



Minister's Statement

No. _____

Date _____

**The Honourable Eva Aariak
Minister of Justice**

4th Judge for Nunavut

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the recent appointment of The Honourable Neil A. Sharkey as Judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice. Mr. Justice Sharkey has been a member of the Nunavut Bar since 1999; of the Northwest Territories Bar since 1983, and the Bar of Saskatchewan since 1976. Mr. Justice Sharkey has been involved in the practice of law in Nunavut in various roles, from Crown Counsel to private practitioner and Executive Director of Maliganik Tukisiniakvik for many years. Mr. Justice Sharkey has an acknowledged expertise in criminal appeals and major criminal cases.

As you are aware, the Justice Department is dedicated to providing the most culturally-appropriate, equitable and effective justice services to Nunavummiut and it was quite clear that part of the reason for delays in hearings, trials, and other court procedures was the lack of a 4th Judge. As our Senior Judge, the Honourable Beverly Browne indicated some time ago “the lack of judicial resources in Nunavut continues to be a chronic problem and a concern”. The Department of Justice of the Government of Nunavut,

in cooperation and coordination with our federal partners, had made a strong case for the increase in judicial resources for our territory. The appointment of the Honourable Judge Sharkey was the result of our efforts, and this appointment will certainly assist the administration of justice in Nunavut, and address many of the shortfalls and delays in the courts.

The Department of Justice will continue to work to improve the provision of justice services to Nunavummiut; to increase the number of lawyers and the amount of Legal Aid funding available in the territory, and to strive to ensure that all the justice-related needs of Nunavummiut are met.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.