



News Release

Successful Justice and Public Safety ministers' meeting in Charlottetown

IQALUIT, Nunavut (January 30, 2012) —The federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) ministers responsible for Justice and Public Safety recently wrapped up their annual meeting in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

Yukon Justice Minister Mike Nixon, Northwest Territories Justice Minister Glen Abernethy and Nunavut Justice Minister Daniel Shewchuk met with their federal and provincial counterparts to talk about issues of particular concern to the North and committed to continue working with federal and provincial ministers to improve access to justice for marginalized individuals and communities.

Territorial ministers called on the federal government to expand support for drug treatment courts to include other therapeutic models. This would allow the courts to provide offenders with an alternative to incarceration by offering the opportunity to complete a drug or alcohol addiction program.

"Together with our justice counterparts in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut we can work towards alternative programs that address the underlying causes of criminal activity and focus on rehabilitation," Nixon said.

Nixon led a discussion on the impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) on the justice system. FPT justice ministers were unanimous in their agreement to continue moving forward on this priority issue, stressing the need to improve access to justice for disadvantaged people, including those with FASD.

Another issue of shared concern in the North that the territorial ministers addressed was the First Nations Policing Program.

"In the discussion on the First Nations Policing Program, all ministers recognized the importance of the program in addressing public safety challenges in First Nation and Inuit communities. Federal and provincial ministers also acknowledged the need for the expansion of the program to the North," Abernethy said.

"Our ministerial colleagues acknowledged the challenges and opportunities related to the administration of justice in northern and remote communities. Federal, provincial and territorial ministers are committed to continuing to advance these discussions," Shewchuk said.

The next FPT Justice ministers' meeting will be held this fall in Regina.

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