# HOW OTHERS SEE US

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We, in the West, underestimate the
resentment of the rest of the world against us.
**Category:** Observations

We in the Western world are used to seeing ourselves as the good guys. We stand for democracy, equality, freedom of speech, helping the poor and all sorts of other good things. We are self-evidentially correct in supporting Ukraine against Russian aggression and - of course - all right thinking people in the world are on our side. Or are they?

https://twitter.com/GerardAraud/status/1507742268777799692?s=20&t=s06SN4ufBvjKjc4cPl4AqA

Just in case you were wondering, GÃ©rard Araud is a senior French diplomat with extensive experience working around the world.

The thing is, the rest of the world doesn't necessarily see us as the good guys. To many, the Russian aggression in Ukraine looks very little different to Western interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is Western countries that profited from the Atlantic slave trade (see the reaction to Prince William's latest visit to the Caribbean) and which colonised and imposed borders on much of Africa and Asia.

Now obviously things are much more complex than this and a few paragraphs can't capture all of the nuances of international relationships. However, it is safe to say that the rest of the world does not necessarily admire the West, share our values, want to be like us, or (most importantly, perhaps) think that we have their best interests at heart.

In the mission world, things are more complex. Very often there is a genuine gratitude to Western missions and churches that played a key role in taking the Christian message to other parts of the world. However, this can be coupled with a resistance to what are seen as enduring colonial attitudes and assumptions of superiority expressed by Westerners.

Western missionaries and mission agencies would do well to remember M. Araud's tweet. It may well be an indication of what is going on behind the surface. After all, the rest of the world does have genuine reasons to be suspicious of Western intervention.