



Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference  
in Federal Electoral Processes and  
Democratic Institutions

Enquête publique sur l'ingérence étrangère  
dans les processus électoraux et les  
institutions démocratiques fédéraux

## Overview Report:

# Examples of media, diaspora and non-governmental organization concern about foreign interference in Canada

Prepared by: Commission Counsel

## Summary of Report

Examples of media articles and information from diaspora and non-governmental organizations commenting on foreign interference in Canada.

This commentary provides some background about foreign interference as a public concern in Canada.

## Note to Reader

Pursuant to Rules 42-44 of the Commission's *Rules of Practice and Procedure*, the following Overview Report contains a summary of background facts and documents relating to the Commission's mandate.

Overview Reports allow facts to be placed in evidence without requiring those facts and related documents to be presented orally by a witness during the public hearings. The Overview Report may be used to assist in identifying issues relevant to the Commission, make findings of fact and enable recommendations to be made by the Commission.

Parties have been provided an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this Overview Report. Commission Counsel and the Parties may call evidence from witnesses at the Inquiry that casts doubt on the accuracy of the content of the documents underlying this Overview Report. The Parties may also make submissions regarding what, if any, weight should be given to the Overview Report and the cited documents.

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## 1. Introduction

- [1] This overview report gives examples of media reports and information from diaspora and non-governmental organizations from 2019 until September 2023, which comment on foreign interference in Canada.
- [2] This overview report is not a comprehensive summary of indications of public concern about foreign interference. The purpose of this report is to show a sample of public expressions of concern about foreign interference in Canada during the period under review by the Foreign Interference Commission.
- [3] The inclusion of sources in this Overview Report does not represent any expression by the Commission that contents of those sources are true or false and are not admitted into evidence for the truth of their contents. Further, no parliamentary committee testimony may be used to cross-examine or discredit a witness before the Commission.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Gagliano v Canada (Attorney General) (F.C.)*, 2005 FC 576.

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## 2. Media reports about foreign interference with elections and politicians

- [4] **From 2019 until late in 2022.** There were sporadic news articles about possible interference by foreign states to advance their own agendas and influence elections.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> David Ljunggren, Business, Reuters, “CORRECTED-Foreign interference in 2019 Canada election very likely -Ottawa” (April 8, 2019), **COM0000046**;

Lee Berthiaume, “Top federal officials warned China, India could use communities in Canada to advance agendas” (July 12, 2019), **COM0000211**;

Mike Blanchfield, National Post, “Russian election-meddling in Canada linked to Arctic ambitions: report” (September 8, 2019), **COM0000196**;

Catharine Tunney and Ashley Burke, Politics, CBC News, “Federal parties being warned of efforts by 6 foreign countries to influence election sources” (September 16, 2019), **COM0000093**;

Sam Cooper, Global News, “Hong Kong Canadians question alleged pro-Beijing backing for prominent Liberal candidate” (October 20, 2019), **COM0000101**;

Catharine Tunney, Politics, CBC News, “Federal government warning of voter coercion, foreign election interference through private messaging services” (February 9, 2020), **COM0000092**;

Stewart Bell, Canada, Global News, “Canadian politicians were targets of Indian intelligence covert influence operation: document” (April 17, 2020), **COM0000028**;

Maria Rantanen, Richmond News, “Richmond MP rebuts Chinese consul-general’s criticism of politicians” (August 14, 2020), **COM0000193**;

Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun, “Is China interfering in the Canadian election?” (September 13, 2021), **COM0000074**;

Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun, “Conservatives face ugly barrage over party’s China policy” (September 14, 2021), **COM0000073**;

Ian Young, South China Morning Post, “Conservative vote plunged in Canada’s most Chinese electorates. Did party pay price for tough stance on Beijing?” (September 23, 2021), **COM0000044**;

Lee Berthiaume, La Presse Canadienne/Le Devoir, “Probable ingérence étrangère lors du prochain scrutin fédéral”, (July 17, 2021), **COM0000179**;

Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, “Senator apologizes for saying defeated MP Kenny Chiu was lying about falling victim to disinformation campaign” (March 30, 2022), **COM0000204**;

Marie Woolf, Politics, CBC News, “Canada and allies on high alert for Russian disinformation and interference: minister” (April 13, 2022), **COM0000024**;

