

Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction Mandate Letter (August 28, 2018)

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Office of the
Prime Minister



Cabinet du
Premier ministre

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A2

Dear Mr. Blair:

I am honoured that you have agreed to serve Canadians as Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction.

We are now in the third year of implementing our plan to grow our economy, strengthen the middle class, and help those people working hard to join it. We are providing more direct help to those people who need it by giving less to those who do not. We are making strong public investments to spur economic growth, job creation, and broad-based prosperity. We implemented a responsible, transparent fiscal plan for challenging economic times.

Canadians will hold us accountable for delivering these commitments, and I expect all ministers to do their part – individually and collectively – to improve economic opportunity and security for Canadians.

It is my expectation that we will deliver real results and professional government to Canadians. To ensure that we have a strong focus on results, I will expect Cabinet committees and individual ministers to: track and report on the progress of our commitments; assess the effectiveness of our work; and align our resources with priorities, in order to get the results we want and Canadians deserve.

If we are to tackle the real challenges we face as a country – from a struggling middle class to the threat of climate change – Canadians need to have faith in their government's honesty and willingness to listen. I expect that our work will be informed by performance measurement, evidence, and feedback from Canadians. We will direct our resources to those initiatives that are having the greatest, positive impact on the lives of Canadians, and that will allow us to meet our commitments to them. I expect you to report regularly on your progress toward fulfilling our commitments and to help develop effective measures that assess the impact of the organizations for which you are answerable.

I made a personal commitment to bring new leadership and a new tone to Ottawa. We made a commitment to Canadians to pursue our goals with a renewed sense of collaboration. Improved partnerships with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments are essential to deliver the real, positive change that we promised Canadians. No relationship is more important to me and to Canada than the one with Indigenous Peoples. It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

We have also committed to set a higher bar for openness and transparency in government. It is time to shine more light on government to ensure it remains focused on the people it serves. Government and its information should be open by default. If we want Canadians to trust their government, we need a government that trusts Canadians. It is important that we acknowledge mistakes when we make them. Canadians do not expect us to be perfect – they expect us to be honest, open, and sincere in our efforts to serve the public interest.

Our platform guides our government. I expect us to deliver on all of our commitments. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that we fulfill our promises, while living within our fiscal plan. Other issues will arise or will be brought to our attention by Canadians, stakeholders, and the public service. It is my expectation that you will engage constructively and thoughtfully and add priorities to your agenda when appropriate.

As Minister, you will be held accountable for our commitment to bring a different style of leadership to government. This will include: close collaboration with your colleagues; meaningful engagement with

Opposition Members of Parliament, Parliamentary Committees and the public service; constructive dialogue with Canadians, civil society, and stakeholders, including business, organized labour, the broader public sector, and the not-for-profit and charitable sectors; and identifying ways to find solutions and avoid escalating conflicts unnecessarily. As well, members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, indeed all journalists in Canada and abroad, are professionals who, by asking necessary questions, contribute in an important way to the democratic process. Your professionalism and engagement with them is essential.

Canadians expect us, in our work, to reflect the values we all embrace: inclusion, honesty, hard work, fiscal prudence, and generosity of spirit. We will be a government that governs for all Canadians, and I expect you, in your work, to bring Canadians together.

You are expected to do your part to fulfill our government's commitment to transparent, merit-based appointments, to help ensure gender parity and that Indigenous Canadians and minority groups are better reflected in positions of leadership.

As Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, your goals are to ensure that our borders remain secure and to lead cross-government efforts to reduce organized crime. You will work to ensure Canada's borders are managed to promote legitimate travel and trade while keeping Canadians safe and treating everyone fairly, in accordance with our laws. You will also play a leading role in our efforts to reduce gun violence. You will lead the legalization and strict regulation of cannabis, and are the Minister responsible for our strategy to manage the challenge of irregular migration.

