

For Immediate Release

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Delegates from across Canada commit to a Canadian Department of Peace

Delegates from across Canada gathered in Ottawa, over the weekend of November 2- 4 for the 6th Annual Conference and General Meeting of the Canadian Peace Initiative to recommit themselves to the goal of creating a Canadian Department of Peace.

A private member's bill submitted by Alex Atamanenko MP Bill C-373 An Act to establish the Department of Peace received First Reading on November 30, 2011. The Bill outlines the role of the department in creating and sustaining the conditions for domestic and international peace. The impact of the department should it come to reality was explored in a series of dialogues throughout the three days.

Conference participants and the public gathered in the historic Government Conference Centre in Ottawa, to listen to Queen's University Professor and author of *Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety* Ian McKay warn of the recasting of Canada's rich peace heritage as a militaristic tradition

A public consultation held at Université St-Paul University, Ottawa on Saturday November 3 was the culminating event of a series of cross-country consultations engaging Canadians in asking the question, 'Does Canada Need a Department of Peace?' Beginning in Hamilton in February 2012 and including stops in Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Ottawa these public forums received submissions from local/national organizations and individual Canadians from all walks of life.

Many of the participants have worked for generations to find a place in democratic Canada for their voice to be heard and acted upon. A reference to Doug Roche former Ambassador on Disarmament for Canada noted his expressed frustration at often being told he was an idealist with fluffy unrealistic expectations. He challenges that to this day saying peace is practical. As Steven Staples, President of the Rideau Institute and one of the peace commissioners at the Ottawa consultation reminded the audience, "Peace comes first in, 'Peace, Order and Good Government"

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