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**Public Safety Canada - 2nd Summit on the Economics of Policing & Community Safety - March 2, 2015 - Ottawa**

March 5, 2015 2:40 P.M.

Hon Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services

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Good morning, Bonjour.

It is great to be here to help kick off this Second Summit on the Economics of Policing and Community Safety.

I want to take a moment to join Deputy Mayor Taylor in welcoming my Ministerial counterparts from across the country to Ontario and to my beautiful hometown of Ottawa.

And it is a privilege to share the stage with Minister Steven Blaney and Minister Lise Theriault and outline Ontario's vision to build a safer, stronger province.

I also want to welcome Nova Scotia Minister of Justice and Attorney General Lena Metlege Diab and New Brunswick Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and Minister of Justice Stephen Horsman.

The foundation of that vision is safer, stronger communities - they are the building blocks, the strong foundation on which we will build.

For us, community means both the policing community and the communities they serve.

That is why we have spent the past decade strengthening our partnerships with police services

...

... Increasing targeted funding for local priorities and investing in the things that matter most to our families.

Funding to municipalities and municipal police services from our ministry have steadily increased over the past decade, and will increase again this year.

And we have seen the positive results of this approach...

Ontario is now one of the safest jurisdictions in North America.

Since 2003, Ontario's crime rate has dropped by 34% and Ontario's violent crime rate dropped by 27%.

In fact, Ontario has had the lowest crime rate of any province and territory every year since 2005.

En fait, l'Ontario a le taux de criminalité le plus bas de toutes les provinces et de tous les territoires du pays chaque année, depuis 2005.

So as we see crime rates steadily dropping across the country, why is the cost of delivering these services not doing the same?

Well, for one thing, the nature of crime is changing.

The issues faced by today's police officers are more complex than ever anticipated when the current policies and police frameworks were developed.

Here are just a couple of examples

These frameworks never anticipated the increasing complexity of fraud - that someone could wipe out a person's life savings with the simple click of a mouse.

They did not anticipate the increasing frequency of interacting with individuals suffering from mental health or addiction;

And these frameworks never anticipated the rapid acceleration of technological advances and how they will be used in policing and by society.

Furthermore, we are increasingly asking our police officers to do more and to play a larger role in our communities.

Even as violent crime rates have declined, OPP Officers responded to 24,000 more calls for service last year than they did in 2009.

A police officer should not, at the same time, need to be a social worker, mental health worker or youth counsellor.

But these are the roles we often call on them to fill.

A police officer needs to provide a safe environment for those other professionals to do their jobs.

This increasing complexity and the increased demands on our police officers mean we must realign our services to reflect these realities.

Ontario and its police services have worked hard to make our communities safe...

... Now we must work SMARTER to make our communities SAFER.

L'Ontario et ses services de police ont travaillé d'arrache-pied pour améliorer la sécurité communautaire ...maintenant, nous devons travailler PLUS INTELLIGEMMENT pour rendre nos collectivités encore PLUS SÛRES.

This realignment is the key to building sustainable, effective, and community focused policing in the 21st century.

This is something that can only be answered by looking at every program, every model, every regulation and asking ourselves:

Is this still appropriate?

Is it still effective?

Is it sustainable?

And most importantly, does this help us achieve our goal of building a safer community?

These are the questions the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has been asking as we create our new Strategy for a Safer Ontario.

Building on three years of work with the Future of Policing Advisory Committee...

... Our government is poised to take our policing partners' recommendations and the needs in our committees to craft a new provincial policing framework.

Ontario's Strategy for a Safer Ontario is about finding smarter and better ways to do things - and using evidence and experience to improve outcomes.

We will not waste our time chasing the easy thing to do or the flavour of the day.

We will do what works and we will listen to our policing partners.

We will focus on collaborative partnerships that include police and other sectors such as education, health care and social services to make communities safer.

That means that if mandatory education programs do a better job of reducing crime than mandatory minimum sentences - than that is what we will focus on.

And, we will look across jurisdictions to discover innovative solutions and identify best practices.

