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K1A 0A3Gouvernement du Canada
Bureau du Conseil privéConseillère à la sécurité nationale et au renseignement
auprès du Premier ministreUNCLASSIFIED

The Honourable Minister Mélanie Joly,

As announced by Minister LeBlanc on June 18, 2023, the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force provided enhanced monitoring and assessment of foreign interference threats directed towards the by-election that was held on July 24, 2023.

As it undertook this work, the SITE Task Force kept the Deputy Minister Committee on Intelligence Response (DMCIR) informed through written reports and verbal briefings. DMCIR stood ready to brief and advise ministers with mandates to combat foreign interference and protect Canada's democratic institutions, should that have been necessary.

As instructed in the June 18, 2023, announcement, SITE has now completed two reports – one classified and one unclassified – consisting of the Task Force's assessment of any attempts at foreign interference targeting the by-election.

It is my pleasure to provide you with copies of these reports (enclosed), which note that SITE did not observe any indication of foreign interference directed at the by-election. The reports also note that no cyber incidents were detected to suggest that any foreign state actors were specifically targeting Elections Canada in the lead up to the by-election, and that SITE did not observe any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election.

If additional information regarding foreign interference in the by-election comes to light, I will provide you with updated analysis at the earliest opportunity.

Yours Sincerely,



Jody Thomas

Attachments (2)

C.C.: David Morrison, Deputy Minister, Foreign Affairs

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Security / Sécurité (with attachment(s) / avec pièce-jointe(s))

~~Top Secret / Très secret~~ SECRET.

Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission

To / Pour : National Security and Intelligence Advisor		Date : Sep 18, 2023
Subject / Objet: DISTRIBUTION OF FINAL SITE REPORTS ON FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THE JULY 2023 BY-ELECTION		
From / De :		Via:
Name / Nom	Office / Bureau	Name / Nom
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		Dan Rogers
		ONIA
Approved By / Approuvé par :		Drafting Officer / Rédacteur :
Name / Nom	Office / Bureau	Admin typist / Dactylographe :
+ / -		
Marie-Hélène Chayer	ADMO	
+ / -		
Action Requested / Mesure de suivi :		
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See page 2 for a description of each Section / Consultez la page 2 pour obtenir une description pour chaque article.

ATIP delegated authority approval / Autorisation de l'autorité déléguée de l'AIPRP :

Name / Nom	Signature
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Marie-Hélène Chayer	

Reference Numbers / Numéros de référence :

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Security and Intelligence
Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A3

Gouvernement du Canada
Bureau du Conseil privé

Sécurité et renseignement
Secrétaire adjoint du Cabinet

UNCLASSIFIED (SECRET WITH ATTACHMENTS)

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE
ADVISOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER**


**DISTRIBUTION OF SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE
THREATS TO ELECTIONS (SITE) TASK FORCE REPORTS
ON FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THE JULY 2023 BY-ELECTION**

(For Signature)

SUMMARY

- The Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force has completed classified and unclassified versions of a final report presenting its conclusions about the July 2023 by-election (**Tab A**).
- The reports note that SITE did not observe any indication of foreign interference directed at the by-election, that no cyber incidents were detected to suggest that any foreign state actors were specifically targeting Elections Canada in the lead up to the by-elections, and that SITE did not observe any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election.
- The reports were approved by the Deputy Minister Committee on Intelligence Response (DMCIR). As the Chair of DMCIR, it is recommended that you send the reports to the Prime Minister and relevant Ministers, and that you send the classified report to the Chair of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) and to the Chair of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA). Letters to accompany the report have been prepared for your signature (**Tab B to E**). PCO Communications has engaged with Minister LeBlanc's Office to finalize plans for releasing the unclassified report once the classified report is distributed.
- PCO Security and Intelligence (S&I) will also offer to provide the classified report to appropriately-cleared representatives of political parties that were offered briefings from SITE before the by-elections.

