



# Annual Report **2022-2023**



OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY TO THE  
GOVERNOR GENERAL

## PHOTO CREDITS

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## Official Residences

Rideau Hall, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A1

Residence of the Governor General at the Citadelle,  
1 côte de la Citadelle, Québec, Quebec G1R 4V7



## THE VICEREGAL LION

The emblem used by the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General is the crest from the Royal Arms of Canada. It consists of a gold lion wearing the Royal Crown and holding in its right paw a red maple leaf. The lion stands on a wreath of the official colours of Canada, red and white.



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## OUR VISION

CONNECT,  
INSPIRE AND  
HONOUR  
CANADIANS

Our priorities are based on a clear understanding of the governor general's responsibilities:

- Representing the Crown in Canada
- Representing Canada nationally and internationally
- Encouraging excellence and achievement
- Serving as commander-in-chief of Canada
- Connecting with Canadians

## OUR MISSION

TO SUPPORT  
THE GOVERNOR  
GENERAL AS  
THE KING'S  
REPRESENTATIVE  
IN CANADA  
AND TO SERVE  
CANADIANS

# OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL AT A GLANCE



The Office of the Secretary to the Governor General (OSGG) supports the governor general in fulfilling the constitutional, State and ceremonial responsibilities of the role. The OSGG is also responsible for planning and implementing the governor general's program and the many activities undertaken with, and on behalf of, Canadians in communities across the country and abroad, as well as with the Canadian Armed Forces in the governor general's capacity as commander-in-chief. These activities recognize outstanding achievement by Canadians and foster national identity, unity and pride.

- The OSGG is headed by a secretary, who serves as senior advisor to the governor general and as herald chancellor of the Canadian Heraldic Authority.
- The Program, Operations and Communications (POC) branch helps the governor general connect with Canadians through the organization and communication of public events and visits in Canada and abroad. The POC supports the governor general in advancing the themes of each mandate and raising public awareness of important national issues.
- The Chancellery of Honours recognizes exceptional Canadians with medals, decorations and awards. It brings to light Canadian successes, innovations and unsung heroes from all walks of life. The Chancellery is also home to the Canadian Heraldic Authority, which creates and records armorial bearings in Canada, and which is headed by the governor general.
- The Corporate Services Branch provides internal services to the department, including those related to information technology, and to financial and material management.
- The Human Resources Directorate provides advice, guidance and recommendations to employees and OSGG management to create and maintain a healthy, diverse and inclusive workforce.

The OSGG's operating budget is approved by Parliament. The department is also accountable to Parliament for its expenditures, which are disclosed through the public accounts process at the end of every year.

# A YEAR MARKED BY HISTORY

The 2022–2023 fiscal period ran concurrently with Governor General Mary Simon's second year of her mandate—a year marked by a multitude of significant events as the world slowly began its transition out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year was marked by many significant events and activities.

- Her Excellency joined with Canadians in mourning the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and travelled to the United Kingdom to bid farewell to this beloved monarch and witness the proclamation of a new sovereign, His Majesty King Charles III.
- She also bore witness to Pope Francis' apology on Canadian soil for the atrocities committed at residential schools—an important step on the journey towards reconciliation and healing. She also engaged with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members during her regional visits across Canada.
- At the request of the Prime Minister, Her Excellency led an official visit to Iceland and a State visit to Finland where she helped reinforce Canada's unwavering support for international security and strengthen firmly established relations with these countries. Through her presence at the Arctic Circle Assembly in Iceland, Her Excellency reinforced Canada's commitment to the Arctic. The visit also marked 75 years of Canada-Iceland diplomatic relations. In Finland, the visit enhanced Canada's active international presence and helped promote sustainable development, Indigenous knowledge, scientific exchanges and youth empowerment in the Arctic.
- Her Excellency welcomed the Honourable Joe Biden on his first visit to Canada as president of the United States, demonstrating the ongoing and critical importance of Canada's collaboration with its closest ally.



National Day of Mourning in Canada to honour Queen Elizabeth II. Ottawa, September 2022.



Governor General Mary Simon meets with His Holiness Pope Francis. Québec, July 2022.



Governor General Mary Simon meets with His Excellency Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland. Helsinki, February 2023.



Governor General Mary Simon and Mr. Whit Fraser meet with the Honourable Joe Biden, President of the United States, and Dr. Jill Biden. Ottawa, March 2023.