Ontario and Saskatchewan, thanks to the leadership of our Deputy Ministers, are looking at working together on issues like bail reform and policing best practices.

This focus means shifting the delivery of community services to make sure Ontarians get the services they need, when they need them, in an effective, efficient and sustainable way.

This means delivering services in a proactive, targeted manner.

Developing this integrated approach recognizes that multi-disciplinary partnerships produce better results at lower costs to each organization.

This is the idea behind the Situation Table Model and the community safety and well-being initiatives, which are being created around the province.

These projects bring service providers together to work collaboratively and rapidly mobilize services that will reduce risks that could lead to victimization or harm.

This will give us an opportunity to collect data, review their effectiveness and develop policies based on evidence.

There are currently eight Situation Tables operating across Ontario with six more in the process of starting up - followed by six more in the coming months.

They are in urban, rural and First Nations communities throughout Ontario.

Ces programmes sont dans des communautés urbaines, rurales et des Premières Nations, partout en Ontario.

For example,

The Ministry has been working with Rama, a First Nations reserve in central Ontario, to support their Community Mobilization Action Committee.

It helps prevent crime by identifying local community leaders that can serve as role models to address the precursors to crime.

Another has been started in the rural community of Brantford, called The CRISIS Table, to provide better supports for individuals and families in crisis.

And we have the Furthering Our Community Uniting Services or FOCUS project in the Toronto community of Rexdale - which aims to reduce and prevent crime and social disorder

These kinds of initiatives move away from the old one-size-fits-all approach and allow communities to identify their risks, mobilize the proper resources, and proactively and collaboratively make their communities safer.

And we are seeing that these Situation Table models work.

Et nous observons que ces modèles centraux fonctionnent.

One of the longest running pilot programs is the Community Mobilization and Gateway Hub in North Bay.

North Bay is a mid-size northern town with a population of approximately 65,000.

The program has been operating for just over a year now.

In that time, over 200 cases have been brought forward to the Gateway Hub table, and it has supported over 290 individuals.

Preliminary results show that mental health, substance abuse and family issues are the three most prevalent risk priorities in that community.

Knowing that has allowed them to deploy the proper resources, intervene sooner and improve outcomes for both the community and service providers.

In fact, a recent report by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit found that 93% of community agencies that participated in the Hub found that collaboration between agencies improved and 96% believed that their relationships did as well.

These models show new ways of sharing information across the social sphere - between cultural, religious, community and health care groups ...

...Providing opportunities for early intervention that help prevent crimes and improve outcomes for local residents and the community.

And these models make police services part of a stronger safety net, rather than being the entire net themselves.

This frees up resources to help solve more crimes and prevent even more from happening in the first place.

These are the types of programs we must continue supporting, investing in, and championing ...

... because the only way to truly fight crime is to eliminate it from happening in the first place.

These are the same goals that Premier Kathleen Wynne gave me in my mandate letter.

The letter specifically identified the need to:

- Develop a new strategic vision for community safety and policing;
- Accelerate the development of a package of reforms to policing service delivery; and,
- Maintain a strategic focus on community safety through a made-in-Ontario community safety and well-being strategy that builds on past work and complements other key government initiatives.

The overlap of these priorities necessitates a shift from a focus of policing alone towards the value of community safety and well-being at the local level.

This is the kind of forward-looking planning that will help communities bend the cost curve for policing and all emergency services ...

... by helping move away from a reactive model of crisis response towards one of pre-emptive intervention and community building.

It is one that will be reflected across our government as we expand the existing links with other ministries and public sector organizations to plan for community safety and well-being.

Thank you again for inviting me to this important conference and for allowing me to talk about our government's vision to build safer, stronger communities.

Our Strategy for a Safer Ontario is ambitious, it is bold, it will be guided by evidence and will be focused on outcomes.

We must embrace this opportunity - now is time to set the course for an effective, sustainable, and community-focused model of policing for the 21st century.

It will only be possible because of the strong partnerships built through conversation, at conferences like this, and focusing on those issues that bring us together.

Thank you!

Merci!

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