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## Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, David Morrison SITE Updates – Friday, June 23, 2023

Friday, June 23, 2023, 13:00 to 13:30 – In person at PCO (convened by NSIA)

### Context

- It is expected that a discussion on updates from the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force will be held on Friday, June 23, 2023.
- This is the first DM-level SITE discussion since the conclusion of the June 19, 2023 by-elections. Another federal by-election has been scheduled for Calgary Heritage for July 24, 2023, for which the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities announced that the SITE Task Force will continue to monitor for foreign interference threats.
- The agenda for this meeting is expected to include: (1) a discussion of the initial SITE after-action observations during the June 19, 2023 by-elections; and, (2) a discussion around a protocol for briefing Members of Parliament about intelligence when appropriate.
- It is anticipated questions will be raised related to an upcoming RRM report, which is not yet finalized.
- This note covers items 1 (and referencing the upcoming RRM report); IND has prepared a separate package for item 2.

### Objectives

- Convey support for the approval and publication of the SITE After Action Report (AAR).
- Flag the new RRM Canada Open Data Analysis Report to the Committee. Note we don't want to sit on this report; recommended actions and the report aiming to be at DMCIR next week.

### Talking points

#### Top-line messages:

- **SITE After Action Report:** GAC supports the effort that has gone into the SITE After Action Report for the June 19 by-elections. Officials continue to coordinate as needed. No incidents were noted, and the draft report will seek approvals as required.
- **RRM Canada Report:** RRM Canada has drafted a report after detecting an information operation on WeChat directed at MP Michael Chong (CPC, Wellington—Halton Hills). RRM Canada discovered an opaque network of 75 WeChat news accounts sharing over 115 unique new articles about MP Chong that featured false or misleading narratives amplified hundreds of thousands of times – likely viewed by millions of WeChat users.
- There are a number of indicators suggesting it is highly likely that Beijing directed the campaign, but RRM Canada is unable to make a full attribution.
- Recognizing current environment and sensitivities related to foreign interference, GAC finalizing the report and will aim to share at DMCIR next week with recommended actions for discussion.

### Background

**SITE After Action Report:** When the Government of Canada announced the measures to protect the June 19, 2023 by-elections from foreign interference, the SITE Task Force was tasked with producing both a classified and unclassified report following polling day, consisting of SITE's assessment of any attempts at foreign interference identified during the by-elections.

Additionally, PCO has drafted a letter to be sent from the National Security and Intelligence Advisor (NSIA) to the Prime Minister to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities outlining SITE's preliminary conclusions. GAC officials have been engaged with other SITE departments, and contributed to, and reviewed the draft After Action Report and the NSIA letter.

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**RRM Canada Report:** RRM Canada first observed this activity on WeChat targeting MP Michael Chong – and also, to a lesser extent, Canada's former Consul in Shanghai, [REDACTED] – during the daily monitoring activities to inform SITE during the June 2023 by-elections. To be clear, the activity itself is not related to the by-elections. RRM began to investigate the activity based on its mandate to monitor the social media landscape for signs of foreign information manipulation and interference as it pertains to threats to democracy.

The report has been shared with SITE members at working level (to validate methodology), confirm potential actions by members based on mandates, etc. No red flags have been raised. Final drafting is taking place before circulating to ADM and DM community (aiming for next week). If included on DMCIR next week, GAC will work with SITE members to inform recommendations for next steps.

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**Mandatory for all:**

Classification: Unclassified

Drafter symbol/last name: IOL Drafter phone number: 

Consulted divisions:

Enclosures (list, if any):

**Approvals and consultations:**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: ADMs are accountable for the notes, but may delegate approval to others. Ensure that consultations have been done across the department, as relevant.**

Level	Symbol	Name
Director		
<i>Director approval also confirms that the <b>title</b> of the note can be proactively disclosed.</i>	<i>Redactions to title, if required:</i>	
DG (if required)	IOD	Tara Denham
ADM (if required)		
<b>Consulted</b> (add lines if needed)	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Name</b>

**Checklist:** Please verify and check all boxes before submitting the note.

<b>Does the note include/illustrate:</b>	
Why this meeting matters?	
What we want to get out of the meeting, including next steps on key issues?	
What bilateral and multilateral issues should/could be raised?	
Up-to-date fact sheet appended?	
<b>Has the note been...:</b>	
Thoroughly edited for grammar, acronyms, and to ensure it's clear and concise?	
Reviewed to ensure conformity with length requirements?	
Consulted with all relevant divisions?	
<b>For MINE</b>	
Check whether accompanying cue cards are to be prepared and that TPs align	

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