

Welcome from Daniel Préfontaine:

- Why we are here? The importance of participating in shaping some of our national policies. Some remarks about the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy (ICCLR&CJP);
  - The International Centre was created in 1991, when the presidents of the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the International Society for the Reform of Criminal Law (UBC, SFU and the ISRCL) approached then Prime Minister, Kim Campbell, and suggested Vancouver as an obvious choice for the establishment of such a centre of excellence.
  - Support from the BC and Ontario Law Foundations, Human Rights Groups, as well as from various levels of government made the establishment of the Centre possible. In 1995, the Government of Canada and the United Nations entered into an agreement which finalized the official affiliation of the International Centre with the United Nations, as part of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.
  - The Centre was created in order to provide a vehicle through which governmental, non-governmental and academic groups, as well as other interested individuals could make a significant contribution to the various existing process of criminal law reform at the international, regional and national levels. A second focus was to be a resource for the Canadian government in the formulation of foreign policy relating to human rights and criminal justice.
  - The Mission of the International Centre is based on a commitment to promote human rights, democracy and good governance. These principles provide the Centre with concrete parameters within which it affirms the fundamental values to which it subscribes. These values include: respect for human dignity, justice, the rule of law, fairness, equity, public participation in decision making and institutional accountability. The Centre's mission is one which emphasizes the role of criminal law and the importance of criminal law reform as essential means to defend these values and give them a concrete expression in the face of the challenges with which national and trans-national crime continue to confront citizens of all countries.
  - It is very important for those countries that have suffered through domestic strife to obtain assistance in the rebuilding of their institutions, specifically those institutions referred to in today's forum on 'peacebuilding and justice'.
  - Long term rebuilding of domestic infrastructures requires assistance, as it is the breakdown of the legitimacy of those structures that often predates the conflict.
  - Today's consultation forum is part of a broader national process