

FIVE COUNTRY MINISTERIAL



Joint Communiqué

We, the Interior Ministers, Immigration Ministers, and Attorneys General of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States met in Ottawa on June 26, 2017, to discuss both national security challenges facing our nations and proactive areas for collaboration. Our five country partnership, founded after the Second World War and strengthened during the Cold War, is more relevant today than ever as we deal with the relentless threats of terrorism, violent extremism, cyber-attacks, and international instability, while retaining our deep commitment to the shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Countering violent extremism

The safety and security of our citizens, whether at home or abroad, continues to be threatened by terrorist groups and the individuals who support them. The recent attacks in Manchester; London; Melbourne; Flint, Michigan; Sainte-Foy, Quebec; and Finsbury Park have tragically demonstrated that our five countries are not immune to terrorism – and other forms of violent extremism – and can be targets of terrorist and violent extremist groups and those who support them. During the Five Country Ministerial meeting, we committed to joint efforts to counter the spread of violent extremism and recruitment efforts by extremist groups that advocate and utilize violence to achieve their objective. Ministers further committed to:

- A shared approach to engaging with Communication Service Providers to address online terrorist activities and propaganda, and to support a new industry forum led by Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Twitter.

- Collectively enhancing knowledge on key issues such as design and support for local-level initiatives and sharing of best practices in prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation, such as approaches to mitigating the threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families.
- Examine the role of traditional and social media and community voices in facilitating or disrupting processes of radicalization to violence or the threat of terrorist propaganda, and to support effective practices in this area.
- Promote research on programs to identify and build upon those with greatest effectiveness.

Global migration and refugee systems

We recognize the sovereign right of each nation to establish a lawful system of immigration that prioritizes public safety and the well-being of its citizens, while providing lawful immigrants an opportunity to make positive contributions to society. The Ministers affirmed that our countries intend to work together to understand global migration challenges, recognizing the importance of sovereignty, public safety, strengthened border security and human rights. The Ministers discussed joint efforts in border technology innovation and the importance of continued cooperation on screening and vetting of travelers, migrants and refugees. Ministers also committed to support border agencies in better using publicly available information for screening. They recognized the importance of distinguishing between economic migrants and those who seek protection, the potential benefits of legal pathways for migration depending on each country's domestic interests, and the right to return persons found not to have the legal right to remain. Ministers also discussed the importance of keeping refugees and migrants as close to home as possible — ideally in the country of first asylum — and the benefits of programs and support networks in countries neighbouring conflict zones.

Security cooperation on border management and human trafficking and aviation security

A joint meeting between the Five Country Ministerial and the Quintet of Attorneys General provided the opportunity to discuss the tools available for sharing information on criminal activities and national security issues, including terrorism and human trafficking. The recent brutal attacks in the UK, Afghanistan and elsewhere also serve as a reminder that Daesh

and its affiliates will continue to attack soft targets in public spaces. In order to help prevent these sophisticated and relentless plots, the Ministers and Attorneys General affirmed that sharing information among partners on known criminal and terrorist actors is vital. Therefore, we committed to explore more timely and detailed information sharing on the detection of terrorist and foreign terrorist fighter movements, and to explore possibilities to further improve criminal information sharing practices. We also discussed the need to enhance the international response to human trafficking and modern slavery. To enable targeted action, the Ministers and Attorneys General agreed to direct their law enforcement agencies to share experiences of how partners are tackling this global challenge and identify opportunities for joint operations. Ministers also agreed to work together to better deter, detect and disrupt terrorist travel and to raise the baseline of aviation security globally to protect the traveling public against terrorist threats.

Cybersecurity

Ministers and Attorneys General noted their concerns with the recent cyber events that have affected various institutions and individuals in all of our countries. The “WannaCry” ransomware attack, which began on May 12th and impacted individuals in over 150 countries, is an unfortunate reminder that cyberattacks are increasing. To address cybersecurity threats, we note the robust cooperation underway between our five countries on cyber issues and note our collective efforts to study and assess key emerging issues and trends in cyber security to prevent, detect and respond to cyber threats.

Encryption

Ministers and Attorneys General also noted that encryption can severely undermine public safety efforts by impeding lawful access to the content of communications during investigations into serious crimes, including terrorism. To address these issues, we committed to develop our engagement with communications and technology companies to explore shared solutions while upholding cybersecurity and individual rights and freedoms.

Conclusion

We decided today on concrete steps to address issues and new challenges related to countering violent extremism, migration and refugees, security cooperation on border management and human trafficking, and encryption. While our five countries share similar security challenges that predicate this strong collective response, we more importantly share a history of cooperation, friendship, and common values. We are committed to building on this past cooperation in national security affairs and remain accountable for the steps we have pledged to take today. Throughout these discussions, we affirmed that building public trust within our countries is required to move forward on national security issues. Enhanced safeguards and greater efforts to promote transparency are critical in this respect.

The Five Country Ministerial and Quintet meeting of Attorneys General were hosted by Canada's Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the Honourable Ralph Goodale, and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, in collaboration with the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, the Honourable Ahmed Hussen. They met with their international counterparts from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and New Zealand. These included George Brandis, Australian Attorney General; Peter Dutton, Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection; Christopher Finlayson, New Zealand Attorney-General; Michael Woodhouse, New Zealand Minister of Immigration; Amber Rudd, United Kingdom Home Secretary; John Kelly, United States Secretary of Homeland Security; and Jeff Sessions, United States Attorney General.

Ottawa, June 27 2017