

Prime Minister's remarks on the UN Security Council and the new mobile app to help notify Canadians of COVID-19 exposure

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Hello everyone.

I want to start by congratulating all of the new, non-permanent members of the UN Security Council. And although Canada isn't one of them, I want to take a moment to talk about our work on the file.

As Canadians know, we embarked on this journey four years ago now.

We decided to throw our hat in the ring because we saw a unique opportunity to engage with our partners across the UN, build sustainable peace, and make real progress on issues that matter to Canadians.

And that's what we've done during this campaign.

We forged new partnerships, we strengthened existing friendships, and we laid a solid foundation for an even greater collaboration in the future.

And that's never been more critical.

Now more than ever, global cooperation is crucial not only to defeat this virus, but to address the great challenges of our time – challenges that transcend borders.

Growing our economies, mitigating the impacts of climate change, building a lasting peace, advancing gender equality, protecting our citizens – we have to engage with partners to achieve these goals.

Getting this seat was never an end in itself, but rather a means to an end. A means to ensure that our voice was heard and that our values were upheld on the world stage.

The bid was certainly one way to achieve this, but it's far from the only way.

Moving forward, Canadians can count on us to keep working with our partners to make progress internationally on issues that matter to them.

Across the country, we're starting to reopen parts of the economy and that's welcome news for everyone.

But as we start loosening some restrictions, we also have to strengthen other measures so that we don't lose the progress we've made.

As some people start heading back to work, testing and contact tracing is crucial.

That's why we've been working with the provinces and territories to ensure that they have everything they need to keep people safe and healthy.

And today, we're taking an important step forward toward containing the virus and safely restarting the economy.

Led by the Canadian Digital Service, and with the help of Shopify, Blackberry, and the Government of Ontario, we've been working on a nationwide mobile app that will notify users if they've been exposed to COVID-19.

We will soon begin testing this app in Ontario. There are already a number of other provinces, including B.C., who are working with us on this, but it will be available to everyone in the coming weeks.

Premier Ford will have more to say on how the app will work in Ontario later today, but I want to thank him and his government for their leadership and partnership.

Now, I want to stress that this app will be completely voluntary.

It'll be up to individual Canadians to decide whether to download the app or not.

But the app will be most effective when as many people as possible have it.

Here's how it's going to work.

If you test positive for COVID-19, a health-care professional will help you upload your status anonymously to a national network.

Other users who have the app and have been in proximity to you will then be alerted that they've been exposed to someone who's tested positive.

The notification will encourage them to reach out to their local public health authorities.

At no time will personal information be collected or shared, and no location services will be used.

The privacy of Canadians will be fully respected.

Over the past few weeks, we have started reopening some parts of the economy.

But this presents specific challenges for different sectors.

I am thinking, for example, of the cultural industry.

Since the beginning of the crisis, our government has been there for artists, creators, and workers in this sector.

The Canada Council for the Arts estimates that, in total, the cultural industry has received over \$2.5 billion, notably through programs like the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.

In April, we provided \$500 million to support our artists, our creators, and our rising sports stars. I can announce that we are today launching an online portal to speed up the processing of these applications.

Organizations that want to obtain funding can now apply on the government's site.

We are making significant progress, but we know there is still work to be done.

Over the past few months, our museums have experienced major revenue losses, which is threatening a lot of people's jobs.

Our government has therefore decided to invest an additional \$25.7 million to maintain nearly 200 jobs in seven national museums across the country.

Our museums tell our stories, celebrate our artists, and enrich our communities.

The people working in these institutions are preserving our Canadian heritage.

They help us to learn about our past and to discover those who have left their mark on our country.

Since the beginning of the crisis, our government has been closely monitoring the spread of the virus, its impacts on our economy, and making the right adjustments along the way.

We're going to keep listening to Canadians and look for other ways to support them as the situation evolves.