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Public Safety Canada Sécurité publique Canada

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Ottawa, Canada
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SUBJECT: DMCC Meeting
DATE: Friday, April 14, 2023
TIME:
LOCATION:

UNCLASSIFIED

File No.: PS-
RDIMs No.: 4596494

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY MINISTER**DEPUTY MINISTER'S COMMITTEE ON CHINA****ISSUE**

You will be attending the upcoming Deputy Ministers (DM) Committee meeting on China on Friday, April 14th and will have a chance to provide a brief update on the Government of Canada's efforts at countering foreign interference (FI).

BACKGROUND

s. 39 - Cabinet Confidence

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is one the most capable threat actors conducting FI activities against Canada. The PRC has the capacity to conduct extensive FI in Canada by applying pressure and influence in a clandestine and deceptive manner to pursue its political, economic and security interests to Canada's detriment.

In response to recent allegations of PRC interference attempts in Canada's federal elections, PM Trudeau announced a series of initiatives in March 2023, including the following PS-led initiatives s. 39 - Cabinet.

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- The launch of public consultations to guide the creation of a Foreign Influence Transparency Registry (FITR); and
- The establishment of a new National Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator at Public Safety Canada to coordinate efforts to combat foreign interference.

Also, included in these measures was a request by the PM to develop a plan to address outstanding recommendations from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) in 2018 and 2019, the Judd Report and the Rosenberg Report. Of note, the implementation plan for the *Countering an Evolving Threat Report: Update on Recommendations to Counter Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Institutions* (PCO 30 day-report) is still under discussion as it will have direct implications on various departments within government.

CURRENT STATUS

Key messages

- s. 39 - Cabinet Confidence

Key messages – Counter-Foreign Interference Coordinator

- The creation of the Counter-FI Coordinator and associated office at Public Safety was one of the key initiatives announced by the PM in March.

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- That said, PS has begun undertaking efforts to ensure the smooth design and implementation of the office.
- *You may wish to turn to the RCMP to discuss their B2023 allocation.*

Key messages - Counter-Foreign Interference Strategy

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- Work has been underway at to develop two versions of the Strategy:
 - An unclassified version to enhance public awareness of the threat posed by FI, including existing measures in place to counter it, and tools at the public's disposal; and
 - A classified version of the Strategy to serve as an internal implementation plan to guide current and future Government of Canada actions to counter FI.
- While the classified Strategy is in nascent stages, the unclassified Strategy is an advanced stages and could be published in the short-term.
- The office of the Counter-FI Coordinator will be responsible for implementing and updating the Strategy.

Key messages – Foreign Influence Transparency Registry (FITR)

- Public and stakeholder consultations on the FITR launched on March 10, 2023. Public consultations are set to close on May 9, 2023. To date, Public Safety has received over 800 submissions from the public, as well as several written submissions from stakeholders.
- You may wish to note that the Government of Canada intends to pursue a two-track approach to consultations, consisting of both public online submissions and targeted stakeholder discussions.
- Engagements with stakeholders may include both roundtable formats with stakeholder groups, while others will be held in a bilateral format to allow for a more confidential setting to accommodate specific stakeholders such as diaspora and community groups. These consultations will extend beyond the May 9, 2023 close of public consultations.
- Public Safety is working with select interlocutors to convene stakeholder roundtables to discuss the FITR. Stakeholders who have already agreed to convene roundtables to

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discuss FITR include the Business Council of Canada (BCC), the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI – who intend to host a table with academics and a table with human rights/advocacy organizations), and the Canadian Association of Defense and Security Industries (CADSI).

- You may wish to raise that the Minister of Public Safety has agreed to attend the roundtable hosted by the Business Council of Canada on May 12, 2023. The roundtable will be moderated by Goldy Hyder, President of the BCC, and include representatives from BCC member organizations. The Minister is expected to attend others as they firm up.
- You may also wish to indicate that senior officials at Public Safety continue to explore bilateral engagements with diaspora representative communities on FITR, and that these conversations may include discussions about the broader Foreign Interference threat.
- You may also wish to note that once consultations are completed, Public Safety will prepare a “What We’ve Heard” report. Public Safety will also require a signals check from Ministers before proposing legislation to address questions on a number of issues in the fall (e.g. subnational application of the registry, where the registry will be housed, etc.).
- s. 39 - Cabinet Confidence

Key messages - Next steps

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Discussions are also underway to implement the recommendations outlined in the 30 day report.
- You may wish to note that the unclassified Strategy is currently being consulted at the ADM level, and will soon move to DMs with a view for publishing in the short-term.
- Additionally, you may also wish to mention that MIN Mendicino will be appearing before the Procedure and House Affairs Committee on (PROC) on the 25th of April as part of its study on alleged foreign election interference in Canada.