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RRM CANADA DAILY BRIEF

Key findings:

- RRM Canada did not observe any significant indicators of foreign state-sponsored information manipulation in its monitoring of the broader Canadian digital information ecosystem during the period of August 18
- RRM Canada assesses the majority of content originated from recognizable Canadian news sites.
- RRM Canada identified an article from the *Global Times* that called on users to “Co-sign our petition! Request Canada to release [Meng Wanzhou]!” The *Global Times* likely timed the release of the petition with Meng’s 1000th day of in detention in Canada, and not the federal election. The petition has received high levels of engagement on the Chinese platform WeChat, but little engagement on Twitter, Facebook or Reddit. Canadian news outlet *Globe and Mail* has also covered news of the petition. The *Globe and Mail* article is available here: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-chinese-state-media-launches-online-petition-demanding-meng-wanzhou/>

Scan performed at: 8:00PM, August 18, 2021

Scan covers: 9:00AM August 18, 2021 – 8:00PM August 19, 2021. (Updates on the Meng Wanzhou petition and *Global Times* article as of 9:30AM Aug 19, 2021)

Platform used: Buzzsumo, WeChat, Weibo, Crowdtangle

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Engagement on Facebook, Twitter and Reddit¹

Article title	Date	Publisher	Facebook engagement	Twitter engagement	Reddit engagement	Total engagement
O'Toole slams other parties as 'all the same' and 'part of the problem' in first campaign rally	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>Post Millennial</i>	31.1K	17	0	31.1K
Ottawa has 'no plans' to recognize Taliban as legitimate government of Afghanistan: Trudeau	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>CBC News</i>	58	208	10.3K	10.6K
Trudeau heckled over vaccines, lockdowns during campaign stop in Ontario	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Post Millennial</i>	6K	69	0	6.0K
Twitter pulls Conservatives' 'Willy Wonka' attack ad on Trudeau due to copyright	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Global News</i>	2.4K	359	2.3K	5.0K
Canada will not recognize Taliban as Afghan gov't	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Reuters</i>	3.8K	109	671	4.6K
Trudeau announces he consulted with Hillary Clinton about Afghanistan crisis	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Rebel News</i>	4.4K	100	0	4.5K
Trudeau touts need for "she-covery" after "she-cession"	Aug 17, 2021	<i>TNC News</i>	4.2K	207	0	4.4K
Justin Trudeau faced with onslaught of boos and heckling during first campaign stop in Cobourg, Ont.	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>Rebel News</i>	4K	63	0	4.0k
Mandatory COVID-19 vaccines a hot-button issue as election race kicks off	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Global News</i>	3.2K	19	0	3.3K
'GST Holiday' In December Is Erin O'Toole's Latest Election Promise	Aug. 17, 2021	<i>Narcity</i>	3.1K	13	0	3.1K

¹ Engagement numbers reflect the stated reporting period. RRM Canada uses the following keywords to determine which news stories receive the most engagement. "Canada", "Canadian Election" OR "Canadian Federal Election" OR "44th General Election", "Bloc Québécois" OR "Yves Blanchet" OR "Yves-François Blanchet", "Erin O'Toole" OR "Conservative Party of Canada" OR "Parti conservateur du Canada", "Trudeau" OR "Justin Trudeau" OR "Liberal Party of Canada" OR "Parti libéral du Canada", "Annamie Paul" OR "Green Party of Canada" OR "Parti vert du Canada", "Maxime Bernier" OR "Parti populaire" OR "people party", "Maverick Party" OR "Le Parti Maverick"

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Engagement on WeChat

Article Title ²	Date	Account	Total engagement ³
加拿大，放人！ (Canada, let her go!)	Aug. 18., 2021	<i>Global Times</i> (state media)	100K
一起联署！要求加拿大放人！ (Co-sign the petition! Demand Canada to release her!)	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>Global Times</i> (state media)	100K
加拿大快放人！孟晚舟引渡案审理结束 (Canada, release her! Meng Wanzhou's extradition trial is over!)	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>Global Times</i> (state media)	100K
孟晚舟案审理结束！ (Meng Wanzhou's extradition trial is over!)	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>Global Times</i> (state media)	100K
孟晚舟案今晚结案 律师：最后请求法官释放 (Meng Wanzhou's case ends tonight! Lawyer: Requesting the judge to finally release her)	Aug. 18, 2021	<i>iFeng</i> (partially owned by state)	83K

Notes on BuzzSumo engagement

- According to data presented by the analytics tool Crowdtangle, none of the top-ranking stories for August 18 were shared among unfamiliar Canadian politics-related Facebook groups.

Notes on WeChat engagement

- Generally, the top-ranking Canadian politics stories on WeChat originate from locally-run accounts, such as 51.ca, SuperLife, BC Bay and York BBS. The top four Canadian politics stories for August 18 all originate from the Global Times and feature the petition to Amb. Barton demanding the release of Meng Wanzhou.

² Article titles translated by RRM Canada

³ Total engagement numbers reflect the article's page views; WeChat does not automatically calculate the number of comments an article receives

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On our radar:

Global Times article and petition:

- The *Global Times*' WeChat account posted an [article](#) calling on users to sign a petition that “demands Canada release Chinese citizen Meng Wanzhou.” The petition is likely intended for both a domestic and foreign audience, and is available in both English and Chinese. The *Global Times* later shared the [petition](#) on Weibo, Facebook and Twitter.
- The article [headline](#) directs users to a clear call of action “Co-sign the petition! request Canada to release [Meng Wanzhou!]” It then directs users to a separate HTML web page hosted outside the WeChat platform. In general, news articles within the WeChat subscription service are hard to share outside of the platform's ecosystem. The petition is likely hosted on a regular HTML web page to encourage users to share it with others.
- Users who wish to sign the petition only have to click a button in the centre of the page. The user does not have to provide their name or any other identifying information. Underneath the “sign the petition” button, a user is prompted to share the website URL on Facebook or Twitter.
- There is a counter that displays how many users have signed the petition. At the time of writing, there were 7.8 million signees.
- The *Global Times* Twitter account (1.8 million followers) shared the petition a number of times, and tweeted: “We need your vote! After nearly 1,000 days, Chinese citizen #MengWanzhou is still under detention in #Canada due to political persecution by #US. Come sign this online petition to call for Meng’s immediate release.”
- As of writing, the petition has received a total engagement of 13K (including likes, comments and shares) on Facebook, Twitter and Reddit; a number of high-followers accounts have shared the petition, including the [People’s Daily Facebook page](#) (2.7 million followers) and [Zhang Heqing](#), counselor at the PRC embassy to Pakistan (74K followers).
- The *People’s Daily* Weibo account has shared the petition with its 80 million followers. The [post](#) has since been shared 21K times.
- The following is an excerpt from the English petition:
- *“Your government, which labels itself internationally as a country that “values human rights,” is flatteringly compliant in the face of such blatant political persecution of a Chinese citizen by the US government. What is even more outrageous is, despite the overwhelming evidence that Meng presented to show how the US was lying, Canada still pushed forward with so-called extradition procedures. As an accomplice in the case, the Canadian government should be held liable for aiding the US persecute a Chinese citizen for political purposes. Therefore, as the 1,000 days approach after Meng was illegally detained in Canada, the Global Times has launched a campaign to invite netizens from China and the rest of the world to join in the appeal against the ugly acts of the Canadian government, which is acting as an accomplice of the US government to persecute a Chinese citizen, demanding the immediate and unconditional release of Meng. We would like to ask you to convey our concerns to your government truthfully.”*

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