

PM speaking notes for the June 2 COVID-19 update

2 June 2020

Good morning, everybody.

Later today, I will be in the House of Commons to speak about what I know is on a lot of Canadians' minds.

I'll have more to say then, but for now, I want to address the role that we, as leaders and allies, have to play.

As politicians, we must listen and learn about what needs to be done to fight racism, discrimination, and injustice.

Because being an ally is about taking a hard look at our existing systems, and being committed to doing the necessary work to fix them.

[Pause]

Our government is ready to take action.

[Pause]

Because what we're seeing right now are not isolated cases.

It is the result of systems that far too often tolerate, normalize and perpetuate injustice and inequality against people of colour.

Not just across the border, but here at home, in our communities, in our country.

This must stop.

And people who have never experienced racism or discrimination have a very important role to play in all of this.

We have a responsibility to recognize the injustices in our lives and to take concrete actions that show our solidarity with our fellow citizens.

[Pause]

As we move through this pandemic, I know a lot of Canadians are wondering when their community will be able to get back up and running.

The short answer is that it depends on where you live, and how things are going for your city or your region.

That's why every province and territory has its own plan to restart.

But as I said yesterday, as a country, defeating COVID-19 is something we must do together.

Our government knows that, which is why I've been collaborating with the Premiers on a shared approach moving forward.

Yesterday, we took a first step, with some funding for municipalities.

Of course, help for cities and towns is just one piece of the puzzle.

We know that provinces and territories also need support on securing personal protective equipment, and other vital supplies.

And here too, we're stepping up.

[Pause]

Since day one, our government has been working around the clock to secure vital PPE.

Just take the fact that we have received more than 100 million surgical masks and nearly 40 million gloves, and are continuing to send a whole range of supplies to the provinces and territories.

Or that we've signed a contract for millions of syringes, to have the supplies needed once a vaccine is ready.

Working with suppliers from around the world is key to keeping Canadians safe.

But at the end of the day, one of the best ways to ensure we have what we need - well, it's to make it right here at home.

Our government has been working with Canadian manufacturers to make that happen.

Over half of our face shields were produced in Canada.

Working with companies like Canadian Shield - which retooled to manufacture visors, and went from 10 employees to 200 - is win-win.

Not only do we build our capacity to make these supplies at home, we support good jobs for Canadians.

And the same goes for testing.

We are now funding four Canadian companies working on what may be breakthrough solutions for COVID-19 rapid testing - Deep Biologics in Guelph, Nicoya Lifesciences in Kitchener, Fourien in Edmonton, and Metabolic Insights in Kelowna.

This is on top of the support we've already provided for testing, including for Precision Biomonitoring as they set up a test kit manufacturing facility in Ontario.

[Pause]

We are making huge progress, but we have to keep going.

As we restart the economy, demand for supplies will go up.
And Canada must be able to keep up.

So whether it's N95 masks or ICU equipment, we will
continue our work with the provinces and territories on the
supplies we need going forward.

[Pause]

Whether it is obtaining personal protective equipment or supporting municipalities, we will continue working with the provincial premiers and the territories to ensure people's safety.

Hundreds of thousands of items have already been distributed to front-line workers since the beginning of the crisis.

But we know that, in the long term, the best way to ensure that we have the equipment we need is to manufacture it at home.

So, over the past few months, we have made targeted investments to increase our production capacity.

Today, almost half of our face shield inventory is made in Canada.

Progress is also being made in the area of diagnostic testing.

Funding is now being provided to four Canadian companies whose work could lead to major breakthroughs in rapid screening for COVID-19.

One of the companies being supported is Precision Biomonitoring in Ontario, which is setting up a plant to manufacture test kits.

We are moving in the right direction, but we need to do more.

As the economy recovers, demand for this type of product will increase.

That is only natural.

We will therefore continue working with the provinces and territories to make sure that they have enough personal protective equipment.

[Pause]

To support Canadian jobs, to restart the economy, we have to work together.

And not just as governments, but across sectors, too. Last month, we set up the Industry Strategy Council.

Led by Minister Bains and chaired by Monique Leroux, their mandate is to take a deeper dive into the specific challenges and pressures that different industries are facing.

Today, Minister Bains announced the Council's membership - nine business leaders from across the country who each represent a different pillar of our economy.

This team will bring together government and industry to meet and discuss regularly, as we plan our path forward.

[Pause]

Since the beginning of the crisis, we have seen how important mutual aid and solidarity are.

But that does not just apply to the pandemic.

There are so many issues worldwide that cannot be dealt with by one government or one country.

I am thinking, for example, of the fight against climate change.

This is a priority for our government and we will continue to take action to protect our children's and our planet's future.

But we cannot do it alone.

And the good news is that we do not have to do it alone.

For example, the Powering Past Coal Alliance, which has over 100 members around the world, is doing an incredible job of improving air quality.

In a few moments, the Alliance, founded by Canada and the United Kingdom, will unveil its new members, including Desjardins Group.

Desjardins will become the first North American financial institution to join the Alliance.

Here again, Canadians are leading the way.

And our government will always be there to support this type of initiative.

[Pause]

I want to end this morning by recognizing that today is La Festa Della Repubblica, which is the perfect time to wish everyone a happy Italian Heritage Month.

For generations, Italian-Canadians have made our country a stronger, better place.

So it comes as no surprise that during this pandemic - just like always - this community is stepping up to help.

- Maybe you've been taking groceries over to an elderly neighbour
- Or maybe you were one of many who helped raise \$1 million for the Italian Red Cross
- However you're lending a hand: thank you
- It just goes to show that we are stronger together

The values embodied by the Italian community—work, family, generosity—are important to all of us.

Today, and every day, we recognize the many ways in which this community contributes to our country and our lives.

Happy Italian Heritage Month.

Thank you.