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Commandement des forces d'opérations spéciales du Canada  
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Ottawa, On, Canada K1A 0K2

29 April 2021 (Comd)

OPEN LETTER FROM COMMANDER CANSOFCOM

Members of CANSOFCOM,

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you today. As all of you have likely read, I failed a member of our Command, in his time of need, when his spouse (herself a former member of the CAF) was sexually assaulted by another former CAF member.

Instead, when approached by the perpetrator in this case, I recognized and empathized with his personal struggles and I responded emotionally. And while my intent to help may have been purely driven, it is clear that the impact of my actions was profoundly harmful to the victim and her spouse. Moreover, I did not consider how my actions would be viewed by other silent survivors of sexual assault in our ranks.

Over the past four years, I've done a lot of self-reflection and I've come to realise the significant degree to which I have been shaped by my personal experiences and blinded by my biases. For what it's worth, I've been humbled by and have learned from this mistake. In the intervening years, I have had the opportunity to hear directly from other survivors of harassment and assault and I can assure you that it has been sobering and enlightening.

With this letter, I can offer only three things: first, my absolute condemnation of sexual assault and misconduct in all forms; second, my sincerest apology to all of you who rightfully expected more from your Commander; and third, my commitment to do better.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

P.S. Dawe  
Major-General