

Intervention of Canada - HRC21

Panel discussion on access to justice for indigenous peoples

18 September, 2012

Canada has developed targeted strategies and focused significant resources to address access to justice issues.

Canada's Aboriginal Justice Strategy promotes the active involvement of Aboriginal communities in the local administration of justice services. It supports community-based approaches to justice, including the diversion of accused persons from criminal trials to community service, the promotion of sentencing alternatives, and the enhancement of family and civil mediation services. In 2010-2011, the Strategy funded 275 community-based justice programs that reached approximately 600 Aboriginal communities in all of the provinces and territories in Canada, with positive results.

Canada also has an Aboriginal Courtwork Program which provides direct services to Aboriginal people charged with an offence. This program works to ensure that those involved with the criminal justice system receive fair, equitable and culturally-sensitive treatment. Aboriginal Courtwork services have a satisfaction rating of over 90% from clients as well as strong support from the courts.

Canada has also shown, through its Aboriginal Community Corrections Initiative, that supporting community healing models designed to treat offenders, victims and their families can have direct benefits for the community as a whole, in terms of promoting sustainable cultural, social and economic development and reducing recidivism.

Canada will continue to work to ensure access to justice for all Canadians, including Aboriginal people.

Thank you.