Marie-Hélène Chayer,
Acting Assistant Secretary to the
Cabinet (Security and Intelligence)

 Chayer
Webcims: 2023-SI-00141

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TAB | A
Onglet

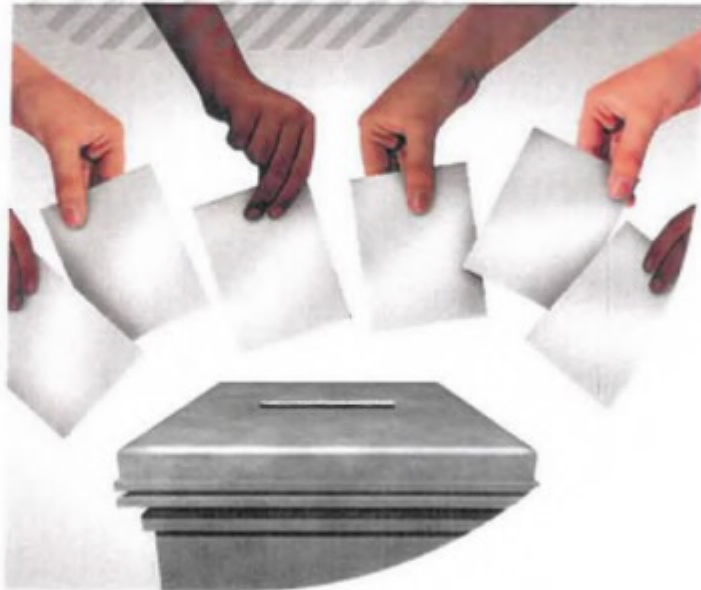
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JULY 2023




Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force

Threats to the Canadian Federal
By-elections – July 2023

Canada

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JULY 2023

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Cette publication est également disponible en français :

Menaces visant les élections partielles fédérales du Canada dans la circonscription de Calgary Heritage – Rapport après action

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JULY 2023

Background

On June 18, 2023, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities (now the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs), announced that the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force (SITE TF) was to provide enhanced monitoring and assessment of foreign interference (FI) threats directed at the Calgary Heritage electoral district by-election being held on July 24, 2023. (U)

The SITE TF met weekly between June 18, 2023 and July 28, 2023 to review and discuss intelligence collection, assessment, and open-source analysis related to FI directed at the by-election. As noted in the June 18, 2023 announcement, the focus of the SITE TF during the by-election period was to assess FI threats; however, the SITE TF also committed to report any observations of threats of violent extremism relating to the by-election. The SITE TF provided weekly situation reports (SITREPS) on both FI and violent extremism threats directed at the by-election to the Deputy Minister Committee on Intelligence Response (DMCIR) from June 30 until July 28, 2023.

Scope and resources

This report covers the SITE TF observations of foreign threat actors' intentions and activities relating to FI as well as any observations of threats of violent extremism directed at the Calgary Heritage by-election with voting held on July 24, 2023. It is based on analysis, reporting and observations – from both classified and unclassified sources – reviewed from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023.

SITE TF members and role

The SITE TF consists of representatives from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). The SITE TF's role is to help safeguard Canadian federal elections from FI by:

- Providing a clear point of engagement with the security and intelligence community for Government partners engaged in related work.
- Reviewing and focusing intelligence collection, assessment, and open-source analysis related to FI in Canada's democratic process in a coordinated manner.
- Providing situational awareness for Government partners, senior public servants, and other relevant partners.

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- Promoting the use of intelligence, assessment, and open-source information analysis in the protection of electoral processes through sharing with partners or, when respective mandates permit, take action to mitigate the threat.

Cyber Security

As the Government of Canada's (GoC) technical authority for cyber security and information assurance and an integral member of the SITE TF, the CSE's Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (the Cyber Centre) supported the federal by-election by:

- Providing the political parties with advice and guidance during a SITE briefing, which was held during the by-election period for the by-elections which took place on June 19, 2023, including an overview of common cyber threats and best practices for IT security.
- Providing enhanced monitoring of cyber incidents for Elections Canada from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023.
- Offering political parties a 24/7 Hotline Service to obtain centralized support if party or candidate communications, email, or social media accounts were compromised. The 24/7 Hotline Service will continue to be available to political parties for reporting of cyber incidents until one month after the election. Use of the Hotline triggers an immediate response to minimize damage and restore normal operations.

Foreign Interference

The SITE TF defines foreign interference as: "activity conducted or supported by a foreign state/actor that is detrimental to Canadian national interests and is clandestine, deceptive or involves a threat to a person." In the context of Canadian electoral processes, the objective of FI is to affect electoral outcomes and/or undermine public confidence in Canadian democratic institutions.