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- [5] **November 2022.** One news outlet reported an expert testifying before a parliamentary committee said foreign interference did not impact the integrity of the 2021 federal election.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after, another outlet reported Canadian intelligence officials warned the Prime Minister about a Chinese Communist Party proxy group that covertly donated to: (1) candidates for the Liberal Party of Canada (“Liberal Party”) and the Conservative Party of Canada (“Conservative Party”) in the 2019 general election; (2) an Ontario Member of Provincial Parliament; and (3) unelected public officials.<sup>4</sup>
- [6] **December 2022.** One article said CSIS briefed the Prime Minister about China targeting federal candidates in the 2019 general election.<sup>5</sup>
- [7] **February 2023.** Media reports about possible foreign interference by China in Canadian elections began to increase. An early February article said national security officials told the Prime Minister alleged Chinese state agents were assisting Canadian candidates running for political offices.<sup>6</sup>

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Christian Paas-Lang, CBC News, The House, “O’Toole claims Chinese interference in 2021 election flipped Tory ridings – but experts urge caution” (June 18, 2022), **COM0000172**;

Vincent Larouche, La Presse, “Des candidats aux élections fédérales auraient été financés par Pékin” (November 7, 2022), **COM0000080**;

Mélanie Marquis, La Presse, “Les élus fédéraux veulent des explications” (November 14, 2022), **COM0000107**.

<sup>3</sup> Irem Koca, Toronto Star, Federal Politics, “Foreign interference didn’t ‘impact’ integrity of federal election, security expert tells MPs” (November 1, 2022), **COM0000094**.

<sup>4</sup> Sam Cooper, Global News, “Canadian intelligence warned PM Trudeau that China covertly funded 2019 elections candidates: Sources” (November 7, 2022), **COM0000027**;

Sam Cooper, Global News, “Toronto businessman allegedly focus of Chinese interference probes: sources” (November 16, 2022), **COM0000212**.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, “CSIS briefed Trudeau that China targeted federal candidates in 2019 election, but no evidence of covert funding” (December 21, 2022), **COM0000059**.

<sup>6</sup> Sam Cooper, Global News, “2017 memo prepared for PM warns Beijing election interference” (February 8, 2023), **COM0000013**;

Joël-Denis Bellavance, La Presse, “Huit candidats conservateurs auraient été défaits en raison de l’ingérence chinoise” (February 17, 2023), **COM0000084**.

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- [8] The story continued with several articles in mid-February alleging CSIS warned the Prime Minister about a former Ontario Liberal cabinet minister's alleged ties to Chinese diplomats;<sup>7</sup> China having a strategy to influence Canada's 2021 election;<sup>8</sup> and China targeting Canadian politicians and officials and business leaders through blackmail, bribery and seduction.<sup>9</sup> More articles followed that month claiming the federal government ignored CSIS warnings about threats of foreign interference before the 2019 election.<sup>10</sup> There was also a news article about Russia using a state-funded propaganda outlet to undermine the Government of Canada.<sup>11</sup>
- [9] **Spring and Summer 2023.** Media focus on foreign interference in Canadian politics continued steadily through the spring, peaking in March to May.<sup>12</sup> News reports included

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, "CSIS warned Trudeau about Toronto-area politician's alleged ties to Chinese diplomats" (February 13, 2023), **COM0000067**.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, "CSIS documents reveal Chinese strategy to influence Canada's 2021 election" (February 17, 2023), **COM0000060**.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, "CSIS reports outline how China targets Canadian politicians, business leaders" (February 20, 2023), **COM0000065**;

Wendy Cox, The Globe and Mail, "Western Canada; Former B.C. MP reacts to revelation that China tried to influence the 2021 election" (February 18, 2023), **COM0000217**.

<sup>10</sup> Sam Cooper, Global News, "Liberals ignored CSIS warning on 2019 candidate accused in Chinese interference probe: sources" (February 24, 2023), **COM0000137**;

Steve Scherer, Reuters, World, "Canada's Trudeau denies report that Liberals told to drop candidate over China ties" (February 27, 2023), **COM0000026**;

Omair Quadri, The Globe and Mail, "Morning Update: CSIS uncovered Chinese plan to donate to Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation" (February 28, 2023), **COM0000066**.

<sup>11</sup> Caroline Orr, Canada's National Observer, "Russia used state-funded propaganda outlet to whip up support for the 'Freedom Convoy' and undermine the Trudeau government" (February 10, 2023), **COM0000327**.

