

Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade Mandate Letter (August 28, 2018)



Dear Mr. LeBlanc:

I am honoured that you have agreed to serve Canadians as Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade.

We are now in the third year of implementing our plan to grow our economy, strengthen the middle class, and help those people working hard to join it. We are providing more direct help to those people who need it by giving less to those who do not. We are making strong public investments to spur economic growth, job creation, and broad-based prosperity. We implemented a responsible, transparent fiscal plan for challenging economic times.

Canadians will hold us accountable for delivering these commitments, and I expect all ministers to do their part – individually and collectively – to improve economic opportunity and security for Canadians.

It is my expectation that we will deliver real results and professional government to Canadians. To ensure that we have a strong focus on results, I will expect Cabinet committees and individual ministers to: track and report on the progress of our commitments; assess the effectiveness of our work; and align our resources with priorities, in order to get the results we want and Canadians deserve.

If we are to tackle the real challenges we face as a country – from a struggling middle class to the threat of climate change – Canadians need to have faith in their government’s honesty and willingness to listen. I expect that our work will be informed by performance measurement, evidence, and feedback from Canadians. We will direct our resources to those initiatives that are having the greatest, positive impact on the lives of Canadians, and that will allow us to meet our commitments to them. I expect you to report regularly on your progress toward fulfilling our commitments and to help develop effective measures that assess the impact of the organizations for which you are answerable.

I made a personal commitment to bring new leadership and a new tone to Ottawa. We made a commitment to Canadians to pursue our goals with a renewed sense of collaboration. Improved partnerships with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments are essential to deliver the real, positive change that we promised Canadians. No relationship is more important to me and to Canada than the one with Indigenous Peoples. It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

We have also committed to set a higher bar for openness and transparency in government. It is time to shine more light on government to ensure it remains focused on the people it serves. Government and its information should be open by default. If we want Canadians to trust their government, we need a government that trusts Canadians. It is important that we acknowledge mistakes when we make them. Canadians do not expect us to be perfect – they expect us to be honest, open, and sincere in our efforts to serve the public interest.

Our platform guides our government. I expect us to deliver on all of our commitments. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that we fulfill our promises, while living within our fiscal plan. Other issues will arise or will be brought to our attention by Canadians, stakeholders, and the public service. It is my expectation that you will engage constructively and thoughtfully and add priorities to your agenda when appropriate.

As Minister, you will be held accountable for our commitment to bring a different style of leadership to government. This will include: close collaboration with your colleagues; meaningful engagement with Opposition Members of Parliament, Parliamentary Committees and the public service; constructive dialogue with Canadians, civil society, and stakeholders, including business, organized labour, the broader public sector, and the not-for-profit and charitable sectors; and identifying ways to find solutions and avoid escalating conflicts unnecessarily. As well, members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, indeed all journalists in Canada and abroad, are professionals who, by asking necessary questions, contribute in an important way to the democratic process. Your professionalism and engagement with them is essential.

Canadians expect us, in our work, to reflect the values we all embrace: inclusion, honesty, hard work, fiscal prudence, and generosity of spirit. We will be a government that governs for all Canadians, and I expect you, in your work, to bring Canadians together.

You are expected to do your part to fulfill our government's commitment to transparent, merit-based appointments, to help ensure gender parity and that Indigenous Canadians and minority groups are better reflected in positions of leadership.

As Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, your goal will be to implement national commitments and priorities that depend on strong relationships with other orders of government, creating good middle class jobs, growing the economy, and advocating for and achieving improved trade between provinces and territories. You will also work to address the needs and priorities of Northerners.

In particular, I will expect you to work with your colleagues and through established legislative, regulatory, and Cabinet processes to deliver on your top priorities:

- Lead our government's work in maintaining open and collaborative relationships with provinces and territories, with the goal of working together to serve and improve the lives of all Canadians.
- Collaborate with provinces and territories to eliminate barriers to trade between each other, and work toward a stronger, more integrated Canadian economy. This work should be undertaken with a full exercising of federal jurisdiction as outlined by section 91(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, and Supreme Court decisions on the regulation of trade and commerce.

