

FIVE COUNTRY MINISTERIAL



Communiqué

June 27 & 28, Wellington, New Zealand

We, the Home Affairs, Interior, Security and Immigration Ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States (the ‘Five Countries’) convened in person, under Canada’s chairship, in Wellington, New Zealand on June 27-28, 2023 for the Five Country Ministerial (FCM). The Five Countries stand together in our commitment to promote shared values, and work collaboratively in addressing national and homeland security, and migration challenges. This year’s Ministerial discussions focused on the following issues.

Countering Foreign Interference

Foreign interference targeting our **democratic processes, institutions and society** is an ever-evolving challenge that the Five Countries continue to address with swift and strong action, both individually and collectively, based on our independent assessments and according to our interests and values. During the FCM, we reaffirmed our determination to protect our open societies from all forms of foreign interference, whether through technology or through attacks against our democratic processes, transnational repression, or misinformation/disinformation. We remain committed to sharing information, engaging with tech companies, coordinating policy responses when possible, and working together to reduce the adverse impact of such activity on our people and institutions. We will continue to examine the risks and opportunities associated with emerging technology, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence, both individually and together.

Open and collaborative research environments are essential to propel creativity and foster innovation. We recognize that **research security, including the prevention of unwanted transfers of knowledge and technology**, is a priority to protect our world-leading research ecosystems. We understand the importance of integrating the research community as well as other like-minded countries into research security discussions.

In Wellington, the Five Countries committed to further collaborate on policy, regulatory, intelligence, operational and enforcement responses, to build our collective resilience against the hostile actions of state actors.

The Five Countries will continue to work together on the development of a global, values-based approach that promotes trusted and secure cross border data flow.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity threats affect the daily lives of our nations’ citizens. The continued scourge of ransomware threatens the delivery of critical services within our countries and across the world. Russia’s unlawful invasion of Ukraine demonstrates how malicious cyber activity can be used by

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nation states, affiliated malicious actors, and hacktivists in times of heightened conflict. We are united in establishing clear and complementary cyber security strategies to meet our shared objectives, will continue to share information to ensure strong protections for our national infrastructure, and will collectively combat the increasing threat that cybercrime and malicious actors pose to our communities.

Engagement with Tech Industry

The Five Countries share an unwavering commitment to the rule of law, human rights, democracy and the protection of our citizens from harms, including those online. We champion the privacy rights of our citizens and work to ensure that technology is harnessed in a manner that supports democratic values and institutions.

We are committed to working with the tech industry to strengthen cybersecurity and the protections for users against tech-enabled crime, as well as state sponsored cyber activity. We will continue to uphold a strong commitment to privacy and cybersecurity—including through the use of strong encryption and other innovative technology—while ensuring public safety can be protected.

We, the Five Countries, call on industry to work with like-minded international partners to develop safe and secure means for tightly-controlled lawful access to data in line with liberal democratic values in order to permit lawful criminal investigations and counter national security threats. It is also important that technology companies continue to be able to innovate to bring the benefits of technology to our citizens and help our economies thrive.

Ensuring tightly-controlled and strict lawful access to communications content is vital to the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes, including terrorism and child abuse, as well as national security threats. Within each of the Five Countries, such tightly-controlled requests for access are sought with robust safeguards and oversight mechanisms as set out in our policy and legal frameworks. Building on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) *Declaration on Government Access to Personal Data Held by Private Sector Entities (2022)*, and the *International Statement: End-to-end encryption and public safety (2020)*, we welcome dialogue between the Five Countries, industry, and likeminded international partners, to reaffirm our commitments to advancing user privacy, cybersecurity, and lawful access to data in support of public safety.

Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism

Collectively, we reaffirmed that countering the threat of violent extremism and terrorism is a key priority for our countries, and we remain committed to ongoing cooperation to address this evolving challenge. We will continue to enhance information sharing on the prevalence, methods, transnational linkages and networks of domestic and international violent extremist actors, groups or movements that pose a threat to the Five Countries. We remain steadfast in our commitment to share best practices on how to prevent and counter this ever-evolving threat. At the FCM, we explored the commonality of threats across our countries and discussed further

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areas of cooperation. We stressed that effectively combatting violent extremism requires a multisectoral response, which includes prevention efforts. We stressed the importance of policy positions that are informed by research and committed to engaging with research communities to better inform and support evidence-based policies. Prevention also includes strengthening the understanding of online and offline radicalization to violence, which requires collaboration on research and policy from all actors across the prevention spectrum, both in and outside of government.

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Online

The Five Countries remain committed to doing our utmost – exercising every available lever – to tackle all forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse and keep children safe online. Given the transnational nature of this crime, it is imperative that governments, law enforcement, industry and civil society continue to engage and collaborate on efforts to pursue offenders, provide support to victims and survivors, and encourage adoption of safety by design for online spaces.

