



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-00605**

BY: **MR. VIRANI (PARKDALE-HIGH PARK)**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 23, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE RALPH GOODALE, P.C., M.P.**

Response by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

SIGNATURE
Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Anti-terrorism Act 2015

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government is focused on ensuring that Canada's national security framework keeps Canadians safe while safeguarding rights and freedoms. To this end, the Government has committed to a number of important measures, including repealing the problematic elements of the Anti-terrorism Act, 2015.

Already, the Government has introduced Bill C-22, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act, to create a new committee of parliamentarians with extraordinary access to classified information. The Committee will have a robust mandate to review, on its own initiative, the full range of national security and intelligence activities across the Government, including ongoing operations. The Committee can also review the legislative, regulatory, policy, financial and administrative framework for national security and intelligence in Canada. The Committee's public reports to Parliament will allow it to report on whatever it wants, whenever it wants, and with full independence so long as it does not disclose classified information. The Committee will ensure that departments and agencies are working effectively to keep Canadians safe. It will also ensure that they are conducting themselves in ways that are consistent with Canada's laws and fundamental values, the democratic nature of Canada as an open society, and with Canadian's rights and freedoms under the Charter.

The Government has also created a new Passenger Protect Inquiries Office as part of its efforts to improve the no-fly system, particularly with respect to redress mechanisms. This Office assists travellers who experience difficulties related to aviation security lists, notably by helping to prevent delays and stigmatization due to false positives.

The Government has also committed \$35 million over five years, with \$10 million per year ongoing, to create an office of community outreach and counter-radicalization. This new office will provide national leadership on Canada's response to radicalization; coordinate federal, provincial, territorial and international initiatives; facilitate the sharing of best practices; and support community outreach and research. Canadians pride themselves on having an open, plural, democratic society, and Canada must be a world leader in counter-radicalization in order to protect these values.

Moreover, in accordance with the commitments made during the 2015 election campaign, the Government will be better defining rules regarding terrorist propaganda, better protecting the right to advocate and protest, ensuring clarity with respect to warrants, mandating statutory review of all terrorism-related legislation after three years, and ensuring compliance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Government has also launched unprecedented national consultations to give Canadians, including subject-matter experts and members of the public, the opportunity to share their views about what additional measures should be taken to keep Canadians safe and protect rights and freedoms. These consultations include an online component that will receive contributions until December 1st, 2016, as well as in-person consultations in ridings across the country, and a meeting in October with the Ministers of Public Safety and Justice and representatives of civil society. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security has also undertaken consultations, and the Government looks forward to receiving the Committee's report.

The Committee has notably heard testimony from the Privacy Commissioner, and the importance of protecting Canadians' privacy rights is indeed an important element of the Government's approach. The Minister of Public Safety recently spoke with the Commissioner to thank him for his 2015-2016 annual report and to reaffirm the Government's eagerness to continue working with his office to ensure that Canada's national security framework protects privacy rights.

The Government of Canada's top priority must be keeping Canadians safe, and this can and must be done while protecting the rights and freedoms of Canadians, and the open, inclusive, and democratic character of this country – in other words, the qualities that make Canada Canada.