


Canada and China: A half-century journey from Pierre Trudeau to Mark Carney | Ap-business

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By KEN MORITSUGU - Associated Press



BEIJING (AP) — Canada, under Pierre Trudeau in the early 1970s, was among the first Western nations to recognize [the communist government](#) in China, nearly a decade ahead of the United States.

A half-century later, relations soured under Trudeau's son, Justin. His successor, Prime Minister [Mark Carney](#), is in Beijing this week in an attempt to [rebuild relations](#) after several years of frosty ties.

Here is a look at the evolution of the relationship:

Local Trending News

1970: Canada recognizes communist China

Canada establishes ties with Beijing and ends diplomatic relations with [Taiwan](#). The switch takes place more than a year before U.S. President Richard Nixon's 1972 [visit to China](#), which eventually leads to American recognition of the communist government in 1979, when the two nations established relations.

1973: Trudeau meets Mao

Pierre Trudeau, who championed establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, meets Mao Zedong, the founder of the communist state. It is the first trip by a Canadian leader to the country since the [Communist Party](#) took power in 1949.

1984: China's premier visits Canada

Zhao Ziyang holds talks with Trudeau in the first visit by a Chinese premier to Canada since the establishment of diplomatic relations. The two governments sign an investment agreement. Zhao meets U.S. President Ronald Reagan in Washington on the same trip.

1994: Boosting trade

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien brings business leaders to China to expand trade, despite criticism of the government's bloody crackdown on the [Tiananmen Square protests](#) in 1989. A backer of improved ties, Chrétien was in Beijing earlier this month to meet Chinese officials ahead of Carney's trip.

2006: Criticizing human rights

New Canadian leader Stephen Harper initially takes a tough line on China over its human rights records. He angers the Beijing government in 2007 by meeting [the Dalai Lama](#), the Tibetan spiritual leader who has fled China. Harper later shifts to a more moderate approach, visiting China several times to promote trade.

2016: A second Trudeau visits

Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau](#), Pierre's son, declares a new era in relations with China on a visit to Beijing. He says ties have been somewhat lacking in stability and regularity. Trudeau meets Chinese leader Xi Jinping on a return visit in 2017.

2018: Relations crash

Canada detains Meng Wanzhou, a senior executive of China's Huawei Technologies Co., at the request of the United States. The move sparks a downward spiral in relations that lasts for the rest of Trudeau's term. China retaliates by detaining two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, on spy charges. All three are [released in 2021](#) under a three-way deal with the U.S.

2022: Huawei banned

Canada [bans Huawei equipment](#) from Canada's 5G networks. Canada also bars Chinese tech company ZTE Corp. from the country's telecommunication systems. The U.S. had lobbied allies to exclude Huawei over cyberespionage concerns. China says Canada's move was carried out with the U.S. to suppress Chinese companies in violation of free-market principles.

2023: Diplomats expelled

Canada expels a Chinese diplomat in Toronto whom it accuses of involvement in a plot to intimidate Canadian lawmaker Michael Chong and his relatives in Hong Kong after Chong criticized Beijing's human rights record. China [responds by expelling](#) a Canadian diplomat in Shanghai. Canada also [launches an inquiry](#) into whether China interfered in Canadian elections in 2019 and 2021.

2024: A tariff war erupts

Canada says [it will impose](#) a 100% tariff on imports of China-made electric vehicles and a 25% tariff on Chinese steel and aluminum, matching U.S. tariff hikes under the Biden administration. China [retaliates](#) in March 2025 with a 100% tariff on canola products and a 25% tariff on Canadian seafood and pork exports.

2025: Carney takes office, meets Xi

Carney succeeds Trudeau as prime minister in March as Canada and China [face new U.S. tariffs](#) from U.S. President Donald Trump. Carney [meets with Chinese leader Xi](#) in October at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in South Korea. They call their meeting a turning point in relations.

Associated Press journalist Rob Gillies in Canada contributed to this report.