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# OP-ED: Canada must restore public confidence in the immigration system

“A generous immigration system depends on public confidence, and public confidence depends on credible screening and enforceable consequences.”

AUG 12, 2026

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Immigration

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Canada’s immigration system is built on a noble promise: to welcome immigrants, protect genuine refugees, and allow visitors, students, and workers to contribute to the country. But that promise cannot survive if Canadians believe the system is unable to identify criminals, extremists, foreign intelligence threats, or people who simply refuse to leave after losing the legal right to stay. The answer is not panic, nor blanket suspicion of newcomers. It is a serious security reset: better identity verification, better intelligence sharing, faster triage of high-risk cases, and a removal system that actually removes people once legal remedies are exhausted.

Canada is not starting from zero. The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* already makes permanent residents and foreign nationals inadmissible on security grounds for terrorism, espionage, subversion, danger to Canada's security, violence endangering people in Canada, or membership in organizations believed to engage in those acts. It also makes people inadmissible for criminality, organized crime, human-rights violations, sanctions, misrepresentation, and non-compliance with immigration law. IRCC, CBSA, and CSIS already operate a trilateral immigration security screening program, with IRCC doing initial screening, CBSA and CSIS conducting more comprehensive screening where required, and RCMP criminal-record checks being triggered through biometric information.

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The problem is not that Canada lacks legal tools. The problem is that the tools are too often fragmented, delayed, under-measured, or dependent on information that arrives too late. A CBSA evaluation of the Immigration National Security Screening Program found that its screening recommendations were generally legally defensible, but not consistently timely; that performance measurement was limited; that systems used by CBSA, IRCC, and CSIS were not designed to be interoperable; and that the RCMP was "noticeably absent" from parts of the process where organized-crime intelligence could help. In a security system, those are not technical quibbles. They are warning lights.

Recent events show why Canadians are entitled to demand more. In the federal chronology prepared for Parliament after the foiled Toronto terrorism plot, officials described how Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi—who is presumed innocent and whose charges remain before the courts—entered Canada on a visitor visa, later claimed asylum, became a permanent resident, and was granted citizenship before CSIS became aware of a potential national-security threat in June 2024. The same chronology states that certain applications were screened, that some risk indicators appeared, and that security partners returned favorable recommendations at key stages.

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The first reform should be a single accountable immigration-security command structure—not another bureaucracy, but a clear operational lead with authority to track high-risk cases across IRCC, CBSA, CSIS, RCMP, and the IRB from first application to final removal or citizenship. Canada's current program is explicitly collaborative, but collaboration is not the same as accountability. The CBSA evaluation recommended stronger performance measurement, a better surge-capacity plan, clearer tracking of the indicators that trigger referrals, interdepartmental training, and a monitoring mechanism to ensure all applicants who should be referred for screening are referred. Those recommendations should be treated as a minimum standard, not an internal housekeeping exercise.

Second, Canada should close identity gaps before people arrive. CBSA says biometrics—fingerprints and photos—help confirm identity, identify known criminals before they attempt to enter Canada, and detect people who use forged, stolen, or borrowed identities. IRCC's own forward regulatory plan proposes expanding biometrics, including facial biometrics, to visa-exempt eTA travelers, saying this would close "crucial integrity and identity management gaps" and align Canada with like-minded countries. Ottawa should implement that reform, along with digital passport capture and authentication for eTAs and temporary-resident visas, which IRCC says would improve data quality and passport authentication at the application stage.

Third, high-risk files need human scrutiny, not just database checks. Canada's own security-screening model is risk-based, and comprehensive screening can include open-source reviews, checks of classified databases, consultations with foreign partners, and security interviews. That approach should be strengthened for applicants with incomplete histories, unexplained travel, suspicious documentation, ties to sanctioned regimes or extremist networks, serious criminal allegations abroad, or inconsistencies across applications. If the record is thin, Canada should not pretend the risk is thin. Officers should have the time, training, and authority to ask harder questions before status is granted.

