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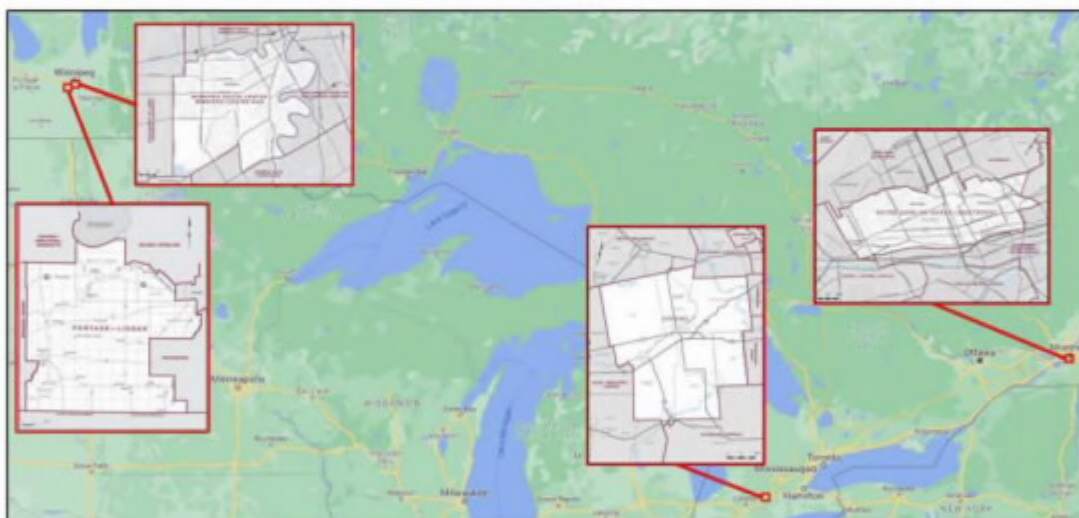


CAB 2023-24/13  
June 6, 2023

## Baseline Threat Assessment June 2023 Federal By-Elections

### Background

1. CSIS is providing a baseline threat assessment on the foreign interference (FI) threat to the June 19, 2023 by-elections in Notre-Dame-de-Grace-Westmount, Quebec; Oxford, Ontario; Portage-Lisgar, Manitoba; and, Winnipeg South Centre, Manitoba.<sup>1</sup> This assessment focuses on the FI threat from the most significant threat actors known to engage in FI in Canada: the People's Republic of China (PRC), India, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, and [REDACTED].<sup>2</sup> CSIS is actively monitoring for any indications that these or other foreign states or state actors are engaging in FI activities around these by-elections. As a member of the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force (SITE TF), CSIS will report any developments through SITE TF's daily Situational Reports. (S//CEO)




### Foreign Interference Threat Overview

2. Sophisticated, pervasive and persistent FI activities constitute a serious threat to Canada's national security and the integrity of Canada's democratic institutions. For certain foreign states, FI activities are part of their normal pattern of

<sup>1</sup> According to the Elections Canada website, the nomination for candidates for all four ridings closes on May 29, 2023, and a complete list of confirmed candidates will be available on May 31, 2023. (U)

<sup>2</sup> CSIS collection efforts are aligned with the Canadian Intelligence Priorities and Intelligence Requirements. (S)

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behaviour in Canada and often peak during election periods. Foreign states can employ FI activities to influence Canadian politics by i) deceptively supporting individuals who are perceived to be receptive to foreign state interests, and ii) opposing individuals who are perceived to be against these foreign states. To accomplish their goals, threat actors exploit loopholes in political party nomination processes; engage in money and financing operations; mobilize and leverage community organizations; manipulate media outlets, including social media; and, engage in cyber threat activity. (S//CEO)

3. An important FI tool for many of the threat actors cited during election periods is to leverage Canadian diaspora populations as a voting bloc, in an attempt to try and shape electoral outcomes. While this is not the only tool at the disposal of these threat actors, it is a powerful one in electoral districts with large Canadian diaspora populations. This is not to say that these threat actors aren't interested in ridings with low diaspora populations, however, the largely minor diaspora communities in the majority of these four ridings reduces the risk. (S//CEO)

### Key Threat Actors

#### People's Republic of China (PRC)

low proportions of Chinese Canadian diaspora populations in each of the four by-election ridings means the possible leverage of a PRC diaspora voter bloc is diminished.

#### India

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the Independent Special Rapporteur, NSIRA, NSICOP, and media attention. (U)



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- [Redacted]
- [Redacted] (S//CEO)
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted] (S)

[Redacted] the low proportions of Indian Canadian diaspora populations means the possible leverage of an Indian diaspora voter bloc is diminished. (S//CEO)

Russia

[Redacted]


[Redacted] Russia is largely preoccupied on FI and disinformation campaigns related to the conflict in Ukraine and upcoming presidential elections in Russia in 2024. [Redacted]

Pakistan

[Redacted]

[Redacted] the low proportions of Pakistan Canadian diaspora

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populations in each of the four by-election ridings means the possible leverage of a Pakistan diaspora voter bloc is diminished. (S//CEO)

#### Iran

[redacted] the low proportions of Iranian Canadian diaspora populations means the possible leverage of an Iranian diaspora voter bloc is [redacted] diminished. (S//CEO)

#### **Outlook**

12. [redacted] PRC, India, Russia, Iran, Pakistan [redacted]

[redacted] The low proportions of diaspora populations from foreign states known to engage in FI in Canada in each of the four by-election ridings means the possible leverage of a diaspora voter bloc is diminished. CSIS will continue to actively monitor for any indications of FI by foreign states or state actors around these by-elections and will report any developments through SITE TF's daily Situational Reports. (S//CEO)

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