In Wellington, the Five Countries reaffirmed our support for privacy enhancing technologies, including end-to-end encryption, that are critical to online security. Privacy and safety are not mutually exclusive: these technologies must be developed and deployed in consideration of the online safety of users, including children, and in a manner that does not preclude the ability for law enforcement agencies to detect and respond to online child sexual exploitation.

Following the launch of the *Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* (Voluntary Principles) in March 2020 by the Five Countries, and endorsed by G7 partners in 2021, we are pleased to see commitments from 19 companies to date. We are committed to supporting industry to adopt transparency reporting, and are further committed to holding the digital industry to account on their efforts to create a safer online environment for children, both through recognizing efforts to date and seeking to maximize these efforts. We continue to urge those who have endorsed, or are looking to endorse, the Voluntary Principles to engage in a transparent and accountable way, including reporting publicly against progress and compliance. Global standards and global collaborative action across all sectors are more critical now than ever – we need every actor to play their part and to take clear, decisive action.

The Five Countries have also committed to continuing to ensure we strengthen collective law enforcement efforts in tackling child sexual abuse, including developing a central repository for digital fingerprints (a “hash”), that identifies a picture of confirmed child sexual exploitation and abuse. We recognize the significant benefits of sharing hashes internationally and will continue to collaborate to develop this capability, with the aim to implement operationally in 2024.

Migration

The Five Countries acknowledge the current global migration and forced displacement landscape, and recognize the importance of international collaboration to address rising trends in irregular migration. Partners also acknowledge the importance of regular economic/labour

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pathways and the social and economic contributions of migrants and refugees in our respective domestic contexts.

At the FCM, we reaffirmed our joint commitment to the international protection regime, including the protection of refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless individuals; humanitarian approaches to forcibly displaced people; and other populations in vulnerable situations. The Five Countries recognize the importance of exploring and considering complementary, alternative and additional pathways with a focus on those affected by humanitarian/complex crises.

We concurred on the importance of modernizing immigration systems so they continue to offer safe and regular pathways, yet are responsive to evolving realities and crises, as well as adaptable to labour market needs. Our nations are committed to exchanging and collaborating on strengthening and digitalizing our respective immigration systems to ensure their accessibility, efficiency, security and sustainability.

The Five Countries agree to work together to assess emerging irregular movement trends and threats, including those facilitated by criminal organizations, and to share novel approaches to addressing this issue. The Five Countries are committed to leveraging the tools afforded by digitalization to strengthen risk management and enhance the integrity of our immigration and border management systems.

National Resilience

Collectively, we acknowledge the increasing frequency, concurrence and impact of domestic and international crises – whether from natural hazards or human-induced threats – and the implications for our nations’ capacities to prevent, mitigate, respond and adapt to, and recover from them. We emphasize our strong concern, amplified by the latest finding of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), at the accelerating and intensifying impacts of climate change, and our nations further recognize that climate change is increasing vulnerabilities to national security threats and natural hazard events. The Five Countries reaffirmed our commitment to work together to create a shared understanding of how to better identify, prepare and mitigate against disasters, global shocks, and national crises, enhance emergency management operational coordination, and share approaches for building and enhancing the capabilities of our respective emergency management workforces. We will continue to strengthen our collaboration on national resilience, emergency management, crisis preparedness and response, and climate security.

Critical infrastructure across the Five Countries is increasingly interconnected and interdependent: disruptions to businesses’ ability to operate, including to grow, manufacture, power, store and deliver goods and services, may have downstream impacts on partner countries.

We recognize that collective action and collaboration in this area will enable members to have greater situational awareness of threats and trends, and provide more effective guidance to critical infrastructure owners and operators. By implementing sustained and impactful best

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practices on information sharing through forums like the Critical Five, the Five Countries will continue to drive cooperation to address current and emerging threats and risks facing critical infrastructure.

Fentanyl and the Opioid Crisis

On February 22, 2023, Ministers from the Five Countries convened to discuss the critical threat to public health, public safety and security posed by the illicit supply of fentanyl and other synthetic drugs. This includes the global expansion of the illicit production and trafficking of synthetic opioids and their precursor chemicals by transnational organized crime groups.

The Five Countries shared our concerns, experiences and priorities in managing this crisis. We will continue to work together to exchange best practices on how to prevent the import of illegal drugs and their precursor chemicals through detection and interdiction operations. We remain committed to building a global coalition against synthetic drugs to confront this complex challenge, together.

Closing

Continued engagement through the Five Country Ministerial illustrates the strength of the relationship between our nations, and our shared commitment to collaboratively address evolving threats to our countries and our citizens. We remain steadfast in our determination to uphold and promote our shared values internationally, and to continue to use this forum as a platform to strengthen our cooperation.