There is no way that the pro-Russian rebels in the breakaway Donbas region of Ukraine are simply going to surrender their hard-fought territory to a Canadian soldier in a blue helmet.

First, there was a statement from Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland stating that the Liberal government has been at the heart of international efforts to support Ukraine, and we are working hard to ensure an ongoing peacekeeping effort guarantees Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Then it was the turn of Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer, who declared that, if he were prime minister, he would support the peacekeeping proposal from Ukraine’s government. “This mission would allow Ukraine to restore control over its eastern border with Russia, ensuring the Russian military stays within its own country, and out of Ukraine’s state space.”

It is clear from Freeland’s and Scheer’s statements that either they know nothing about peacekeeping or they know nothing about the current conflict in Ukraine.

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan only added to the collective ignorance when he confirmed Canada is considering a peacekeeping proposal from Kyiv that would “respect Ukraine’s original borders.”

There is no way the pro-Russian rebels in the breakaway Donbas region of Ukraine are simply going to surrender their hard-fought territory to a Canadian soldier in a blue helmet. Since Canada recognizes Crimea to be sovereign Ukrainian territory, it would then also mean somehow forcibly expelling the Russian troops that annexed the region in 2014.

Defeating rebels in a civil war and starting a territorial war with Russia is not peacekeeping. Russia’s counterproposal—to have international peacekeeping troops patrol the current ceasefire lines between the rebels and Ukrainian government forces in advance of demilitarizing the area and conducting negotiations—seems to fit the traditional model of peacekeeping. Sajjan, however, rejected this offer for the reason that it would “freeze” the conflict along the current lines.

Unless I missed something, I thought the idea of freezing the bloodshed was the rationale behind peacekeeping.

The whole premise is moot as long as Russia has a veto at the United Nations Security Council. This discussion was happening on the eve of a UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial conference in Vancouver on Nov. 14 and 15. Justin Trudeau’s liberal government has not kept its 2015 election campaign promise to make Canada a great peacekeeper again, despite an August 2016 announcement of an imminent UN mission or missions, possibly to somewhere in Africa.

As that deployment of 600 troops never materialized, Canada’s current paltry commitment of just 131 out of 176 in terms of corps, by country, is where the military problems in Afghanistan, our security policy and NATO-led troops in 2014, included Canada moving forward, Security Forces have reached the 352,000-person recruitment benchmark set by the international community after the conclusion of Ukraine’s combat mission in 2014, they continue to be a largely inefficient and an incapable professional force.

The focal point of the post-2014 NATO-led Resolute Support Mission partners, which must include Canada moving forward, needs to be on training Afghan security forces to be an offensive security apparatus rather than a force that only maintains a defensive posture in the face of sophisticated and violent attacks by insurgent groups.

Canada’s current approach to Afghanistan needs to be reconsidered. We must support the U.S.-led initiative to militarily re-engage in Afghanistan, from an advisory viewpoint. Canada can do its part by assigning military experts and advisers to key Afghan security ministries to help coordinate the war against insurgents and also to the morale of our Afghan partners, if Canada is genuinely serious about its commitment to Afghanistan.

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