

## **CHAIR'S STATEMENT: SECURITY MINISTERS' MEETING**

**April 24, 2018**

On April 23 and 24, 2018, G7 security ministers, together with the members of the European Union and the Secretary General of Interpol, met to develop clear approaches to strengthen our security, protect our values as democratic nations, and work toward the collective goal of building a more peaceful and secure world. As a group of like-minded countries, we want to assure our citizens that we will never compromise their security or freedoms, and we will not sacrifice one for the other. The agreed commitments are a testament to our focus on collaboration and the importance of the G7 as the right forum for that purpose.

### **Commitments**

- [G7 Security Ministers' Commitments Paper](#)

Gender equality and women's empowerment are a priority for Canada's G7 Presidency, and were important themes of this ministerial meeting. We know that countries that achieve greater gender equality are more peaceful. Therefore, our efforts to promote gender equality should go hand-in-hand with our mission to build a more peaceful and secure world. In this vein, G7 security ministers met with the members of the Gender Equality Advisory Council for Canada's G7 Presidency.

### **Trafficking in persons**

Trafficking in persons is a serious crime that occurs in every region of the world, and women account for the vast majority of its victims. It is often intensified by issues like poverty, racism, conflict and the lack of social support networks. G7 countries agreed to take concrete measures to eradicate this atrocious crime. As part of our meeting, G7 security ministers heard from some members of the Gender Equality Advisory Council who asked governments to crack down on criminal networks that fuel this problem, and to take clear steps to address violence against women and marginalized groups, specifically in the context of trafficking in persons.

### **Counterterrorism**

As we have seen in recent months, the security challenges we face are complex and evolving every day. From each of our countries, individuals have travelled to conflict zones for the purpose of engaging in terrorist related activities. They are now on the move. Some may be trying to return home, presenting new risks to all of us. Moreover, these security risks are not limited to male fighters, but also women and children who can be victims of trauma, perpetrators of violence, or both.

As a group, we are absolutely clear that we stand united against the threat posed by returning extremist and terrorist travellers. To effectively deal with this problem, G7 Security Ministers emphasized the need to responsibly share information with each other, particularly evidence collected on the battlefield. This evidence can help our countries with the prosecution of individuals who have taken part in terrorist activities. We also committed to address domestic terrorism from wherever it emanates, by using all tools at our disposal.

While individuals who are radicalized towards violence pose a security threat to our societies, we recognize that more can be done to prevent people from radicalizing to violence in the first place. There can be no doubt in our conviction that hateful ideologies of terrorist organizations cannot be tolerated. All G7 countries are working together to find innovative solutions to deal with this problem. Part of those solutions includes working closely with communities and private industry to help build resilience against violent extremism in our societies.

That includes getting ahead of emerging technology. We recognize that terrorists use the internet as a tool for recruitment, training, propaganda, and financing, often by exploiting the different ways men and women can be targeted online. Therefore, countries need to intelligently address

this problem by investigating the gender-based strategies of terrorist groups, and by working with the internet industry to create effective solutions. G7 Security Ministers had an open conversation with the members of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, comprised of Facebook, Google, Twitter, and Microsoft. We called upon these companies to work together with the G7 countries to address this complex problem on an urgent basis.

### **Cybersecurity**

Apart from the use of the online space by terrorists, G7 partners must remain focused on the wide-ranging cyber threats facing each of our countries. Some of these threats include foreign interference in elections, cybercrime—which includes the theft of personal information—and threats to our critical infrastructure. While technology can make life easier for us, it can also make life easier for people who want to harm us. Technological innovations are occurring very rapidly, making it difficult for governments to keep up.

Because of the interconnected nature of this threat, we recognize that working together on this issue is more important than ever. Our discussion today allowed us to reaffirm our commitment to sharing information and best practices that will build our security in this important area.

I would like to thank my G7 colleagues for their participation in this meeting, and I look forward to advancing the work we committed to here today. I would also like to thank those who joined the discussions: the Gender Equality Advisory Council, the Global Internet Forum for Countering Terrorism and Interpol. I look forward to working with my French counterpart leading up to 2019, when France assumes the G7 Presidency, and with all of my G7 partners on these vital issues.

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