

Politics

Trudeau ends use of Emergencies Act, says 'situation is no longer an emergency'

Prime minister says inquiry into the deployment of the law will begin within 60 days

[Nick Boisvert](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 23, 2022 3:59 PM ET | Last Updated: February 24



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announces the end of the Emergencies Act during a news conference on February 23, 2022 in Ottawa. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press)

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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is revoking the use of the Emergencies Act, the powerful legislative tool that was deployed in response to protests and blockades that erupted in Ottawa

and at border crossings over recent weeks.

"The situation is no longer an emergency," Trudeau told a news conference.

"We are confident that existing laws and bylaws are now sufficient to keep people safe."

The Governor General signed off on the revocation on Wednesday afternoon, which formally ended the state of emergency.

MPs in the House of Commons voted to affirm use of the act on Monday. The Senate was in the midst of debating the act on Wednesday but withdrew the motion shortly after Trudeau made his announcement.

WATCH | Trudeau announces end of Emergencies Act



Trudeau ends government's use of Emergencies Act

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"The situation is no longer an emergency," Trudeau tells a news conference. 1:02

The government's decision to invoke the act on Monday, Feb. 14 became a source of considerable controversy and criticism. The act had never been used since it was passed by Parliament in 1988.

The introduction of the act gave authorities sweeping temporary powers, including the ability to freeze the bank accounts and credit cards of protesters. Attending any event deemed an unlawful assembly, such as the Ottawa convoy protest, also became illegal.

Trudeau has described his decision to use the act as a last resort.

"As the weeks went by, it became obvious that provincial and local authorities needed more tools in order to enforce the law and protect Canadians. And that's exactly what the Emergencies Act provided," he said.

"It was the responsible and necessary thing to do."

Ottawa police said the act helped them end the convoy protest. The act made it possible for officers from outside of Ontario to participate in the operation.

WATCH | Public safety minister discusses decision to end Emergencies Act on CBC's Power & Politics



Government revokes deployment of Emergencies Act

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Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino joins Power & Politics to discuss what led to the decision to end the use of the Emergencies Act just over a week after it was invoked. 9:10

Trudeau said the decision to end the act's use was made after consulting with police services across Canada, which told the government they can prevent further disruptions under normal laws.

An inquiry into the government's decision to invoke the act and subsequent police actions will begin within 60 days, Trudeau confirmed. He said Parliamentarians will establish a committee to oversee that review next week.

- [Most bank accounts frozen under the Emergencies Act are being released, committee hears](#)
- [Conservative senator says 'friendly ... patriotic' Ottawa protesters have been demonized](#)

Conservatives say decision proves 'the PM was wrong'

The Conservatives and Bloc Québécois voted against the use of the act in the House of Commons, arguing that it constituted government overreach. Other critics, including the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), have said the use of the act was unnecessary because the protests were not a legitimate national emergency.

"Today's announcement is proof that the prime minister was wrong when he invoked the Emergencies Act," said Conservative interim leader Candice Bergen in a media statement.

"Nothing has changed between Monday and today other than a flood of concerns from Canadian citizens, bad press, and international ridicule."

WATCH | Conservative public safety critic says act should never have been used



Conservative MP: 'Prime minister was wrong to invoke this act'

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Reacting to news that the government has ended its deployment of the Emergencies Act, Conservative MP Raquel Dancho says Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was wrong to invoke the act in the first place. 2:10

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney says his government will proceed with a court challenge of the federal government's use of the Emergencies Act.

He calls the decision to end the act's deployment a "humiliation" for those who supported it.

- [Alberta to proceed with Emergencies Act challenge despite it being lifted: Kenney](#)

The CCLA last week also announced a lawsuit against the government over its use of the act. The organization said it is now deciding if it will continue with its challenge.

"Even though the orders are no longer in force, Canadians are left with the precedent that the government's actions have set," the CCLA said in a statement.

The NDP, which threw its support behind the motion and ensured its adoption under the minority government, welcomed Trudeau's decision to revoke.

"We said from the beginning that it should be revoked as soon as it was no longer needed. We're glad to see that has been done," NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh said in a statement.

WATCH | NDP MP says party was reluctant to support act



NDP MP Peter Julian says his party is happy with decision to end use of Emergencies Act

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Julian says the NDP was reluctant to support the law's use from the beginning and that authorities should have acted earlier to deal with the convoy occupation of Ottawa. 1:36

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