- Focus your efforts on areas where progress on trade between provinces and territories can be achieved quickly and where the elimination of barriers will have a real and positive impact on the competitiveness of Canadian businesses and the everyday lives of Canadians. This should include encouraging greater harmonization of rules and regulatory requirements where appropriate. Your responsibilities will include serving as the federal representative on the Committee on Internal Trade.
- Support me in hosting a First Ministers' Meeting in Fall 2018, where discussions will focus on ways to build on Canada's economic growth through diversifying international trade and improving trade within our borders.
- Support the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and provinces and territories on the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, and support northern communities confronting immediate climate adaptation challenges.
- Support the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations on the work taking place in full partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples on the creation of the Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework. Specifically, you will support her with engagement with provinces and territories on the Framework.
- Co-lead with the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, partnerships with the Atlantic provinces on the Atlantic Growth Strategy, while seeking opportunities to develop new partnerships between the federal government and other provinces and territories that contribute to economic prosperity.
- Serve as Chair of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration.
- Lead our government's work in the North including a new Arctic Policy for Canada. In collaboration with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, continue to advance work on a shared Arctic Leadership model and support northern programming, governing institutions, and scientific initiatives.
- Continue to work to update and expand the Nutrition North program, in consultation with northern communities.
- With the support of the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, continue to work with the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. to advance devolution in Nunavut.

These priorities draw heavily from our election platform commitments.

I expect you to work closely with your Deputy Minister and his or her senior officials to ensure that the ongoing work of your department is undertaken in a professional manner and that decisions are made in the public interest. Your Deputy Minister will brief you on issues your department may be facing that may require decisions to be made quickly. It is my expectation that you will apply our values and principles to these decisions, so that issues facing your department are dealt with in a timely and responsible manner, and in a way that is consistent with the overall direction of our government.

Our ability, as a government, to successfully implement our platform depends on our ability to thoughtfully consider the professional, non-partisan advice of public servants. Each and every time a government employee comes to work, they do so in service to Canada, with a goal of improving our

country and the lives of all Canadians. I expect you to establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, whose role, and the role of public servants under his or her direction, is to support you in the performance of your responsibilities.

We have committed to an open, honest government that is accountable to Canadians, lives up to the highest ethical standards, and applies the utmost care and prudence in the handling of public funds. I expect you to embody these values in your work and observe the highest ethical standards in everything you do. When dealing with our Cabinet colleagues, Parliament, stakeholders, or the public, it is important that your behaviour and decisions meet Canadians' well-founded expectations of our government. I want Canadians to look on their own government with pride and trust.

As Minister, you must ensure that you are aware of and fully compliant with the *Conflict of Interest Act* and Treasury Board policies and guidelines. You will be provided with a copy of *Open and Accountable Government* to assist you as you undertake your responsibilities. I ask that you carefully read it and ensure that your staff does so as well. I draw your attention in particular to the Ethical Guidelines set out in Annex A of that document, which apply to you and your staff. As noted in the Guidelines, you must uphold the highest standards of honesty and impartiality, and both the performance of your official duties and the arrangement of your private affairs should bear the closest public scrutiny. This is an obligation that is not fully discharged by simply acting within the law. Please also review the areas of *Open and Accountable Government* that we have expanded or strengthened, including the guidance on non-partisan use of departmental communications resources and the new code of conduct for exempt staff.

I know I can count on you to fulfill the important responsibilities entrusted in you. In turn, please know that you can count on me to support you every day in your role as Minister.

I am deeply grateful to have this opportunity to serve with you as we build an even greater country. Together, we will work tirelessly to honour the trust Canadians have given us.

Yours sincerely,

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

*This Ministerial Mandate Letter was signed by the Prime Minister in the Minister's first official language.