<sup>12</sup> Boris Proulx, Le Devoir, "Les rapports sur l'ingérence étrangère sont parfois basés sur des rumeurs, dit un responsable" (March 2, 2023), **COM0000134**;

Marquis and Joël-Denis Bellavance, La Presse, "Malmené, Justin Trudeau ne bronche pas", (March 8, 2023), **COM0000109**;

Catherine Lévesque, National Post, "Global Affairs reached out to Chinese ambassador over boasts about defeating Tory MPs in 2021 election" (March 9, 2023), **COM0000097**;

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- Joël-Denis Bellavance and Mélanie Marquis, La Presse, “La création d’un registre recommandée à Trudeau depuis des mois” (March 9, 2023), **COM0000110**;
- Sam Cooper, Global News, “Two high-level memos allege Beijing covertly funded Canadian election candidates” (March 8, 2023), **COM0000215**;
- CBC News, Toronto, “Ontario MPP resigns from PC caucus, denies alleged link to foreign election interference” (March 10, 2023), **COM0000171**;
- Andrew Russell, Sam Cooper & Colin D’Mello, “Vincent Ke resigns from Ontario PC caucus amid 2019 election interference allegations” (March 10, 2023), **COM0000216**;
- Sam Cooper, Global News, “Ontario legislature member is part of alleged Beijing 2019 election-interference network: sources” (March 10, 2023), **COM0000170**;
- Tom Blackwell, National Post, “Beijing-friendly Liberal politician calls for public inquiry into ‘unlawful’ CSIS” (March 11, 2023), **COM0000021**;
- Raphaël Pirro, Le Journal de Montréal, “Ingérence chinoise : le lanceur d’alerte brise le silence” (March 17, 2023), **COM0000108**;
- Jessica Mundie, Politics, CBC News, “Foreign interference is the ‘greatest strategic threat’ facing Canada’s national security, CSIS says” (March 17, 2023), **COM0000095**;
- Joël-Denis Bellavance, La Presse, “La lettre d’un espion canadien justifie la tenue d’une enquête, dit le Bloc” (March 20, 2023), **COM0000111**;
- The Canadian Press, CBC News, “CSIS briefed Ford’s office on potential interference by China but details too limited, he says” (March 21, 2023), **COM0000058**;
- Boris Proulx, Le Devoir, “Le député Han Dong défend sa réputation face aux allégations d’ingérence étrangère” (March 21, 2023), **COM0000131**;
- Catharine Tunney, Politics, CBC News, “A public probe of foreign election interference should also look at India, Sikh organizations say” (March 21, 2023), **COM0000014**;
- Sean Boynton, Global News, “Han Dong to sit as Independent MP following ‘serious’ allegations in new report” (March 22, 2023), **COM0000099**;
- Sam Cooper, Global News, “Liberal MP Han Dong secretly advised Chinese diplomat in 2021 to delay freeing Two Michaels: sources” (March 22, 2023), **COM0000136**;
- Radio-Canada, “Ingérence étrangère : les Communes adoptent une motion réclamant une enquête publique” (March 23, 2023), **COM0000113**;
- Eric Stober, Global News, “Launch and election interference inquiry, House of Commons urges in vote” (March 23, 2023), **COM00000129**;
- Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, “Trudeau government decided CSIS transcript of MP Han Dong provided no ‘actionable evidence’” (March 23, 2023), **COM0000213**;
- Judy Trinh and Candy Chan, CTV News, “Alleged foreign interference entangles Liberals and Conservatives in one riding” (March 24, 2023), **COM0000017**;
- Sarah-Maude Lefebvre, Le Journal de Montréal, “Ingérence étrangère : des Canadiens vivent dans la peur de la Chine” (April 5, 2023), **COM0000114**;



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Katia Gagnon and Mélanie Marquis, La Presse, “Ce don, c’est une bombe puante” (April 12, 2023), **COM0000321**;

Richard Raycraft, CBC News, Politics, “PM briefed at least 6 times on foreign election interference since 2018, says PCO document” (April 14, 2023), **COM0000175**;

Sam Cooper, Global News, “China’s Consul General threatens Tory MP Bob Saroya before 2021 election, committee hears” (April 14, 2023), **COM0000036**;

Catharine Tunney, Politics, CBC News, “Intelligence community was concerned with Russia prior to 2019 vote, former top officials say” (April 18, 2023), **COM0000117**;

La Presse canadienne, “Ingérence étrangère : le conseiller principal de Justin Trudeau témoigne” (April 25, 2023), **COM0000112**;

Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, “China views Canada as a ‘high priority’ for interference: CSIS report” (May 1, 2023), **COM0000034**;

Bryan Passifume, “As the spectre of China’s meddling spreads, another MP claims he is a victim” (May 3, 2023), **COM0000020**;

Catharine Tunney, CBC News, Politics, “Chong says CSIS report on China targeting MPs was sent to PM’s adviser” (May 4, 2023), **COM0000038**;

Darren Major, CBC News, Politics, “Canada expelling diplomat accused of targeting MP Michael Chong’s family” (May 8, 2023), **COM0000025**;

Boris Proulx, Le Devoir, “Ottawa renvoie le diplomate chinois soupçonné d’ingérence” (May 8 2023), **COM0000173**;

Marie Vastel, le Devoir, “L’intimidation du député Michael Chong par Pékin sera étudiée en comité” (May 10, 2023), **COM0000125**;

Christopher Guly, The Hill Times, “Michael Chong story ‘good example’ of what Chinese Canadians fear, says Toronto MP Vuong” (May 11, 2023), **COM0000142**;

Robert Fife and Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, “CSIS had kept tabs on expelled Chinese diplomat Zhao Wei for 3 years” (May 12, 2023), **COM0000062**;

CTV News, “Chinese diplomat Zhao Wei leaves Canada after expulsion: source” (May 12, 2023), **COM0000037**;

CBC News, Politics, “CSIS has begun offering other MPs briefings on foreign interference” (May 12, 2023), **COM0000063**;

Richard Raycraft, RCI, Politics, “Johnston says no to public inquiry on foreign interference” (May 23, 2023), **COM0000120**;

Derrick Penner, Vancouver Sun, “‘I don’t think people are satisfied’: Former Richmond MP counters recommendations on foreign election interference” (May 23, 2023), **COM0000124**;

Darren Major, CBC News, Politics, “Politicians allegedly targeted by foreign interference ‘disappointed’ in Johnston’s report” (May 23, 2023), **COM0000177**;

Raphaël Pirro, Le Journal de Québec, “Ingérence : un politicien cité dans les fuites poursuit le SCRS et des médias” (May 29, 2023), **COM0000115**;

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allegations that China may have targeted the family of Conservative Party Member of Parliament Michael Chong. Over the summer, interest waned in the foreign interference issue but did not disappear.<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Diaspora and non-governmental organization concern about foreign interference

- [10] Diaspora communities, academics and non-governmental organizations referred to concerns about foreign interference in Canada over a similar timeframe as media interest described in the previous section.

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Mia Robson et Mickey Djuric, La Presse Canadienne “Une députée néodémocrate révèle être la cible d’ingérence étrangère de la Chine” (May 29, 2023), **COM0000127**;

Radio-Canada, “Ingérence : l’ex-chef conservateur Erin O’Toole dit avoir été ciblé par la Chine” (May 30, 2023), **COM0000116**;

Radio-Canada, “Le député Michael Chong visé par une nouvelle campagne de désinformation chinoise” (August 9, 2023), **COM0000132**.

<sup>13</sup> Raffy Boudjikianian, CBC, Politics, “Diaspora groups join calls for public inquiry on foreign interference” (June 7, 2023), **COM0000081**;

Darren Major, CBC, Politics, “David Johnston resigning as special rapporteur on foreign interference” (June 9, 2023), **COM0000075**;

Steven Chase and Marieke Walsh, The Globe and Mail, “CSIS intended for Blair to read memo on Chong, director says” (June 13, 2023), **COM0000064**;

Sam Cooper, The Bureau, “Trudeau Government repeatedly warned on interference from Chinese and Indian diplomats: June 2019 report” (June 15, 2023), **COM0000214**;

Chuck Chiang, British Columbia, CBC News, “Sikh protesters in Vancouver decry gurdwara president shooting death as foreign interference” (June 24, 2023), **COM0000205**;

Norimitsu Onishi, The New York Times, “Canadian Politicians Who Criticize China Become Its Targets” (July 15, 2023), **COM0000029**;

Brennan MacDonald, CBC News, Politics, “NDP MP, Beijing critics call on Ottawa to launch foreign agent registry quickly” (August 17, 2023), **COM0000147**.