*“We must all work together to walk the road of reconciliation and healing. It begins with understanding and respect. You may have heard me speak of ajuinnata in the past year. It’s a phrase in Inuktitut and important to Inuit. It means to never give up, to commit yourselves to action. The spirit of ajuinnata surrounds us. It’s in the perseverance shown during the pandemic. In the tireless work in communities across Canada. And in the determination and hope of our youth to work toward building a Canada that lives up to our dreams.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable *Mary Simon*, Governor General of Canada,  
Canada Day 2022 speech



# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2022–2023

- Over 20 cities and communities visited across Canada
- Close to 10 000 extraordinary Canadians recognized through the Canadian Honours System
- Letters of credence received from 37 foreign heads of mission
- More than 40 000 people visited Rideau Hall and the Residence of the Governor General at the Citadelle of Québec
- In the lead-up to His Majesty King Charles III's coronation, the Canadian Heraldic Authority was instrumental in the development of a number of designs, including the Coronation Emblem for use in Canada, The King's Flag for Canada, and a new Canadian version of the Royal Crown. The Chief Herald of Canada read the proclamation for The King's accession at a national ceremony at Rideau Hall, on September 10, 2022.



Governor General Mary Simon helps Sirivik Food Centre staff and volunteers serve meals to the residents of Inukjuak, Nunavik, May 2022.



Unveiling of emblems and a stamp developed throughout 2022–2023, marking the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, Ottawa.



Presentation of letters of credence ceremonies, Rideau Hall, Ottawa, and the Governor General's Residence at the Citadelle of Québec, 2022–2023.



*“We must look beyond judgment, and lead with understanding and respect for all peoples. Give voice to the marginalized and the disenfranchised, to minority and Indigenous communities. Those displaced, tossed aside, forgotten or ignored. Reach out your hands in friendship to those you have never worked with before. The Commonwealth is not merely a name, but a goal. A society of nations that work together with common objectives.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable **Mary Simon**, Governor General of Canada,  
**65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, August 23, 2022**



# REPRESENTING THE CROWN IN CANADA

As the head of state's representative in Canada, the governor general exercises constitutional duties and acts as a safeguard of our parliamentary democracy. As such, the governor general is non-partisan and apolitical. One of the governor general's most important constitutional duties is to ensure Canada always has a prime minister who has the confidence of the elected chamber. Also, by granting assent, the governor general plays a critical role in parliamentary bills becoming law.

The OSGG supported Governor General Simon in fulfilling her constitutional duties, which included:

- Delivering opening remarks at the 65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, in Halifax, Nova Scotia;
- Swearing in new members of the Canadian ministry; and
- Signing official documents, including Orders-in-Council, Instruments of Advice, bills, proclamations, commissions, agréments for foreign heads of mission, letters of credence and letters of recall.



Governor General Mary Simon delivers opening remarks at the 65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. Halifax, August 2022.



Presentation of letters of credence ceremony. Rideau Hall, Ottawa, April 2022.

*“For 70 years, The Queen was there for Canada and the Commonwealth. Through good times and bad, she was there to bear witness to the evolution of our history. Because she was a sovereign who had seen all of life’s happiness and hardships, we trusted her messages of hope—that tomorrow can and will be better. She knew that time, more often than not, led to healing, progress and understanding.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable **Mary Simon**, Governor General of Canada,  
State Funeral for Queen Elizabeth II, September 19, 2022



# REPRESENTING CANADA AT HOME AND ABROAD

The governor general represents Canada both domestically and internationally. In Canada, the governor general strengthens the country's ties with other nations by officially welcoming incoming foreign heads of diplomatic missions. The governor general welcomes foreign heads of State and members of the Royal Family during their visits to Canada, at Rideau Hall in Ottawa or at the Citadelle of Québec. The governor general also undertakes diplomatic travel at the request of the prime minister, in order to support Canada's international and diplomatic objectives.

Governor General Mary Simon represented Canada by:

- Meeting with Princess Margriet of the Netherlands in May 2022;
- Welcoming and accompanying the then-Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall during their Royal Tour of Canada in May 2022;
- Attending The Queen's Platinum Jubilee events in London in June 2022;
- Meeting with His Excellency Múte Bourup Egede, Prime Minister of Greenland, in June 2022;
- Participating in the visit to Canada by His Holiness Pope Francis in July 2022;
- Attending Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in September 2022;
- Meeting with His Excellency Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, in September 2022;
- Undertaking a working visit to Iceland in October 2022, at the request of the Government of Canada;
- Meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in January 2023;
- Leading a State visit to Finland in February 2023, at the request of the Government of Canada;
- Welcoming the President of the United States to Canada in March 2023; and
- Hosting new heads of mission to Canada at Rideau Hall and receiving their letters of credence.



Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven visit Rideau Hall. Ottawa, May 2022.



Governor General Mary Simon meets with His Excellency Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea. Rideau Hall, Ottawa, September 2022.