Fourth, asylum processing must be faster and finite. The 2019 Auditor General review of asylum processing found that Canada's refugee determination system could not respond quickly to surges in claim volumes, that backlogs grew, and that CBSA, IRCC, and the IRB needed better information-sharing and digital processing. It also found that hearings were postponed because security screening was pending, including cases where postponement occurred in error because screening had already been completed or was not yet due. A refugee system that leaves genuine refugees waiting and weak claims lingering is bad for compassion and bad for security. Canada needs surge funding, integrated digital files, early triage, and fast resolution of manifestly bogus, weak, or ineligible claims—while preserving fast and fair hearings for those who truly need protection.

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Fifth, removals must become a core public-safety function, not an afterthought. Under IRPA, once a removal order is enforceable, the foreign national must leave Canada immediately, and the order must be enforced as soon as possible. Yet the Auditor General concluded in 2020 that CBSA did not remove most people subject to enforceable removal orders as soon as possible, that about 50,000 enforceable cases had accumulated, and that in roughly two-thirds of those cases the agency did not know the person's whereabouts. Current CBSA statistics show some improvement in removals—23,160 enforced removals in 2025 and 10,607 by June 30, 2026—but they also show a large removal inventory, including 33,847 wanted cases and 40,827 removals in progress as of June 30, 2026.

That is not sustainable. CBSA already says it prioritizes removals involving national security, serious criminal offences, organized crime, and human-rights violations. Parliament should require monthly public reporting on high-priority removal cases: how many are enforceable, how many are stalled, why they are stalled, and what has been done to secure travel documents, locate absconders, or impose compliance measures. Where foreign governments refuse or delay travel documents, Canada should use targeted visa and processing leverage, transparently and lawfully; IRPA already contains a framework allowing measures where a foreign government unreasonably refuses or delays issuing travel documents to its nationals in Canada. Individuals who are removable and refuse to cooperate with legal requirements should be held in detention.

Sixth, Canada should use detention and alternatives to detention exactly where the law allows—not as punishment, but as risk control. IRPA permits arrest and detention where there are reasonable grounds to believe a person is inadmissible and is a danger to the public, unlikely to appear, or where identity has not been established; it also requires detention reviews and allows release on conditions. CBSA notes that people who fail to appear for removal interviews or removal dates may face a Canada-wide warrant and detention until removal is carried out. That framework should be used consistently for high-risk cases, with reporting conditions, deposits, electronic monitoring where legally authorized, and detention where danger, identity, or flight risk makes lesser measures inadequate.

Finally, Parliament should clarify the law where courts have narrowed or exposed uncertainty. In *Mason*, the Supreme Court held that IRPA section 34(1)(e) applies only to violent conduct linked to national security or the security of Canada, not ordinary violence unconnected to national security. That decision may be legally sound, but it also shows why Parliament must define modern security threats clearly: terrorist facilitation, transnational repression, organized-crime infiltration, sanctions evasion, foreign-state intimidation, and material support for violent extremist groups. Clear law protects both public safety and due process.

A generous immigration system depends on public confidence, and public confidence depends on credible screening and enforceable consequences. The choice is not between openness and security. The choice is between a system that welcomes the law-abiding while excluding the dangerous, and a system that asks Canadians to trust gaps that the government's own audits have already identified. Canada should choose the former—and do it now.

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**Ron** 4d

First the plandemic then the shots then the replacements then a failing justice system that seems to be working harder to keep the criminals here then deporting them. And still going downhill from there. So to say I have little to none public confidence would be a understatement. Immigration is just one of the areas the government has lost my trust.

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**William Stewart** 4d

"Canada must restore public confidence in the immigration system"

Just a reminder....

Prior to 2015 Canada had an immigration system that was basically respected around the world.

In 2015 enough Canadians elected a low intelligence, virtue signalling sock idiot as their PM.

Canada (in more aspects now then can be counted) started its decline into a cesspool of a country.

In 2025 Canadians had the opportunity to (at least) try to reverse the decline of a wonderful Country.

Instead they voted for a liar, fake, and WEF, Globalist Fraud; the one who was advising the sock idiot. as their PM.

The guy who lies so easily and talks out both sides of his mouth with such efficiency that he might be