

Five Country Ministerial

September 12th - 13th, 2022



COMMUNIQUÉ

1. We, the Home Affairs, Interior, Security and Immigration Ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States (the Five Countries) have come together in Washington, D.C. on September 12-13, 2022, for the Five Country Ministerial (FCM). We stand resolute in our shared responsibility and commitment to confront evolving security threats, promote shared values, and protect our countries from dangers at home, abroad, and online.
2. This past year, we have joined efforts to emerge stronger from the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic by enhancing border security and traveler facilitation and screening through robust information sharing, recovering from shocks to our supply chains and enhancing our resilience, and reimagining a future that is more secure for our citizens. We have confronted world conflict and declared solidarity with Ukraine against Russia's unjustifiable and unprovoked invasion. We remain steadfast in our support of those who are forcibly displaced or seeking refuge, including by offering pathways to seek safe harbor in our countries. We will continue to share best practices and meet new challenges together.
3. We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to an international system that is free and open, based on adherence to international law, support of rules and norms, and respectful of sovereignty. We will support economic growth and post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery by strengthening domestic resilience, promoting transparency and accountability, and defending against attempts to undermine institutions of governance. We will work with other partners, including in the Indo-Pacific, to help ensure international stability, peace, and prosperity.

Facing Emerging Crises Together

4. The Five Country partnership is vital for continued collaboration on information sharing, counterterrorism efforts, malign state and hybrid threats, refugee processing and protection, expansion and promotion of regular, legal pathways for immigration, sharing cybersecurity best practices, and more. As the situation in Afghanistan unfolded in August 2021, this partnership was used successfully to share real-time information on evacuation efforts, intelligence to counter terrorism and preserve border security, and measures to ensure humanitarian protection for those in need of it during one of the largest humanitarian resettlement efforts in recent history.
5. In the face of the Russian invasion, we gathered intelligence on asymmetrical warfare, exchanged best practices on cybersecurity, and monitored regional hybrid threats affecting both our public and private sectors. It is essential that Five Country partners continue to support each other, and like-minded countries, in coordinated and efficient responses to national, regional, and global crises that have the potential to weaken national security. We will continue to develop and share learning on responses to acute, emerging, and chronic crises to collectively improve resilience across the Five Countries.



6. The Five Countries recognize the growing implications of significant domestic hazards and threats, including those driven by climate change, on our nations' capacities to minimize the impact, respond, adapt, and recover from these crises. We will establish deeper collaboration on emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction and will advance Five Country national resilience policies and strategies to bring a new level of emergency preparedness coordination. We will work together to strengthen institutional ties, share information, best practice principles, and enhance policy and operational cooperation in relation to these critical challenges.

Countering Foreign Interference

7. The Five Countries envision a world where countries are secure from coercion and aggression, and where countries can forge their own paths and work together effectively in common cause. To build that future, we must continue strengthening our domestic resilience to safeguard our sovereignty and shared values, including protecting democratic institutions and our most vulnerable communities, assets, and sectors from foreign interference.
8. We condemn efforts aimed at the unwanted transfer of intellectual property and that seek to exploit our immigration systems and institutions to gain access to sensitive information. This practice of using assets to perform covert acquisition of sensitive and protected information in academia and research and development sectors must be addressed. Building on last year's commitment, we will continue to expand our collaboration to reduce the threat in these areas.
9. Individuals and communities at risk of foreign interference and transnational repression are valued members of our democratic societies and should be free from being targeted by foreign states. The Five Countries express their commitment to supporting at-risk communities so that they are able to enjoy their full rights and freedoms. The Five Countries also continue to stand together to support and protect the global systems that keep our public safe, including international law enforcement. We will continue our efforts to align our position on INTERPOL and reaffirm our commitment to working collectively to deter abuse of INTERPOL systems and other tools to support global public safety.

Tackling Forced Labor and Human Trafficking

10. The persistent use of forced labor undermines the protection of human rights and international labor standards. Disregard for the value of human dignity and global economic manipulation is not acceptable. The Five Countries will fight to identify and block goods and services produced with forced labor. We will play a critical role in preventing forced labor and other forms of human trafficking.

