of many months of work.

The meeting also resulted in the creation of a “Beyond the Border Working Group,” which will be charged with the declaration’s implementation and with reporting to the U.S. President and the Canadian Prime Minister in the next few months and on a regular basis after that.

“Security” and “prosperity” were, as usual, two of the main focuses. “To preserve and extend the benefits our close relationship has helped bring to Canadians and Americans alike, we intend to pursue a perimeter approach to security, working together within, at, and away from the borders of our two countries to enhance our security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between our two countries,” the declaration states. It also praises the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

“We intend to work together in cooperation and partnership to develop, implement, manage, and monitor security initiatives, standards, and practices to fulfill our vision,” the document notes, without a reference to the legislatures of either nation.

“We also recognize that cooperation across air, land, and maritime domains, as well as in space and cyberspace, our enduring bi-national defence [sic] relationship, and military support for civilian authorities engaged in disaster response efforts and critical infrastructure protection, have all contributed significantly to the security of our populations,” it says, adding that increased information-sharing and working with all levels of government and the private sector is high on the agenda. Bringing in third countries — Mexico, perhaps? — and international institutions is part of the plan, too.

Essentially, the declaration commits the two governments to work together on everything from health, security, the economy, terror, fraud, and pandemic preparedness to countless other areas where the U.S. government does not even possess constitutional authority to act within the 50 states. Constitutional constraints are not mentioned at all in the document.

The so-called “Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on Emergency Management Cooperation,” last updated in 2008, will apparently be “a



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cornerstone” of the efforts. While not mentioned by name, the [Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America](#), signed by the Bush regime with the governments of Canada and Mexico, bears striking similarities to the new deal.

Next, the document covers a new area: biometric tracking and identification of North American citizens. “We intend to work toward common technical standards for the collection, transmission, and matching of biometrics that enable the sharing of information on travellers [sic] in real time,” the agreement explains. The two regimes also “expect to work towards an integrated Canada-United States entry-exit system.”

In addition, the U.S. and Canadian governments will be looking to “integrate” their efforts and develop “joint facilities and programs” within and beyond the perimeter being erected around the two countries. “Harmonizing existing programs” is also part of the deal.

Law enforcement will be “harmonized” between the nations as well, according to the declaration. “We intend to build on existing bilateral law enforcement programs to develop the next generation of integrated cross-border law enforcement operations that leverage cross-designated officers and resources,” it states. Making cyberspace “safer” for North American citizens — while extraordinarily vague — will also be a priority.

And it appears that Congress and the Canadian Parliament will have little to no say in the matter. “Responsibility for ensuring inter-agency coordination will rest with the Prime Minister and the President and their respective officials,” according to the agreement.

President Obama and Prime Minister Harper held a press conference to announce the progress after signing the agreement last week. “The United States and Canada are not simply allies, not simply neighbors,” Obama said. “We are woven together like perhaps no other two countries in the world.” After some jokes, he continued.

“We’ve had a very successful day,” the President announced. “First, we agreed to a new vision for managing our shared responsibilities — not just at the border but beyond the border. That means working more closely to improve border security with better screening, new technologies and information-sharing among law enforcement, as well as identifying threats early. It also means finding new ways to improve the free flow of goods and people,” he said, noting that a new council had been created. “We’ve directed our teams to develop an action plan to move forward quickly.” Again, no mention of Congress.

Then he broached the subject of bringing other governments on the American continent into the fold. “Finally, we discussed our shared commitment to progress with our partners in the Americas, including greater security cooperation,” Obama said, noting that he was going to Latin America soon. He closed with some remarks about Egypt and gave the floor to the Canadian Prime Minister.

“Today, President Obama and I are issuing a declaration on our border, but it is, of course, much more than that. It is a declaration on our relationship,” Harper said, alternating between English and French. “Over the past nearly 200 years, our two countries have progressively developed the closest, warmest, most integrated and most successful relationship in the world. We are partners, neighbors, allies, and, most of all, we are true friends.”

He noted that in an age of “grave dangers,” the U.S. and Canada share similar interests and values as they face “common” challenges and threats. “So we commit to expanding our management of the border to the concept of a North American perimeter,” he said. “The declaration marks the start of this



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endeavor, not the end; an ambitious agenda between two countries.”

When asked about national sovereignty by a reporter, Harper dismissed the concerns, saying the declaration was not about sovereignty. “We share security threats that are very similar on both sides of the border. We share an integrated economic space where it doesn’t make sense to constantly check the same cargo over and over again — if we can do that at a perimeter, if we can decongest the border, that’s what we should be doing,” he declared. “If we can — if we can harmonize regulations in ways that avoid unnecessary duplication and red tape for business — these are things that we need to do.”

In response to the same question, Obama also brushed aside concerns. “We’ve already made great progress just over the last several years on various specific issues,” he commented. “What we’re trying to do now is to look at this in a more comprehensive fashion, so that it’s not just border security issues, but it’s a broader set of issues involved.” Both leaders said they were committed to defending their nation’s values.

Ironically, most of the resistance to the newest scheme is coming from Canada, where concerns over sovereignty have sparked a fierce backlash. Countless politicians from different parties across the spectrum have lined up to [express concerns](#) about the deal. Commentators have suggested the issue could even play a crucial role in the next Canadian election.

The Canadian press [referred](#) to the agreement as the most significant change in U.S.-Canada relations since NAFTA. Several high-profile Canadian publications [applauded](#) the arrangement, while an assortment of others [attacked](#) it as a plot against Canadian sovereignty and values. The U.S. press, on the other hand, [barely](#) mentioned it.

Both governments deliberately tried to avoid scrutiny of the matter in the press and in their legislatures, as a government public-relations document [leaked](#) by *The Toronto Star* this week revealed.

The new agreement proves yet again that, as *The New American* has [reported extensively](#) in recent years, a Council on Foreign Relations-backed North American Union — modeled after the European Union — is silently being erected with no input from citizens or their legislatures. A great deal of progress has already been made, and unless serious efforts to halt the move arise soon, it may be too late to undo the damage.

Talk of creating a North American legislature is already in the press and on politicians’ minds. NAFTA tribunals routinely overrule American courts. And with the implementation of a “common perimeter,” the goal of an unaccountable North American Union is one step closer to fruition.

*Photo: Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, left, shakes hands with United States President Barack Obama after taking part in a joint press conference in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building across from the White House, Feb. 4, 2011: AP Images*



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