

TRANSMITTAL SLIP / NOTE D'ENVOI

To / À Director		Classification SECRET	
From / De ADP <i>26 August 22 19</i>		File / Dossier	
Drafting officer / Rédacteur		Date 2019 08 21	
Subject / Sujet Memorandum to the Minister: Update on CSIS Engagement with Muslim Students			
Action / Donnez suite		Priority / Priorité	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signature <input type="checkbox"/> Comments / Commentaires <input type="checkbox"/> Approval / Approbation <input type="checkbox"/> Information		<input type="checkbox"/> Routine <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urgent <input type="checkbox"/> Immediate / Immédiate	
		CSIS / SCRS 2019 08 21 (16:30 to ADPO)	
Record of Consultation/Approval Rapport de consultation/d'approbation		Deadline / Délai	
Consulted Consulté Yes Oui No Non		Comments / Commentaires DIR Please find enclosed, for your approval, a draft Memorandum to the Minister that provides an update regarding CSIS engagement with Muslim Students. Enclosed is the letter to the editor of the Toronto Star identifying concerns with an opinion piece published on August 12, 2019. It has been attached in Annex 1.	
DG, PFR <i>2019 08 22</i> <i>J. Jones</i>		CSIS / SCRS AUG 22 2019 33988 ADP / DAP CSIS / SCRS AUG 21 2019 33988 Policy & Foreign Relations	

Canadian Security
Intelligence Service



Director - Directeur

Service canadien du
renseignement de sécurité

CCM # 33988

SECRET

For Information

AUG 27 2019

MEMORANDUM TO THE MINISTER

UPDATE ON CSIS ENGAGEMENT WITH MUSLIM STUDENTS

BACKGROUND:

On 7 August 2019, CBC News published a story reporting that Muslim university students at the University of Toronto are being contacted by CSIS Intelligence Officers on "fishing expeditions" and how a new student support line and pro bono legal clinic is being established to assist students respond to interview requests (*"When CSIS comes knocking: Amid reports of Muslim students contacted by spy agency, hotline aims to help"*).

The following week, on 12 August 2019, the two Toronto-based lawyers looking to establish the clinic published an opinion piece in the Toronto Star reinforcing the narrative in the CBC story. It implied that interview activity surrounding Muslim students had increased and that they should be concerned when engaging with CSIS.

DISCUSSION:

As part of CSIS' stakeholder engagement strategy, on 23 July, 2019, CSIS met with the two lawyers to discuss the initiative and address student concerns with CSIS interviews. The central issue of the meeting concerned how CSIS Intelligence Officers address subject interview requests for legal counsel. The allegation made was that CSIS Officers are dissuading persons during interviews from seeking legal advice or counsel. CSIS assured the lawyers that the Service does not counsel individuals to avoid seeking legal advice.

CSIS offered to maintain contact to help demystify perceptions of CSIS and strengthen community relationships. CSIS also offered to participate in training sessions for the roster of lawyers that will be associated to the clinic as a means to further explain and demystify the Service's interests and perspectives.

Of note, the Service is currently in the process of establishing a new Academic Outreach and Strategic Engagement branch with the mandate to bolster and coordinate senior-level engagement with strategic private sector, academic and civil society stakeholders across Canada. This team will implement a stakeholder engagement strategy to help ensure that CSIS is seen in the minds of these important stakeholders as an informed, sophisticated, and reliable government partner in the protection of their interests as they relate to Canada's national security and economic prosperity. The strategy will also contribute to public literacy around national security issues in Canada, contributing to more informed public debate on national security matters, incidents, and policy development.

Regarding the Toronto Star opinion piece, I submitted a letter to the editor underscoring that CSIS interactions are voluntary and appropriate safeguards are in place for engagement with fundamental institutions. It has been attached in Annex.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.



David Vigneault

cc.: Deputy Minister, Public Safety
National Security and Intelligence Advisor

Enclosure (1)

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ET/OU DE LA LOI SUR L'ACCÈS À L'INFORMATION"

ANNEX A

To the editor:

Re: *What to do if CSIS comes knocking*

I wanted to take this opportunity to respond to the portrayal of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service in the opinion piece written by Nader R. Hasan and Anver Emon, *What to do if CSIS comes knocking*, that was published on August 12, 2019.

In the piece, what's most troubling is the sentiment that Muslim students are being singled-out and have something to fear. This is categorically false.

As Canada's national intelligence service, CSIS regularly engages with Canadians on issues related to our national security mandate. When we seek cooperation or assistance from Canadians, we emphasize that discussions are voluntary. Our approach is lawful, ethical, necessary, and proportionate. In instances where CSIS investigations cross paths with individuals associated with Canadian fundamental institutions such as religious institutions and academia, additional safeguards and requirements are put in place.

At CSIS, building and maintaining the trust and confidence of Canadians is something we strive to do each and every day. It is fundamental to our legitimacy, operational effectiveness, and institutional credibility. Frankly, we would have it no other way.

David Vigneault

Director, Canadian Security Intelligence Service