*"You have come here representing a variety of sectors, have achieved local, national and international success, and have shown us your ingenuity, innovation and generosity. Whether we are marking a lifetime of work or a specific achievement, there is no doubt that you have made a difference in your communities and for Canada. As governor general, I consider it both a privilege and responsibility to learn and to share your stories!"*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable **Mary Simon**, Governor General of Canada,  
**Mixed Honours ceremony at Rideau Hall, May 26, 2022**



# ENCOURAGING EXCELLENCE

The governor general presents honours and awards to acknowledge extraordinary people on behalf of all Canadians. From community volunteers, scientists and actors, to members of the military, scholars and next-door neighbours, thousands of Canadians are recognized each year for their outstanding contributions to our society. Recipients come from all walks of life but all share a desire to help others and achieve excellence. The lifting of pandemic restrictions allowed Governor General Mary Simon to welcome Canadians to Rideau Hall in person to honour their extraordinary contributions.

Governor General Mary Simon  
recognized extraordinary Canadians by:

- Presenting hundreds of individuals with national honours through events and ceremonies at Rideau Hall and at the Citadelle;
- Investing 255 exceptional Canadians into the Order of Canada;
- Presenting the 2022 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards to Canadians whose extraordinary achievements enriched Canada's cultural life;
- Presenting the 2022 Governor General's History Awards;
- Presenting the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case to six laureates; and
- Presenting the 2022 Governor General's Medals in Architecture and Landscape Architecture to outstanding Canadians for their innovative projects.

The governor general is also head of the Canadian Heraldic Authority (CHA), which recognizes Canadians through the granting of coats of arms, flags and badges as part of the Canadian Honours System.

- The CHA created or registered a total of 158 emblems during the 2022-23 fiscal year, including new heraldic emblems for the Enforcement Branch of the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Toronto Port Authority, the École de technologie supérieure in Montréal, and several unit badges for the Canadian Armed Forces.



Presentation of the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case. Ottawa, March 2023.



Presentation of the Governor General's Medals in Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Rideau Hall, Ottawa, January 2023.



The Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala at the National Arts Centre. Ottawa, May 2022.



*“There is something special about each of you who wear the military uniform. You are committed to excellence and consistently show that you’re ready for any and every task you’re presented with. You serve at home, defending our sovereignty, and assisting in times of natural disaster or any other emergency. You serve abroad, engaging with the world and contributing to building a stable and peaceful global society. To all of you, I say thank you. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for your service.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable *Mary Simon*,  
Governor General of Canada,  
Change of Guidon Ceremony at Garrison Petawawa, December 9, 2022





# SERVING AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

As commander-in-chief of Canada, the governor general offers support and encouragement to members of the Canadian Armed Forces and to their families and loved ones, while helping Canadians recognize the military's past and present contributions to our country.

As commander-in-chief, Governor General Mary Simon supported the Canadian Armed Forces by:

- Presenting a new guidon to the Queen's York Rangers in Toronto;
- Meeting with members of the Canadian Armed Forces who participated in Queen Elizabeth II's funeral;
- Receiving the symbolic first poppy of the National Poppy Campaign at Rideau Hall;
- Participating in the National Remembrance Day Ceremony at the National War Memorial in Ottawa,
- and hosting an event to honour the 2022 National Silver Cross Mother;
- Presiding over a ceremony commemorating 75 years since the creation of the Canadian Rangers;
- Presenting a new guidon to the Royal Canadian Dragoons at Garrison Petawawa;
- Receiving military honours from the Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Régiment at the Citadelle, which included an inspection of the guard and 21-gun salute; and
- Meeting with the Armed Forces Council Executive.



Governor General Mary Simon commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canadian Rangers. Victoria, May 2022.



*“Reconciliation is all around us. It isn’t limited to just one day, one moment, one act. In the past year, I have seen truth and reconciliation in action. I have seen it in school children learning about our true history. I have seen it in communities celebrating their cultural heritage. I have seen it in the stories of Indigenous successes and challenges, told by Survivors, Elders, leaders, storytellers, traditional healers, community members and youth. I have seen the hope in reconciliation.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable *Mary Simon*,  
Governor General of Canada,  
**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, September 30, 2022**

# CONNECTING WITH CANADIANS

In a country as vast and diverse as Canada, the governor general plays an important role in bringing people together in a spirit of goodwill and common cause. By meeting with Canadians in their communities, and by hosting events and activities at Rideau Hall in Ottawa and at the Citadelle of Québec, the governor general encourages dialogue, nurtures a sense of shared purpose, identity, compassion and achievement, and promotes respect for the diverse experiences, backgrounds and perspectives of all Canadians.

Building on the Crown's foundational relationship with Indigenous peoples, the governor general is also in the unique position to foster mutual understanding and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This is done by visiting First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada; celebrating Indigenous achievements and milestones alongside those of non-Indigenous Canadians; and drawing attention to the contributions of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada's history.

