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# Government of Canada provides update on recommendations to combat foreign interference

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## News release

**Ottawa, Ontario, April 6, 2023** – The Government of Canada takes any attempt at foreign interference, including in Canada’s democratic institutions and processes, very seriously. That’s why the government continues to improve, strengthen, and protect our democracy from these threats.

Yesterday, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, and Janice Charette, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, delivered a report to the Prime Minister entitled *Countering an Evolving Threat: Update on Recommendations to Counter Foreign Interference in Canada’s Democratic Institutions*.

The report highlights work completed to date, including through Canada's 2019 Plan to Protect Democracy. The report includes further actions to respond to recommendations from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) and assessments of the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol (the Protocol) to:

- enhance communications with Canadians about foreign interference and protecting democracy;
- strengthen institutions and supporting legislation to combat foreign interference;
- respond to newly emerging risks, vulnerabilities, and security issues; and
- deepen engagement with partners to enhance awareness and improve resiliency to foreign interference.

This builds on measures announced within the past month, including the establishment of a new National Counter-Foreign Interference Coordinator to enhance our proactive and coordinated approach on foreign interference and the launch of public consultations on a Foreign Influence Transparency Registry.

Specifically, the report outlines that, along with ministers and national security agencies, the new National Counter-Foreign Interference Coordinator will work to bolster public communications on foreign interference. New briefings will be offered to Members of Parliament, Senators and their staff, and the

Coordinator will work on expanding briefing mechanisms outside the federal government. The plan also includes reviews of existing legislation, such as the *CSIS Act*, the Criminal Code, the *Security of Information Act*, and the *Canada Elections Act*. Improvements will be made to briefings for political parties during the next General Election and the government will be exploring further changes to the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol, as well as enhancements to the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force.

Threats to Canada's democracy require a whole-of-society approach. That's why the government will continue to work with its partners — academia, civil society, and provinces and territories — to ensure ongoing collaboration as we address these ever-changing challenges. The government remains committed to defending Canada's democracy against interference and upholding Canadians' confidence in our institutions.

## Quotes

“Our government continues to identify, address and respond to the evolving nature of threats against Canada’s democracy. Significant progress has been made to implement the recommendations from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and the Protocol evaluation reports. We will continue to ensure Canadians can have confidence in the strength and the resilience of our democracy.”

– The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities

“Canada’s plan to protect and strengthen confidence in our democratic institutions from the threat of foreign interference is strong. Through these continued efforts, the public service stands ready to implement the government’s agenda and provide advice on how Canada can continue to adapt to this evolving threat.”

– Janice Charette, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet

## Quick facts

- On March 6, 2023, the Government of Canada announced a series of measures to take further action on foreign interference and strengthen Canadians' confidence in our democracy. Other measures included:
  - asking the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) to complete a review of the state of foreign interference in federal electoral processes;
  - asking the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA) to complete a review of how Canada's national security agencies handled the threat of foreign interference during the 43rd and 44th federal general elections;
  - launching public consultations to guide the creation of a Foreign Influence Transparency Registry in Canada to ensure transparency and accountability from people who advocate on behalf of a foreign government and ensure communities who are targeted by attempts at foreign interference are protected;
  - establishing a new National Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator in Public Safety Canada to coordinate efforts to combat foreign interference; and
  - investing \$5.5 million to strengthen the capacity of civil society partners to counter disinformation.

- Part of the Government's Plan to Protect Canada's Democracy during the election period was the implementation of the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol, which is administered by a Panel of senior public servants responsible for informing the public in the event of an incident threatening the election's integrity.
  - James Judd undertook an assessment of the Protocol covering the 2019 federal election. Morris Rosenberg conducted his assessment of the Protocol covering the 2021 federal election.
- Most recently, Budget 2023 proposes to provide \$48.9 million over three years starting in 2023-24 to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to protect Canadians from harassment and intimidation, increase its investigative capacity, and more proactively engage with communities at greater risk of being targeted, as well as \$13.5 million over five years, starting in 2023-24, and \$3.1 million ongoing to Public Safety Canada to establish a National Counter-Foreign Interference Office.

## Associated links

- [Backgrounder - Countering an evolving threat: Update on recommendations to counter foreign interference in Canada's democratic institutions](#)

- [Report on the Assessment of the 2021 Critical Election Incident Public Protocol](#)
- [Report on the assessment of the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol \(May 2020\)](#).
- [National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Annual Report 2019](#)
- [Special report into the allegations associated with Prime Minister Trudeau's official visit to India in February 2018](#)
- [Independent Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference](#)
- [Protecting democracy](#).

## Contacts

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### **Date modified:**

2024-07-11