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- [11] **October 2019.** An association of Hong Kong Canadians, Torontonians Stand With Hong Kong, questioned whether a Toronto-area Liberal Party candidate was too close to alleged pro-Beijing Liberal Party members.<sup>14</sup>
- [12] **August 2020.** Kenny Chiu, Conservative Party Member of Parliament, spoke publicly about China’s consul-general in Vancouver targeting Canadian politicians who criticized China’s actions in Hong Kong.<sup>15</sup>
- [13] **February 2021.** A Simon Fraser University professor published an academic paper about Russian and Iranian trolls engaged in a campaign of disinformation to try to influence the 2015 federal election in Canada.<sup>16</sup>
- [14] **July 2021.** A policy brief by the Queen’s University Centre for International and Defence Policy relied on secondary sources to warn about foreign interference. The Brief alleged there was a mounting threat of election interference in Canada and security threats to the Canadian electoral process were “alive and well.”<sup>17</sup>
- [15] **April 2021.** Mr. Chiu introduced a private member’s bill, the *Foreign Influence Registry Act* (Bill C-282), to try to expose relationships between lobbying agents in Canada and foreign states.<sup>18</sup> He alleged China targeted him with a disinformation campaign in

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<sup>14</sup> Sam Cooper, Global News, “Hong Kong Canadians question alleged pro-Beijing backing for prominent Liberal candidate” (October 20, 2019), **COM0000101**.

<sup>15</sup> Maria Rantanen, Richmond News, “Richmond MP rebuts Chinese consul-general’s criticism of politicians” (August 14, 2020), **COM0000193**.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmed Al-Rawi, “How did Russian and Iranian trolls’ disinformation toward Canadian issues diverse and converge?” *Digital War* (published online February 12, 2021), **COM0000016**.

<sup>17</sup> Jean-Nicolas Bordeleau, “*Securing Elections: A Comparative Assessment of Canada’s Response to Foreign Interference*” (July 2021), Volume 7, Issue 3, **COM0000032**.

<sup>18</sup> House of Commons, *Bill C-282: An Act to establish the Foreign Influence Registry*, 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, First Reading, April 13, 2021, **COM0000022**.

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response to his Bill.<sup>19</sup> Later that year, Mr. Chiu said he lost his seat in the 2021 election because of a campaign of disinformation by China.<sup>20</sup>

- [16] **October 2021.** The Canadian Global Affairs Institute published a study about Russia's "hybrid warfare," which the article said aimed to undermine democracies through disinformation, cyber attacks, transnational repression, economic pressures and the use of regular and irregular military forces.<sup>21</sup> The article referenced Canadian experts and the intelligence community saying Canada was a target of Russian disinformation and influence operations.
- [17] **March 2022.** The Media Ecosystem Observatory published the results of a joint project among two non-governmental organizations, McGill University and the University of Toronto. The group found anti-Conservative Party misinformation on Chinese language social media channels but no evidence of systematic attempts to amplify and spread these messages and no evidence these activities had a significant impact on the overall election.<sup>22</sup>
- [18] **December 2022.** The World Sikh Organization of Canada issued a press release about its fears that Canada would be the subject of increased foreign interference and pressure by India after the Government of Canada launched its Indo-Pacific strategy.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun, "Conservatives face ugly barrage over party's China policy" (September 14, 2021), **COM0000073**.

<sup>20</sup> Ian Young, South China Morning Post, "Conservative vote plunged in Canada's most Chinese electorates. Did party pay price for tough stance on Beijing?" (September 23, 2021), **COM0000044**;

Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, "Senator apologizes for saying defeated MP Kenny Chiu was lying about falling victim to disinformation campaign" (March 30, 2022), **COM0000204**.

<sup>21</sup> Markus Kolga, "Confusion, Destabilization and Chaos : Russia's Hybrid Warfare against Canada and its Allies," Policy Perspective, Canadian Global Affairs Institute (Calgary: October 2021), **COM0000043**.

<sup>22</sup> A. Bridgman, M. Lavigne, M. Baker, T. Bergeron, D. Bohonos, A. Burton, K. McCoy, M. Hart, M. Lavault, R. Liddar, P. Peng, C. Ross, J. Victor, T. Owen and P. Loewen (2022), *Mis- and Disinformation During the 2021 Canadian Federal Election*, Media Ecosystem Observatory, **COM0000141**.

<sup>23</sup> World Sikh Organization of Canada, "Sikhs Weary of Increased Foreign Interference in Wake of Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy" (December 8, 2022), **COM0000206**.

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The strategy is intended to increase engagement in the region and includes a \$2.3 billion investment over 2022 to 2027.

