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> Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada



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Ministre de la Justice et Procureur général du Canada REVIEWED

The Honourable/Linonorable Allan Rock Ottaws, Canada K1A 0H8

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The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi Minister of Justice Government of the Northwest Territories 5003 - 49th Street 6th Floor, Laing Building P.O. Box 1320 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Xakswi: Stuplea

I sent you late yesterday a copy of the Bill, An Act respecting firearms and other weapons, which I introduced in the House of Commons today. You will also have received the news release issued today. Once again, I would like to thank you for your considerable advice over the past year or so. Your suggestions for improving Criminal Code provisions related to firearms control have resulted in a substantially strengthened firearms program.

I know that you have particular reservations about implementation and compliance with the national registration system in Northwest Territories and I want to ensure that the program is flexible enough to accommodate particular territorial needs and concerns. Please rest assured that I will consult extensively with you and Aboriginal groups to pave the way for a smooth transition to registration and to all other aspects of the new firearms control program.

As I mentioned at our meeting in Victoria, registration is one of the main pillars of the new firearms control program and fundamental to its success. As you know, registration responds to widespread concern by Canadians in general, and by police enforcement organizations, in particular, about the lack of an efficient national firearms monitoring system. I would like to assure you that the system will be user-friendly, and that the Federal Government will help defray administrative costs incurred by the Provinces and Territories and will work towards the negotiation of new financial agreements.

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Canadians are understandably concerned about crime and public safety. They are looking to governments for adequate and appropriate action. I feel confident that the changes proposed substantively address these concerns and that the Bill accurately reflects our shared commitment to increase measures that safeguard the health and safety of Canadians.

Please rest assured that we will consult extensively on implementation phases for the new program. The first opportunity for this will come with the all-member, Parliamentary Committee that will be receptive to all points of view on every aspect of the Bill.

I look forward to working with you on building a successful firearms control program that will help restore public confidence in the criminal justice system and help maintain Canada's image at home and abroad as a peaceful and non-violent society.

Yours very truly,

Allan Rock

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