



## **2022 WEST COAST SECURITY CONFERENCE WELCOMING REMARKS**

**Date:** November 21, 2022

*Disclaimer: This briefing note contains the encapsulation of views presented by the speaker and does not exclusively represent the views of the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies.*

### **KEY EVENTS**

On November 21, 2022, Candyce Kelshall, President of the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies Vancouver, delivered her welcome remarks for the 2022 West Coast Security Conference. During her welcoming remarks she stated that the conference was designed for Canada, its military, law enforcement, and the public safety community. Kelshall spoke about the importance of the public safety community considering the emergence of new threat actors and new technologies, changing from state-based responses to identity-based responses when assessing new threats, adapting to changing norms, and collaborating beyond boundaries.

### **BACKGROUND**

Kelshall acknowledged that the conference was taking place during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and noted that although it might be deemed a local war, it is, in fact, a global war despite not yet being articulated as such. She also noted that the world seemed to be in a state of daydreaming by thinking that we are at peace and that after the peak of the pandemic, everything has gone back to normal. However, she stated that nothing is, or will ever be, normal again—at least not as it used to be before the pandemic.

She then pointed out that the law seems to be static even though we are facing new threat actors and people from a new generation become the authors, content creators, organizers, and even agitators when they cannot voice their desire for policy changes through other means. Kelshall also stated that when this new generation enters the world of national security and public safety, their expectations will be very different from what is the norm. One could say that the current structure and conduct of the security apparatus is now under constant

scrutiny in a way that it can easily become a global issue and be challenged legally.

When we understand identity as one of the key contributors to conflict and division, we can begin to understand that the way business is conducted in public safety has to change. Kelshall stated that the notion of identity means that we are dealing with transboundary actors who do not have to deal with the jurisdictional issues that law enforcement does. The word transboundary is different from transnational, with the latter implying state-based responses and perspectives. However, according to Kelshall, we need to be thinking not only about state-based responses but also about individual-based responses—who are the customers, precincts, social judges, and juries.

The smartphone is one of the key drivers of change, as it has become more powerful than a gun; its connectivity is a weapon with the ability to bring harm and more division or unity than ever seen before. That direct connectivity brings influence and power to those who know how to use it well, which demands that we shift our focus to defining threats from a state perspective to an individual and identity-based perspective. Further, criminology will always require systems, structures, and policing guidelines because the nature of breaking the law will not change, and law enforcement cannot pick and choose which laws are valid. This can be translated as policy decisions that need to be driven by understanding that the norms we live in today are changing and those in public safety must keep pace with that change.

We need to develop the ability to operate jointly in a transboundary manner and understand that interoperability, generational diversity, and adaptability must define how we address new threat actors and environments as we move forward. Disruption is the new reality, and we are dealing with threats that are unknowable, unpredictable, unexpected, and unplanned. Nobody planned to stay at home for two years during the pandemic; nobody planned for personal freedoms enshrined in our charter of rights to be limited. We also did not plan to deal with *illegal* citizens' protests at the scale that has happened. Kelshall emphasized that there is a distinction between legal and illegal protests, as illegal protests result in harm.

Identity informs all of these issues and lays at the heart of current conflict. Kelshall argued that who we identify with, the values we believe in, the expectations that we have, and the norms and structures that we consider important are all challenges that have not been articulated within the law enforcement community. The new warfare is interstate in nature, including the

current war between Ukraine and Russia as Vladimir Putin lays claim to the Kievan Rus. He has admitted that this war is to claim multipolar hegemony, which, Kelshall noted, is translated as leadership and dominance dictated by culture and influence.

To conclude, Kelshall pointed out that a special theme of the 2022 West Coast Security Conference was dedicated to recognizing the cost of changing norms and the stress of the working environment in which public safety personnel need to work. Dealing with disruption, in addition to dealing with personal struggles, can take its toll on the mental health and personal wellbeing of law enforcement personnel. However, this community remains the best of us as humanity, as it is their job to protect the rest of us, often, in the worst moments of our lives. Kelshall also stated that it is a sacred duty as Canadian citizens and anyone working in the law enforcement and public safety environment to champion multiculturalism, equity, respect, and democracy.

### **KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION**

- Identity is one of the key contributors to conflict and division, which means that we are dealing with transboundary actors who do not have jurisdictional limits like law enforcement do; therefore, how we conduct business in public safety must change.
- As new technologies emerge, we are faced with new security challenges, which demand that we shift our focus from defining threats from a state perspective to an individual and identity-based perspective.
- New generations and technology lead to a change in norms, so it is imperative that the public safety community progresses at the same rate.
- As disruption becomes the new reality, we need to develop the ability to operate jointly in a transboundary manner and understand that interoperability, generational diversity, and adaptability must define how we address new threats.
- The new warfare is interstate in nature; therefore, law enforcement must take into consideration new challenges related to individual values, expectations, identities, and concerns.



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