



Statement by Commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue

I am heartened that so many diaspora groups and organizations have chosen to work with the Commission on Foreign Interference. They bring a necessary perspective to the discussion about foreign interference in Canadian democracy, and their input and participation is essential to our work. I invite other diaspora members and groups to also contribute to the important work of the Commission.

Some members of diaspora communities have told us that they fear reprisals if they provide information to the Commission. Some are also worried that all the information they provide to the Commission will be shared with Participants in the Commission. I want to reassure them that it is not the case. None of the Participants in the Commission, including those with Party standing, will have access to classified information, or information provided to the Commission on a confidential basis.

Furthermore, the Commission has created measures to protect those who wish to share information with the Commission but fear they may experience negative consequences if they are seen to be assisting the Commission. These protections include:

1. A confidential email address (conf@pifi-epie.gc.ca), which can be used to send information to the Commission on a confidential basis. The Commission has put strict controls in place to protect the confidentiality of any information provided through this email address and the identity of the person or group providing the information.
2. The ability, in appropriate circumstances, to redact sensitive information from documents before they are provided to the Commission or before they are circulated to some or all of the Participants and the public.
3. The option, where personal security is an issue, of testifying and producing documents *in camera* (i.e., without the presence of anyone other than the Commission's lawyers and myself, the Commissioner), so that evidence will only be accessible to the Commissioner and Commission counsel unless the person who provided the evidence agrees otherwise.

It is important to note that a Commission of Inquiry must reach out to all those with a real and direct interest in the subject of the Inquiry. This includes those who are the subject of the core allegations of foreign interference that this Commission is tasked with investigating. It is also essential to point out that a Commission must hear different, and even divergent, points of view before drawing its own conclusions.

Together, these measures will provide protection for those who fear consequences for assisting the Commission's investigation, while respecting principles of fundamental justice on which Canadian society is founded.

The Commission invites those who wish to provide information, but still fear for their safety, to contact us at our confidential email address (conf@pifi-epie.gc.ca) for further information on the measures that can be put in place to protect them.

Commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue,
Commission on Foreign Interference