In particular, I will expect you to work with your colleagues and through established legislative, regulatory, and Cabinet processes to deliver on your top priorities:

- Lead the government's plan on irregular migration. Your leadership of this initiative will be fully supported by the departments and agencies of the Ministers of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and Foreign Affairs for this responsibility.
- Represent the Government of Canada on the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration. You will be expected to work in close collaboration and partnership with provinces, territories and municipalities to help address this ongoing challenge.
- Lead conversations with the United States on the Safe Third Country Agreement, working closely with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.
- **Support the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on the passage of Bill C-71, and work together on additional policy, regulations or legislation that could reduce crime involving the use of firearms and keep Canadians safe. You should lead an examination of a full ban on handguns and assault weapons in Canada, while not impeding the lawful use of firearms by Canadians. [my emphasis added]**
- Lead work across the government to reduce the smuggling of opioids across our borders, and work in partnership with provinces, territories, and municipalities, as well as the United States per the Joint Prime Minister – President Statement of February 2017.
- Working with the Ministers of Transport, Foreign Affairs and Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, seek additional opportunities to expand pre-clearance operations for travelers to the United States.
- With support from the Ministers of Health, Justice and Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, lead the legalization and strict regulation of cannabis across Canada, including working with the provinces and territories to develop and implement these regulations. Your key priorities are public safety, responsible usage and keeping cannabis away from children.
- Lead work across the government to develop new policies and legislation to reduce organized crime and gang activity in Canada. You will be expected to work closely with provinces, territories, and municipalities, as well as community organizations, law enforcement and border agencies. This work should include a focus on cutting off money laundering which, as we have seen recently in British Columbia, supports our efforts to counter guns, gangs and opioid distribution.

These priorities draw heavily from our election platform commitments.

I expect you to work closely with your Deputy Minister and his or her senior officials to ensure that the ongoing work of your department is undertaken in a professional manner and that decisions are made in the public

interest. Your Deputy Minister will brief you on issues your department may be facing that may require decisions to be made quickly. It is my expectation that you will apply our values and principles to these decisions, so that issues facing your department are dealt with in a timely and responsible manner, and in a way that is consistent with the overall direction of our government.

Our ability, as a government, to successfully implement our platform depends on our ability to thoughtfully consider the professional, non-partisan advice of public servants. Each and every time a government employee comes to work, they do so in service to Canada, with a goal of improving our country and the lives of all Canadians. I expect you to establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, whose role, and the role of public servants under his or her direction, is to support you in the performance of your responsibilities.

We have committed to an open, honest government that is accountable to Canadians, lives up to the highest ethical standards, and applies the utmost care and prudence in the handling of public funds. I expect you to embody these values in your work and observe the highest ethical standards in everything you do. When dealing with our Cabinet colleagues, Parliament, stakeholders, or the public, it is important that your behaviour and decisions meet Canadians' well-founded expectations of our government. I want Canadians to look on their own government with pride and trust.

As Minister, you must ensure that you are aware of and fully compliant with the *Conflict of Interest Act* and Treasury Board policies and guidelines. You will be provided with a copy of *Open and Accountable Government* to assist you as you undertake your responsibilities. I ask that you carefully read it and ensure that your staff does so as well. I draw your attention in particular to the Ethical Guidelines set out in Annex A of that document, which apply to you and your staff. As noted in the Guidelines, you must uphold the highest standards of honesty and impartiality, and both the performance of your official duties and the arrangement of your private affairs should bear the closest public scrutiny. This is an obligation that is not fully discharged by simply acting within the law. Please also review the areas of *Open and Accountable Government* that we have expanded or strengthened, including the guidance on non-partisan use of departmental communications resources and the new code of conduct for exempt staff.

I know I can count on you to fulfill the important responsibilities entrusted in you. In turn, please know that you can count on me to support you every day in your role as Minister.

I am deeply grateful to have this opportunity to serve with you as we build an even greater country. Together, we will work tirelessly to honour the trust Canadians have given us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Justin Trudeau', written in a cursive style.

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada