

For Public Release

## **DISINFORMATION AND THE G7 RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM (RRM)**

- Disinformation has emerged as a critical threat to the rules-based international order and democratic governance.
- Hostile state actors and their proxies leverage disinformation to reshape the international order and erode support for democracy and human rights.
- Canada continues to support international efforts to counter disinformation, especially through the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, stood up at the 2018 Charlevoix Summit to identify and respond to foreign threats to democracy.

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- La désinformation est devenue une menace grave pour le maintien d'un ordre international fondé sur des règles et sur la gouvernance démocratique.
- Les acteurs étatiques hostiles et leurs mandataires exploitent la désinformation pour remodeler l'ordre international et éroder le soutien qu'ont la démocratie et les droits de la personne.
- Le gouvernement du Canada continue d'appuyer les efforts internationaux visant à contrer la désinformation, notamment par l'entremise du Mécanisme d'intervention rapide du G7 mis sur pied au Sommet de Charlevoix en 2018. Le mécanisme vise à cerner les menaces étrangères à la démocratie et à y répondre.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY MESSAGES**

- Canada is deeply concerned that some states are employing disinformation, as one of a number of tactics, to erode democracy and the rules based international order.
- A strong democracy relies on access to diverse and reliable sources of news and information, and ultimately a shared set of facts, so that members of society can form opinions, hold governments and individuals to account and participate in public debate

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- Canada takes this threat seriously. At home, we have stepped up efforts to build societal resilience through, research, training and supporting local journalism. In 2019, we launched a Protecting Democracy Plan to help safeguard elections.
- Internationally, we are collaborating broadly with democracies, civil society, academia and industry to identify and respond to foreign state sponsored disinformation. This includes leading the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism.

### **SUPPORTING FACTS AND FIGURES**

- The world is facing an “infodemic” – an overabundance of information, some accurate, some not – that makes it hard to identify reliable information. A combination of misinformation (erroneous) and disinformation (deliberate), propagated by state and non-state actors, pollutes the online information environment. Disinformation is driven by geopolitical, ideological or financial objectives.
- Some states have used disinformation to pursue their geopolitical objectives, including reshaping the international rules-based order. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity to accelerate these efforts.
- Hostile states are employing increasingly sophisticated tactics to blur lines between domestic and foreign activity, and between overt and covert messaging, leveraging a multiplicity of social media platforms and, increasingly, web sites.
- Canada’s premium forum to address state sponsored disinformation is the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (G7 RRM).

### **BACKGROUND**

Canada’s international efforts to counter threats to democracy culminated in the announcement of the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism in 2018 during the Charlevoix Summit. Since then, Canada has worked to operationalise and consolidate the mechanism, to share real-time assessments, country approaches and lessons learned with a view to fostering a shared understanding of the threat and coordinated response.

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