Governor General Mary Simon connected with Canadians by:

- Undertaking official visits to Quebec, British Columbia and Yukon to meet with local, territorial and provincial leaders;
- Travelling to Saskatchewan to be with the James Smith Cree Nation community following a tragic mass stabbing incident;
- Visiting Prince Edward Island to witness hurricane-affected areas and provide support to the community;
- Delivering the 19<sup>th</sup> Lecture at the LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium in Calgary, an event focusing on democracy, citizenship and the public good;
- Returning to her childhood home in Nunavik, northern Quebec, to raise awareness of challenges in the North and to meet with Inuit leaders, youth groups, teachers, students and members of Indigenous organizations;
- Continuing her “kindness calls” to individuals making a difference in their communities;
- Attending her first Canada Day national celebration in person, as governor general; and
- Marking the second annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by participating in a number of activities, including the national commemorative event, Remembering the Children.



Governor General Mary Simon speaks at the annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium. Calgary, October 2022.



Governor General Mary Simon witnesses the impact of Hurricane Fiona during her visit to Prince Edward Island. October 2022.





# RESPECTFUL DISCOURSE ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On March 8, 2023, to mark International Women's Day, Governor General Mary Simon hosted a round-table discussion on the harmful impact of toxic online discourse. This event was organized to bring awareness to the reality that women—particularly those in leadership positions, high-profile women, Indigenous women and girls, women from ethnic minorities, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals—are threatened every day online and on social media. This toxic discourse can discourage women from participating and seeking positions of leadership, to the detriment of our country and our public institutions.

Participants in the round-table discussion included women heads of mission, public figures, academics, representatives from related civil society organizations, and a select group of women journalists. Together, they explored the importance of women in leadership positions, the challenges they face, and what society can do to create safe and inclusive spaces for respectful public discourse, free of toxicity.

Governor General Mary Simon is not immune to toxic social media discourse, having been the target of

continued racist comments and harassment on the OSGG social media platforms. The OSGG took the unprecedented step of disabling social media comments on the various social media platforms to create a healthy digital environment for both the public and employees.

Like reconciliation, respectful discourse requires all people to come together in open, inclusive and respectful dialogue with the goal of fostering a greater sense of unity, acceptance and mutual support. Like reconciliation, there is still much work to be done.

*“I cannot and will not just brush off or ignore comments, or offer a platform for the spreading of stereotypes and tropes that I have spent a lifetime opposing. I want to stand beside the younger generation and others who will no longer accept online abuse as routine or as an obstacle to leadership. And who are actively working to ensure our conversations reflect the diversity of Canada.”*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable *Mary Simon*,  
Governor General of Canada,  
International Women's Day at Rideau Hall, March 8, 2023



# OSGG OPERATIONS

Governor General Support	Internal Services	Statutory Expenditures (non-discretionary)	Total
\$13,515,272	\$8,004,378	\$3,720,360	\$25,240,010

The complete 2022–2023 Financial Statements of the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General are available on our website at [gg.ca/en/the-office/reports](https://gg.ca/en/the-office/reports).

## THE OSGG ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FOR 2022–2025

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) requires all Government of Canada departments and agencies to publish an Accessibility Plan that outlines how they will remove barriers to make their organizations more accessible by 2040. To this effect, the OSGG published its first [Accessibility Plan for 2022–2025](#), in which the department outlined efforts to reach the Government of Canada goals.





# SUPPORT FROM OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

In addition to the support provided by the OSGG, six federal government departments and agencies are also mandated to support the activities of the governor general. The funds allocated to this role and spent directly by the following organizations from their budget appropriations amounted to \$25,454,235.\*

- The National Capital Commission (NCC) is responsible for the preservation, maintenance and capital construction projects for all of the official residences located in the National Capital Region, including Rideau Hall.
  - The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) provides support in matters related to the security of and personal protection services for the governor general, domestically and abroad.
  - The Department of National Defence (DND) provides logistical support and transportation for the governor general in an official capacity.
  - Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) provides the OSGG with accommodation and logistical support for the Residence of the Governor General at the Citadelle of Québec and the Chancellery of Honours.
  - Global Affairs Canada (GAC) advises the governor general on all matters related to foreign policy, and funds activities related to incoming and outgoing international visits, and activities undertaken at the request of the prime minister.
  - Canadian Heritage (PCH) is the lead department for such activities as Royal tours, State funerals, national memorial services and special anniversary celebrations.
- \* For further details on these departmental and agency expenditures, please contact the organizations involved, or visit their respective websites.

2022-2023 Support from Other Government Departments			
NCC <b>\$8,408,565</b>	RCMP <b>\$10,520,113</b>	DND <b>\$3,462,984</b>	<b>Total</b>  <b>\$25,454,235</b>
PSPC <b>\$2,225,201</b>	GAC <b>\$801,653</b>	PCH <b>\$35,719</b>	





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