Observations on Foreign Interference

The SITE TF monitored for FI directed at the by-election from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. The SITE TF did not observe, at that time, any indication of FI directed at the by-election. No cyber incidents were detected to suggest that any foreign state actors were specifically targeting Elections Canada from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023.

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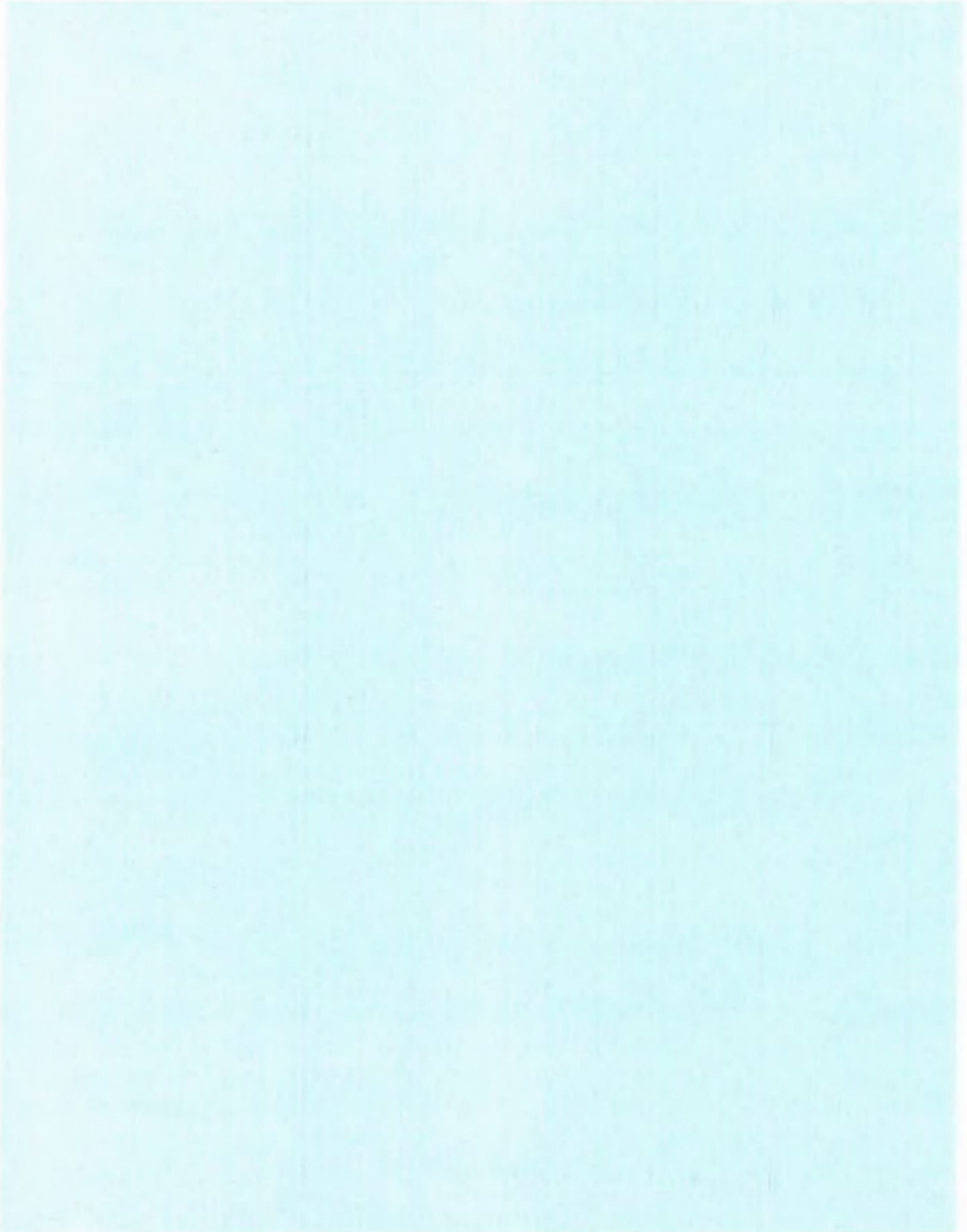
Violent Extremism

While SITE TF is focused on FI, both the RCMP and CSIS have mandates and authorities to look at threats of violent extremism. The SITE TF committed to reporting any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election.

