BRIEFING NOTES

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PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL JURISDICTION IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURATION

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SUMMARY

- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) could have been better used. The fragility of our ecosystem and defense resources revealed important vulnerabilities for potential future global pandemic outbreak.
- Recommendations include inter-governmental increased cooperation in terms of health care in situations of crisis, such as intelligence and resources sharing between federal and provincial governments, the use of social media and artificial intelligence (AI) to contain the threat and manage expectations of Canadians.

PURPOSE

- The current COVID-19 pandemic shed light on potential need of redirection of military resources and military defense capabilities in future similar types of crises. Worldwide pandemics as such must be taken into consideration seriously, given the occurrence of potential future deadlier outbreaks.
- This document mainly provides recommendations for the DND ability to provide support in situations of global pandemic such as the COVID-19 crisis given that the health care is a provincial jurisdiction.

CONTEXT

- The current context urges further and proper training to ensure the military personnel is empowered and provided the necessary resources in such crisis, that is not in the category of a conventional warfare.
- The future threat of biological warfare or deadlier pandemics demonstrate that governments worldwide, including Canada, are not prepared for such attacks because of the rate at which the disease spread.
- Although the response rate at which the confinement in Canada took place was rapidly done in comparison to our neighbours to the South, the number of people infected and accordingly deaths demonstrate vulnerabilities in terms of human security.
- If information was gathered by the DND prior to the outbreak in Canada, how the information was dealt with is also an important determinant in military training as a prevention for the spread of such disease.
- The mobilization of CAF and its resources to ensure the spread is contained is difficult, but further training, such as simulations should be included. Human security is a potential

imminent threat and military resources must be redesigned to ensure it fulfills its role as defense and security.

+ The DND/CAF must also ensure it has the proper training and resources to guarantee limitations of global pandemics or biological warfare in the spreading of a disease.

+ The use of CAF in monitoring borders was not properly in place. They should have conducted triage at the borders and have quarantine locations ready at all times.

+ Military personnel were sent to help local authorities, but better prevention before the disease was already spreading at a fast rate would have been increasingly convenient.

+ When cases start to appear in hospitals, thousands of people have already crossed the borders, and the disease has already started to spread, and usually at a fast pace. Hence efficient distribution of manpower at the borders are to be reconsidered and have such resources in place sooner than later.

+ Military personnel were however put in isolation in order for them to be ready for deployment to Canadian cities if needed. Further training in isolation such as low-level medical assistance could be considered if provinces needed it in times of crisis.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

+ Artificial intelligence (AI) use in DND must be developed and ensured that the military resources to that end are reviewed and prepared for future outbreaks, and the COVID-19 is a great example to learn from.

+ Military defense capabilities must also be trained for outbreaks that fall out of conventional warfare.

+ A redirection or a revisited approach of the use of Canadian military resources and training can help determine if Canada would be prepared in case of biological warfare threats or future pandemics that are increasingly deadly.

+ Artificial intelligence can improve accessibility to staples to "predict trends" in supply and demand but also in terms of infection from the disease based on an individual's geo-localisation (Tucker 2020).

+ Such tools should be added in resources for the military. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the difficulty of accessibility of specific products, but AI can assist not only in prediction, but then give us the tools for prevention of such disparity in supply and need.

+ This is illustrative of how unpredictability of crises can be avoided using AI. Furthermore, it would be advantageous for governments to share this type of intelligence with foreign countries to limit the damages.

+ Intelligence sharing as such should also take place between levels of governments that dispose of specific jurisdictions.

CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- COVID-19 is changing the way security is thought of. The DND and military represent as resources that are extremely important in times of crisis, and hence for human security.
- Logistics to ensure sufficient support is provided to provinces and Canadian citizens are a priority, even if this means to re-think the role of national defense.
- COVID-19 revealed vulnerabilities and disparities in terms of logistics between provincial and federal jurisdictions, but also in border monitoring.
- Since health care is a provincial jurisdiction, DND's ability to support in situations as such requires the sharing of intelligence with clear lines of communication from provincially run medical facilities, to public health, and finally to DND if needed.

NEXT STEPS *(If applicable)*

- In these difficult and trying times, it is a priority to ensure Canada innovates and policy making developments including security and defense concerns are primordial, next to medical responses and contact tracing (such as with the Ebola virus outbreak). The shift in defense and security could not be clearer considering the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- Military personnel should be extensively trained for situations as such and be able to perform tasks that fall outside conventional military training. Such tasks should include their ability to perform diagnostic tests for example or other tasks that may require low-level medical assistance such as triage.
- There is a necessity of clear lines of communications from provincial medical facilities to the DND when it involves national security. To ensure that DND has accurate information in times of crisis, systems must be in place to ensure information is transmitted efficiently between federal and provincial entities.
- Social media and AI can be used by DND and CAF to better predict different scenarios by using its resources and redirecting their training capabilities.
- An in-depth comparative study of foreign states and their responses to COVID-19 outbreak are necessary to identify helpful versus harmful types of responses and approaches to ensure mistakes are not repeated and that successful logistics are prioritized.

RESOURCES:

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