



SPEAKING NOTES FOR

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**PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE
MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA**

FOR THE

**VANCOUVER DRUG TREATMENT COURT
10TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT**

**VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
JANUARY 18, 2011**

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Thank you, Rose (Datillo, Co-Chair, Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver, Public Prosecution Service of Canada), and good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I am very pleased to be here on behalf of the Honourable Rob Nicholson, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, as we celebrate this milestone for the Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver.

For the last ten years, the court has played a key role in helping to reduce crime associated with drug dependency, while providing treatment to those struggling with addiction in the communities of the Lower Mainland.

This particular drug treatment court benefits from a unique relationship between the governments of Canada and British Columbia, which have provided the funding for the court's work to continue.

And that work is getting results.

I was very pleased to hear of the Simon Fraser evaluation that found recidivism among the court's clients decreased by 50 percent over two years.

The Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver, and the five other courts across the country that are also funded by the Government of Canada, take a comprehensive approach to dealing with crimes motivated by drug addiction.

While participants receive the support and treatment they need, they must also be supervised by the courts and be tested for drugs frequently.

Offenders must still take responsibility for their crimes, and face up to their addictions.

And that is why they continue to be part of our Government's comprehensive approach to ensuring that our communities are healthier and safer.

As part of our approach, we introduced Bill C-10, the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*.

Bill C-10 puts forward legislative reforms that target drug producers and traffickers, who may be involved with organized crime or who may target our youth.

Under this proposed legislation, there is an important exception for offenders who successfully complete programs such as those offered by a Drug Treatment Court.

As long as the offence does not involve violence or any other aggravating factor, the offender will receive a reduced or suspended sentence.

This dual approach – providing needed treatment while ensuring community safety –works together successfully. We’ve already seen that it has.

I am pleased that the Government of Canada is working with partners like the Government of British Columbia, and with other organizations that operate Drug Treatment Courts across Canada.

These collaborations support the Government's National Anti-Drug Strategy, and work toward its goals of preventing drug addiction, providing access to treatment and getting tough on those who threaten the safety of our youth and our communities.

Our Government remains committed to making our communities safer, and to getting tough on crime while dealing compassionately with those addicted to illicit drugs.

And Canadians can continue to count on us to ensure that our communities are safe places for people to live, raise their families and do business.

Thank you.

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