



April 2026



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Need to Know is an unclassified open-source, multi-platform media collation, produced by **CSIS Partnerships and Strategic Engagement**, on issues considered relevant to Canada's broad national security interests. The objective is to highlight and share a diverse array of perspectives on Canadian and global security matters, with a focus on emerging developments and sources of expertise across disciplines. Inclusion of a document, source, expert or event does not constitute endorsement by, or affiliation with, CSIS.

Need to Know: April 2026

Iran's War Against the Global Economy — This article discusses the ways in which the United States and Israel's war with Iran is more than just military strikes. Critically, Iran currently holds control of the Strait of Hormuz, which is a key entry point for oil and gas shipments into global markets. With the Strait of Hormuz under Iran's control, Iran may be able to inflict global market instability and volatile shocks. The author argues that while the United States has made strong military gains, the progression of the war is in Iran's favour, as it can continue to destabilize markets. This direct impact can be felt both globally and domestically. Additionally, the author argues that if the United States becomes preoccupied with the war in Iran, China will have the opportunity to leverage U.S. instability and project itself as a key trading partner for key U.S. allies, including Japan and South Korea; and US taxpayer dollars will continue to be diverted away from key initiatives, such as building a comprehensive economic security architecture for the AI race to compete with China. Published in March 2026 by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, read [here](#).

Development of Canada's Military Cyber Unit — Canadian Armed Forces Cyber Command (CAF CYBERCOM) is the cyber unit of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. This article provides a comprehensive history of the development of the DND/CAF cyber capability from the 1990s to the present. The author highlights the changes the unit underwent, as well as the labourious process required for CAF CYBERCOM to be created. In the early years of the unit's development, the Canadian government was under pressure from NATO and its allies to recognize cyberspace as a domain of warfare. These pressures helped drive the Canadian government to establish a dedicated DND/CAF cyber unit. CAF CYBERCOM is able to work alongside the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) to conduct offensive cyber operations. The article also highlights how the development of CAF CYBERCOM was slow as a result of overlapping authorities, responsibilities, and accountability challenges. Published in March 2026 by the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, read [here](#).

Podcasts of Note



Bylines and Frontlines

This Canadian Defence and Security Network podcast explores how Canada is leading efforts to integrate sex-specific data and women's morphology into military equipment design across the CAF and NATO.



Independent Thinking

This episode of the Chatham House podcast examines the regional and political consequences of U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran.



Beyond Arctic Frontiers

Episode 6 of the Policy Insights podcast discusses the unique challenges to Arctic procurement, necessary due diligence as well as Indigenous and northern economic participation.



Restarting Diplomacy Between Canada and India — This article explains the growing relationship between Canada and India. It begins by acknowledging the previous diplomatic tensions between the two countries and then discusses how they restarted diplomatic talks following the G7 Summit in Canada. The author also outlines Canada’s and India’s current policy landscapes and the areas in which the two countries may have strategic alignment. These areas include (1) training, simulation, and readiness; (2) digital cyber-enabled systems and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems (3) propulsion, sustainment, and maintenance, repair, overhaul; and (4) electronics, photonics, and critical minerals. The author argues that Canada and India have parallel reforms, converging industrial priorities, and a shared willingness to engage with one another. If managed correctly, this foundation could support a more resilient defence partnership. Published in March 2026 by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, read [here](#).

The U.N. High Seas Treaty — In 2023, many nations adopted the High Seas Treaty, and in January 2026 the treaty officially went into effect after receiving ratification by over 60 countries. This article discusses the importance of a high seas treaty for ocean conservation, as well as the implications it will have for ocean biodiversity. The article also provides a comprehensive analysis of the treaty’s key components, including Marine Protected Areas, mandatory environmental impact assessments, and the sharing of marine genetic resources. Additionally, the author further examines why the treaty process took so long, how nations will need to cooperate to enforce the treaty, and the positive implications the treaty may have for ocean conservation and climate change. Published in March 2026 by The Marine Biodiversity and Sustainability Learning Center, read [here](#).

How AI is Changing Warfare — AI has developed rapidly over the past couple of years and continues to accelerate at an unprecedented pace. In this article, the author questions the purposes for which AI will be used in warfare and the implications of its use. The author argues that deploying AI with little human intervention could lead to higher death tolls. She believes that the use of AI in war dehumanizes people and that AI systems contain errors within their datasets, which can lead to further mistakes. Additionally, the author discusses Israel’s Project Lavender, airstrikes in Iran, and the controversy between the Trump administration and Anthropic’s military AI technology. The article emphasizes the importance of implementing guardrails on advanced AI models and warns of potential human-extinction-level risks if AI remains insufficiently scrutinized. Published in March 2026 by the Centre for International Governance Innovation read [here](#).

Upcoming Events



<p>Mobilizing Canada: Power, Partnerships and Purpose in the New Global Order Canadian International Council Register here. Victoria, BC</p>	<p>10 April 2026 8:30am- 5:30pm PDT</p>
<p>International Aerospace Innovation Forum Aéro Montréal and Espace Aéro Register here. Montréal, Quebec</p>	<p>13-14 April 2026</p>
<p>Mari-Tech Conference and Exhibition: Skilled Seas CIMarE Vancouver Island Branch Register here. Victoria, BC</p>	<p>12-14 May 2026</p>
<p>CANADA-ASEAN Security Alignment Asia Pacific Foundation and Telfer School of Management Email info@canada-asean.org Ottawa, Ontario</p>	<p>26 May 2026 12-5pm EST</p>

Diversions



Spring has sprung! Track changing water levels as ice begins to rapidly thaw.

Explore [here](#).

Feedback



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