- [19] **February 2023.** An American academic published an academic paper on Russian state media activity during the 2022 “Freedom Convoy” and inferred Russian involvement in this event.<sup>24</sup>
- [20] **March 2023.** The Angus Reid Institute, a non-profit public opinion research foundation, polled Canadians about whether they believed China tried to interfere in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections to ensure a minority Liberal Party government. A majority of Canadians believed China attempted to meddle in the elections (32% said “definitely”; 33% said “probably”). Fifty-three percent of those polled said attempted interference represented a serious threat to democracy. Two-thirds of respondents said the federal government needed to put additional focus on foreign interference.<sup>25</sup>
- [21] **March to June 2023.** Diaspora witnesses before a parliamentary committee spoke about foreign interference in Canada.<sup>26</sup> Witnesses said they were victimized or targeted by interference and faced rising xenophobia towards them because of it.<sup>27</sup>
- [22] **May 2023.** Two representatives from Alliance Canada Hong Kong appeared before another parliamentary committee and testified about intimidation, threats and cyber

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<sup>24</sup> Caroline Orr Bueno, “Russia’s Role in the Far-Right Truck Convoy: An Analysis of Russian State Media Activity Related to the 2022 Freedom Convoy,” (2023) 5(3) *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare* 1-22, **COM0000197**.

<sup>25</sup> Angus Reid Institute, “China, Canada and Challenging Diplomacy: Two-in-three Canadians believe Beijing did attempt election interference” (March 1, 2023), **COM0000035**.

<sup>26</sup> House of Commons Canada, *Foreign Interference and the Threats to the Integrity of Democratic Institutions, Intellectual Property and the Canadian State* (October 24, 2023), 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1<sup>st</sup> Session), Report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (John Brassard, Chair), **COM0000089(EN)/COM0000090(FR)** at 61-62.

<sup>27</sup> House of Commons Canada, *Foreign Interference and the Threats to the Integrity of Democratic Institutions, Intellectual Property and the Canadian State* (October 24, 2023), 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1<sup>st</sup> Session), Report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (John Brassard, Chair), **COM0000089(EN)/COM0000090(FR)** at 15-19 32-34.

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attacks.<sup>28</sup> Also that month, Mr. Chiu said a public inquiry into foreign interference was necessary.<sup>29</sup>

- [23] **May 2023.** The Angus Reid Institute polled Canadians about concerns around foreign interference.<sup>30</sup> It found 52% of Canadians believed a commission of inquiry was needed, despite the Independent Special Rapporteur (ISR)'s work; only 32% thought an inquiry was unnecessary. Other findings indicated serious concerns with foreign interference: 43% of Canadians believed elections were becoming less free and fair in the country and 67% believed the Chinese government likely tried to interfere in past Canadian elections. This was consistent with polling done in March.
- [24] **June 2023.** Sikh protesters in Vancouver alleged the shooting death of Hardeep Singh Nijjar on June 18, 2023, was foreign interference by the Indian government.<sup>31</sup> Mr. Nijjar was president of the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, BC, when he was murdered.
- [25] **June 2023.** Diaspora groups joined parliamentarians in calling for a public inquiry, with at least one group saying it might not engage with the ISR's planned public process if by doing so it could pressure the Government into having a public inquiry.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> House of Commons, 44th Parliament, 1st Session, Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, Evidence, No 070 (May 9, 2023), **COM0000282(EN)/COM0000283(FR)**.

<sup>29</sup> Derrick Penner, Vancouver Sun, "I don't think people are satisfied': Former Richmond MP counters recommendations on foreign election interference" (May 23, 2023), **COM0000124**; Darren Major, CBC News, Politics, "Politicians allegedly targeted by foreign interference 'disappointed' in Johnston's report" (May 23, 2023), **COM0000177**.

<sup>30</sup> Angus Reid Institute, "Election Interference: Canadians tilt towards calling for a public inquiry; majority call government response 'evasive'" (May 26, 2023), **COM0000083**.

<sup>31</sup> Chuck Chiang, British Columbia, CBC News, "Sikh protestors in Vancouver decry gurdwara president shooting death as foreign interference" (June 24, 2023), **COM0000205**.

<sup>32</sup> Mélanie Marquis (La Presse), "La diaspora chinoise réclame une enquête publique" (June 7, 2023), **COM0000106**;

Raffy Boudjikianian, CBC, Politics, "Diaspora groups join calls for public inquiry on foreign interference" (June 7, 2023), **COM0000081**.