

Unclassified

## Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions

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### Commission request for summary information on briefing to Kenny Chiu

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*This document has been prepared by the Government of Canada for the purpose of the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions. It responds to a specific request by the Commission for an unclassified summary of information regarding a briefing given to a former Member of Parliament by CSIS officials and should not be used as the basis for understanding any other topic. This document discloses only information that would not cause injury to the critical interests of Canada or its allies, national defence or national security.*

*The following summary was released in Protected B format to Kenny Chiu. With his consent, this document is now unclassified.*

### Summary of Key Messages

On September 18, 2023, CSIS officials met with Kenny Chiu to inform him of the PRC's threat of foreign interference involving him at the time of the 2021 federal election.

This briefing followed the Ministerial Directive from the Minister of Public Safety to inform parliamentarians of potential specific foreign interference threats.

Mr. Chiu was informed that the Service was legislatively prohibited from sharing classified information except to the federal government except in very specific circumstances. The Service would be invoking its threat reduction mandate to reduce the threat of foreign interference against Mr. Chiu by sharing information.

These threats are relevant to current and former MPs, specifically if they remain active in the public policy debate with respect to PRC interference in democratic processes.

Mr. Chiu was advised that CSIS has not collected intelligence indicating a physical threat to him or his family, in Canada or elsewhere, and that threat to life intelligence triggers rapid engagement with the RCMP and notification to the individual in question.

Threats in the context of this briefing refer to threats of foreign interference in democratic processes.

CSIS requested that Mr. Chiu respect the classified nature of the intelligence. The information was for personal awareness and consumption and cannot be re-purposed for other outcomes or interests. CSIS went on to share an additional rationale to illustrate the importance of keeping the information it would be sharing as confidential.

CSIS provided an assessment of how Mr. Chiu may be perceived by the PRC.

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CSIS advised that online / media activities have been observed that were aimed at discouraging Canadians, particularly of Chinese heritage, from supporting the Conservative Party of Canada and Mr. Chiu in particular. CSIS also advised there are indicators of potential coordination between various Canada-based Chinese language news outlets as well as PRC and CCP news outlets, but it is not clear that this online activity was a PRC-directed FI campaign.

CSIS provided an assessment of how the PRC may have attempted to influence Mr. Chiu, and an overview of “united front work”.

CSIS shared that Chinese Communist Party (CCP) united front work (UFW) is primarily coordinated by the United Front Work Department (UFWD), which is directly subordinate to the CCP Central Committee, a body of approximately 200 individuals who represent the apex of political power in the PRC.

For the PRC, foreign influence is undertaken as united front work, through which the CCP seeks to coopt, reorient or silence non-party elites (e.g. those with perceived influence). This occurs both within and outside of China, to adopt or otherwise support party narratives and policies, or at the least to not actively oppose them.

The current head of the UFWD is a member of the CCP Central Committee’s Politburo, which is a smaller body who runs the PRC on a more day-to-day basis. The Politburo is a more accurate equivalent to Canada’s Cabinet.

The official Cabinet-equivalent in the PRC system is the PRC State Council, but the State Council has no real decision-making power, it is more of an implementation body. In other words, UFW is perceived as essential to the survival of the CCP and, as a result, UFW is managed and directed by the highest levels of the CCP leadership.

CSIS then provided Mr. Chiu with an assessment of how the PRC prioritizes influence operations.

CSIS proceeded to explain how in the context of UFWD, ‘target’ is a word used to denote a general interest in an individual. Actions used to ‘work on’ a target (i.e. targeting someone) can range from overt, direct diplomatic engagement, to the use of proxies or the engagement of PRC security and intelligence services.

CSIS concluded by providing an assessment of the residual risk of PRC-directed interference activities.