Supporting International Norms and Rules Based Order

11. We will explore opportunities to expand collaboration on information sharing related to uncontrolled chemicals and equipment, strengthening enforcement of shipping label standards, and implementing effective programs to limit chemical sales to legitimate customers through the enforcement of rigorous export controls.
12. We recognize that some countries may have concerns about access to technology for sustainable development and peaceful purposes but emphasize that existing export control regimes are not preventing this. Non-proliferation regimes are critical to enabling international trade and science and technology cooperation for peaceful purposes by providing reassurance that technology and materials will not get into the wrong hands, leading to misuse.



Strengthening Pathways for Regular Migration and Innovation within Migration Policy

13. We acknowledge the importance of ensuring access to safe, lawful, and orderly immigration pathways as a means to address irregular migration. We encourage each Five Country partner to identify and strengthen pathways that best suit their domestic landscapes – whether based on family reunification, economic prosperity, or international protection. We reaffirm the positive social and economic benefits that immigrants bring to our societies, including supporting our COVID-19-related economic recovery. We also acknowledge our common commitment to the international protection regime, including the protection of refugees, forcibly displaced persons, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable populations.
14. The Five Countries each undertook serious policy work to build and shape innovative protection and humanitarian pathways in response to the Afghanistan and Ukraine crises. We strengthened and developed new pathways with a focus on welcoming forcibly displaced persons who required international protection and humanitarian assistance. In addition, the Five Countries facilitated international coordination of migration and other forms of humanitarian admission or transfers.
15. We reiterate the sovereign right of states to strong border management, including the responsibility to deter, prevent, detect, and disrupt those who seek to evade or facilitate the evasion of border controls.

Mitigating Violent Extremism in All its Forms

16. The Five Countries are working together to prevent, detect, and respond to all types of violent extremism that threatens our countries regardless of form or motivation. We recognize that it is essential to understand what constitutes violent extremist activity, address it in a robust and coordinated manner, and facilitate information sharing to inform policy responses, strategic communications, community engagement, and swift investigations. We are prioritizing the fight against violent extremism and are working to enhance our methods to identify and address violent extremist activity while continuing to protect privacy, civil rights, civil liberties, and human rights.
17. The Five Countries recognize prevention as a key pillar in combating violent extremism. This pillar is complementary to other mechanisms such as national security, law enforcement, and criminal justice responses to violent extremism. Responding effectively to the threat of violent extremism requires a multilateral and multisectoral approach and includes learning from complementary fields such as public health and social work. We call on our officials to better leverage the research and lessons from frontline prevention efforts in each of our countries to establish a stronger, shared evidence base to support more effective and professional case management approaches to intervene when individuals are at risk or involved in violent extremism.
18. We also call for greater collaboration on research and policy in responding to online radicalization to violence, both across the Five Countries and with support from industry, civil society, and our academic partners. Coordinated, objective, and rigorous research across our countries on the various harmful impacts of online efforts to support or encourage violence will better inform our countries' ability to prevent and respond.



Strengthening Cybersecurity in Response to Evolving Online Threats

19. Our lives are increasingly centered online, and we acknowledge our role in safeguarding our citizens against malicious cyber activity of both state and non-state actors. These cyber threats to national security are not constrained by borders; rather they are international, broad, and often indiscriminate. It is essential that our citizens be able to trust technology as it continues to play an ever-increasing role in society. We affirm that strengthening cyber security requires a whole-of-society effort, and that the private sector is a critical partner in our efforts to mitigate cyber security risks. This includes strengthening our collaboration on global, values based data security within our democratic frameworks. The Five Countries are continuously expanding and iterating on our joint efforts to counter cybersecurity threats and ensure the security and resilience of emerging technologies – including those impacting critical infrastructure – and improve public awareness measures.
20. One of our top shared priorities is combatting ransomware. Ransomware poses a significant threat to governments, critical infrastructure, and essential services on which all our citizens depend. Our countries recognize that ransomware threatens the privacy of data belonging to individuals and businesses and the availability of critical services, with cascading consequences for national security, personal safety, and economic interests. Following the 2021 Five Country Ministerial Statement *Regarding the Threat of Ransomware*, we reaffirm our commitment to work with industries, businesses, and individuals to develop collective responses to ransomware. We continue to work judiciously to achieve joint outcomes as we develop our respective cyber-related processes and policies, including current efforts to enact and implement domestic legislation on mandatory incident reporting.
21. We understand that criminal cyber activity is often multi-jurisdictional and transnational, and we will continue to prioritize the joint efforts needed to combat these crimes. We also commit to take responsibility to combat criminal cyber activity originating within our own jurisdictions and encourage other countries to do the same.

Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Online

22. The Five Countries continue to partner on enhancing public safety online, with the most vulnerable victims at the forefront: our children. Children today face a sustained threat of sexual exploitation and abuse online. The scale and complexity of this threat is rapidly increasing. As the latest Global Threat Assessment from WeProtect Global Alliance shows, it has never been easier for people who want to sexually exploit children to contact potential victims around the world, share images of their abuse, and encourage each other to commit further crimes. As technology advances, new forms of this crime emerge.
23. In March 2020, the Five Country Ministerial launched the *Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* in consultation with six technology companies and the WeProtect Global Alliance. Since then, G7 Interior Ministers have joined in their support, and so far 16 companies have endorsed the Principles. We commend those companies who are acting to address child sexual exploitation and abuse, though we note there are others who have not yet done so despite their expressed desire to protect children online. We reiterate our call to additional companies, and the wider industry, to endorse and transparently implement the Principles.
24. We welcome the cross-industry efforts, including by the Tech Coalition and its recent launch of the Voluntary Industry Framework “TRUST,” for Transparency reporting. We urge that



companies swiftly and consistently start reporting in accordance with this framework. The tools, expertise, and resources industry has at its disposal play a central role in protecting children. Industry should invest in and share solutions to protect children commensurate with the scale, severity, and complexity of this threat, including in those situations in which anonymizing tools and end-to-end encryption are in use. We reiterate the need to protect privacy, cyber security, and children’s safety. Product design decisions that impact public safety, and especially the safety of children, should be informed by consultation with representatives of democratically elected governments. To this end, we urge the digital industry to engage with government representatives and to incorporate Safety by Design practices in their emerging products and devices in line with their users’ expectations of both privacy and safety protections for all users, including children. We recognize the importance of global and cross-sector collaboration and will continue to seek opportunities to engage with wider multilateral forums and international partners to raise awareness and promote common standards.

25. We will continue to deepen the cooperation of our law enforcement institutions and officials to work together and share tools and capabilities to prevent child sexual offenses and bring perpetrators to justice. Following recommendations from a feasibility study, a central repository system for Hash Sharing between the Five countries will be developed. We will engage with international partners to share learning from this work.

Preventing Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

26. Lead officials responsible for migration and border management from the Five Countries met in 2019 and acknowledged the importance of tackling Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and related harmful practices. FGM/C is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights, including the rights of children.
27. The Five Countries recognize that FGM/C is harmful to the physical and mental well-being of women and girls and requires a multi-sectoral approach. We reiterate our commitment to work more closely together in relation to FGM/C, particularly where these practices often involve travel across borders and where Five Country cooperation would have an impact in the mitigation of these practices. We appreciate the importance of cooperation with non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, including women with lived experience of FGM/C, as components of this Five Country response. While this collaboration acknowledges each country’s ability to operate with differing conceptions of the scope of FGM/C, in line with definitions under their respective legislation and within the parameters of domestic priorities, it encourages each country to protect and promote the full rights of women and girls, consistent with international human rights law and international standards.

Beneficial Ownership Transparency

28. We recognize the vital importance to national security of implementing strong, effective measures on beneficial ownership transparency so that law enforcement authorities have rapid access to adequate, accurate, and up-to-date company beneficial ownership information. This can support priority national security objectives, including preventing crime and corruption; countering terrorism, foreign interference and espionage, and supporting enforcement of sanctions; and protection of supply chains and strategic economic sectors. Therefore, we are committed to advocating for this agenda within our own governments, with a view to accelerating and strengthening domestic reforms where appropriate. We are also committed to driving more impactful global action on beneficial ownership transparency by treating it as a priority issue in our engagements with international partners.



Conclusion

29. Today we reaffirmed the importance of the Five Country partnership in addressing complex homeland and national security challenges. Our history of cooperation, our shared values, and our enduring friendship provide solid foundations to face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century together. We remain committed to building on this past cooperation and together pledge the commitments made today.