Observations on violent extremism

The SITE TF monitored for threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. The SITE TF did not observe, at that time, any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election. The SITE TF did not identify any direct threats to the by-election in social media, message boards, chatrooms, online forums or news media relating to the by-elections. No direct threats to any of the candidates, or to the administration of the election were identified.

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AUGUST 2023

SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE THREATS TO ELECTIONS TASK FORCE**THREATS TO THE CANADIAN FEDERAL BY-ELECTIONS – JULY 2023**

On June 18, 2023, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities (now the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs), announced that the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force (SITE TF) was to provide enhanced monitoring and assessment of foreign interference (FI) threats directed at the Calgary Heritage electoral district by-election being held on July 24, 2023. (U)

This report covers the SITE TF activities and observations of foreign actors' intentions and activities relating to FI, and other threats including from violent extremism and the wider spectrum of ideologically motivated criminality directed at the by-election. (U)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SITE TF met weekly between June 18, 2023 and July 28, 2023 to review and discuss intelligence collection, assessment, and open-source analysis related to FI and other threats directed at the Calgary Heritage electoral district by-election. As noted in the June 18, 2023 announcement, the focus of the SITE TF during the by-election period was to assess FI threats; however, the SITE TF also committed to report any observations of threats of violent extremism relating to the by-election. The SITE TF provided weekly situation reports (SITREPS) on both FI and violent extremism threats to the by-election to the Deputy Minister Committee on Intelligence Response (DMCIR) from June 30 until July 28, 2023. (U)

Summary of Key Observations – Foreign Interference

- The SITE TF monitored for FI directed at the Calgary Heritage by-election from June 18 until July 26, 2023. The SITE TF did not observe, at that time, any indication of FI directed at the by-election. (U)
- The SITE TF monitored for cyber incidents targeting Elections Canada (EC) from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. No cyber incidents were detected at that time to suggest that any foreign state actors were specifically targeting EC. (U)

Summary of Key Observations – Threats of Violent Extremism

- The SITE TF monitored for threats of violent extremism directed at the Calgary Heritage by-election from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. The SITE TF did not observe, at that time, any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election. (U)

DETAILS**Scope and Sources**

This report covers the SITE TF observations of foreign threat actors' intentions and activities relating to FI as well as any observations of threats of violent extremism with respect to the Calgary Heritage by-election with voting held on July 24, 2023. It is based on analysis, reporting and observations – from both classified and unclassified sources – reviewed from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. (U)

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AUGUST 2023**SITE TF Members and Role**

The SITE TF consists of representatives from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). The SITE TF's role is to help safeguard Canadian federal elections from FI by: (U)

- Providing a clear point of engagement with the security and intelligence community for Government partners engaged in related work. (U)
- Reviewing and focusing intelligence collection, assessment, and open-source analysis related to FI in Canada's democratic process in a coordinated manner. (U)
- Providing situational awareness for Government partners, senior public servants, and other relevant partners. (U)
- Promoting the use of intelligence, assessment, and open-source information analysis in the protection of electoral processes through sharing with partners or, when respective mandates permit, take action to mitigate the threat. (U)

Cyber Security

As the Government of Canada's (GoC) technical authority for cyber security and information assurance and an integral member of the SITE TF, the CSE's Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (the Cyber Centre) supported the federal by-election by: (U)

- Providing the political parties with advice and guidance during a SITE briefing, which was held during the June 19, 2023 by-election, including an overview of common cyber threats and best practices for IT security. (U)
- Providing enhanced monitoring of cyber incidents for EC from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. (U)
- Offering political parties a 24/7 Hotline Service to obtain centralized support if party or candidate communications, email, or social media accounts were compromised. The 24/7 Hotline Service will continue to be available to political parties for reporting of cyber incidents until one month after the election. Use of the Hotline triggers an immediate response to minimize damage and restore normal operations. (U)

Foreign Interference Defined

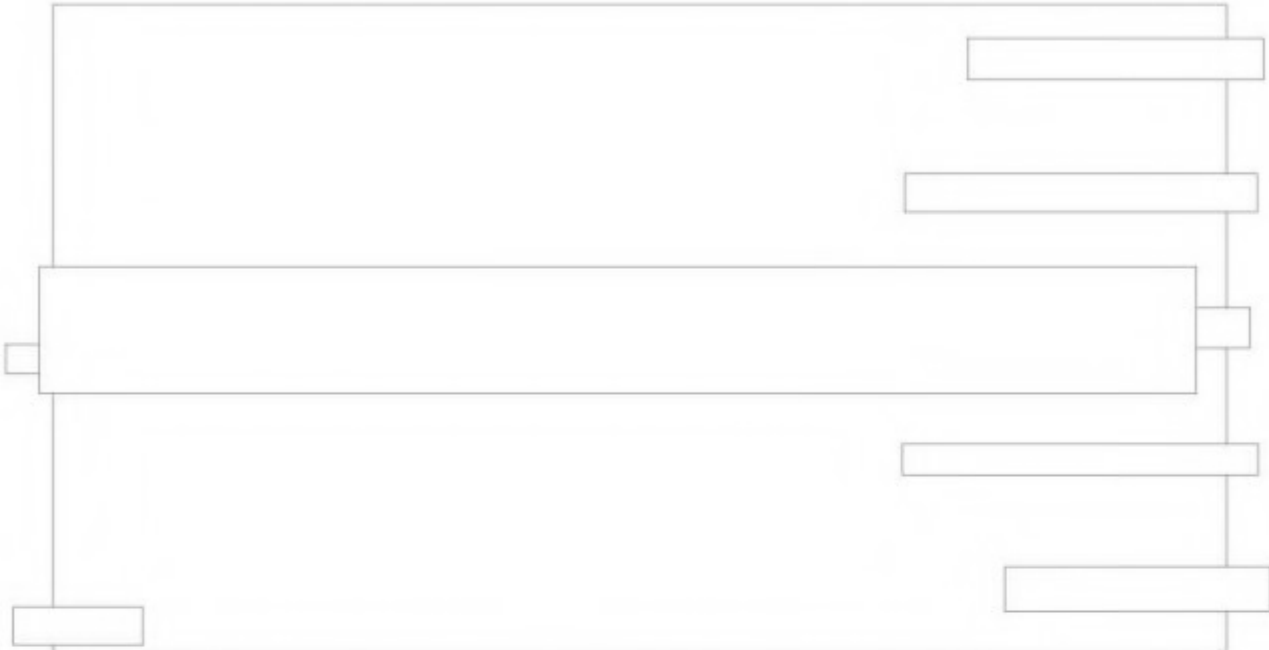
The SITE TF defines foreign interference as: "activity conducted or supported by a foreign state/actor that is detrimental to Canadian national interests and is clandestine, deceptive or involves a threat to a person." In the context of Canadian electoral processes, the objective of FI is to affect electoral outcomes and/or undermine public confidence in Canadian democratic institutions. (U)

Detailed Observations on Foreign Interference Actors

For certain foreign states, FI activities are part of their normal pattern of behaviour in Canada and often spike during election periods. The People's Republic of China (PRC), India, Russia, [REDACTED] Iran and Pakistan have engaged in FI activities in Canada in the past and therefore the SITE TF specifically looked at any FI activities from these foreign states from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (S//CEO)

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AUGUST 2023**Cyber Security**

The SITE TF monitored for cyber incidents targeting Elections Canada (EC) from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. No cyber incidents were detected at that time to suggest that any foreign state actors were specifically targeting EC. The Cyber Centre has not received any calls since the 24/7 Hotline Service was made available on May 30, 2023, at the start of the previous by-election, for political parties to report cyber incidents. (U)

Detailed Observations on Violent Extremism

While the SITE TF is focused on FI, both the RCMP and CSIS have mandates and authorities to look at threats of violent extremism. The SITE TF committed to reporting any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election. (U)

The SITE TF monitored for threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election from June 18, 2023 until July 26, 2023. The SITE TF did not observe, at that time, any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election. The SITE TF did not identify any direct threats to the by-election in social media, message boards, chatrooms, online forums or news media relating to the by-elections. No direct threats to any of the candidates, nor to the administration of the election were identified. (U)

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AUGUST 2023

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