

PM speaking notes for the June 12 COVID-19 update

12 June 2020

Good morning, everybody.

I would like to begin this morning by providing an update on the deployment of members of the Armed Forces to long-term care facilities in Quebec.

Our men and women in uniform are doing an incredible job and they are saving lives.

Since the end of April, the situation in a number of long-term care facilities has stabilized.

And many of the workers are on their way back to work.

This means that members of the Armed Forces who were deployed to a long-term care facility where things have improved, can now go help out in other facilities where the situation is more critical.

This has allowed us to help more than 35 LTC facilities to date and we are continuing to redeploy members of the Armed Forces from the LTC facilities that are under control to new facilities that need them.

We are therefore extending the current mission of the Armed Forces in Quebec until June 26.

Let me be clear: The 1,400 members of the Armed Forces from Operation LASER are still in Quebec and are currently being redeployed to the long-term care facilities that need them most.

We are continuing our discussions with Quebec to develop a medium-term plan that will allow us to support efforts until September 15.

This plan includes the active participation of the Canadian Red Cross with paid, well-trained people who will be as effective as the members of the Armed Forces.

The federal government will continue to be there for Quebecers.

[Pause]

Over the past few months, our government has been working with the provinces on providing care for seniors and the most vulnerable.

This includes by deploying members of the Canadian Armed Forces to certain long-term care facilities.

In Ontario and Quebec, we are extending this deployment to June 26th.

Our women and men in uniform are doing a remarkable job.

Their help is still needed, so we're making sure our elders continue to have this vital support.

[Pause]

To restart the economy, to get Canadians back on their feet, we need a coordinated, country-wide plan.

And at the heart of this approach must be how we do this safely.

In country after country, state after state, a pattern is emerging.

People make the sacrifices needed to flatten the curve.

But then, when governments decide to restart the economy, cases begin to rise again.

And after months of hard work, people are finding themselves right back where they started.

Canada must learn from these lessons.

It's clear that we have to make safety and control of this virus a top priority in our restart.

So that's exactly what we're doing.

[Pause]

Our government is working with the provinces and territories to bring in the right measures to keep Canadians safe and healthy.

Last week, I put our government's commitment on the table \$14 billion toward a safe restart agreement, for the things that Canadians will need in the six months ahead.

At our First Ministers' Meeting yesterday, the Premiers, the Deputy Prime Minister, and I continued our discussion about what this plan might look like.

We talked about the measures needed, whether that's childcare and paid sick leave, contact tracing and testing, or PPE and support for the most vulnerable.

And we talked about the fact that we must keep working together to support Canadians right across the country.

[Pause]

Last night, the Premiers and I also talked about the reports and videos that are out there right now showing violence against Black Canadians and Indigenous peoples.

During our discussion, I mentioned changes that should be made to police forces, such as the use of body cameras.

All levels of government need to work together to ensure that things change as quickly as possible.

We have all now seen the shocking video of Chief Adam's arrest, and we must get to the bottom of this.

Like many people, I have serious questions about what happened.

The independent investigation must be transparent and be carried out so that we get answers.

At the same time, though, we also know that this is not an isolated incident.

Far too many Black Canadians and Indigenous people do not feel safe around police.

It's unacceptable.

And as governments, we have to change that.

[Pause]

In my discussion with the Premiers yesterday evening, I brought this up.

All leaders were united in condemning racism, and in agreeing that we must do more to combat it.

I raised with them some of the ways we can work together moving forward, including on practical things like the adoption of body cameras.

This is something I've already discussed with RCMP Commissioner Lucki.

But reforms are needed at all levels of policing, and these reforms need to happen quickly.

In the days and weeks to come, our government will continue to move as fast as we can with all our partners.

Women and men who serve in our police forces must be part of the solution.

They are people who have stepped up to serve their community.

And they will be invaluable allies as we move forward to make sure that all Canadians are well-served by these institutions.

[Pause]

Today, I also want to speak about the progress we're making on travel, and our work to keep Canadians safe.

Right now, physical distancing is still the best way to protect yourself and others.

Of course, there are some places, like flights, where it's not always possible to keep 2 metres apart.

That's exactly why we've made it mandatory for travellers and staff to wear masks.

We've also worked with airlines and airports on standards they should have in place, whether that's enhanced cleaning, or putting in distancing measures as people wait in line.

And today, I can announce that we are taking another step forward.

Our government is mandating temperature screening for air passengers through a phased approach, first for those travelling to Canada, then for those travelling from Canada, and finally for those traveling within Canada.

A passenger who has a fever will not be permitted to get on a flight.

Employees in the secured areas of airports will also be required to have their temperature checked.

There are strong measures already in place to keep people safe.

This screening will be yet another layer of protection.

Our government is taking note of emerging best practices around the world to protect people.

That is why today I am announcing that temperature-taking will be made mandatory for air passengers, staff and employees.

I know that Minister Garneau will have more to say about this later today.

In the coming weeks and months, we will continue to explore other ways to protect Canadians and limit the spread of this virus.

[Pause]

Right across the country, in every city and town, Canadians are stepping up to help.

If you want a great example, look no further than the Filipino-Canadian community.

In Surrey, the community set up a blood donation drive as their way to pitch in.

In Calgary, an organization called Fiesta Filipinos is raising money for care packages for families.

In Montreal, the Filipino community has set up a meals-on-wheels program to deliver food to seniors who live alone or are confined to their homes.

[Pause]

Today, on Filipino Independence Day, we recognize all the contributions that Canadians of Filipino origin have made to our country.

It is also an opportunity to speak out about the obstacles that this community still faces.

As we celebrate Filipino Heritage Month, we can't ignore the ways in which our country must do better.

Too many members of this community face discrimination, something that has gotten worse because of this pandemic.

- There is no place in our country for racism against Asian-Canadians, or anyone else
- Now, more than ever, we must stand up to discrimination and injustice in every form
- As Canadians, we are stronger together

Thank you.