



Press Statement

Throne Speech Risks Lowered Ambition on Justice Issues

September 25, 2020 (Ottawa, ON) – On September 23rd, Governor General Julie Payette read the Throne Speech on behalf of Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government, detailing the key priorities for the government as Parliament resumed. Among the priorities laid out in the speech was a pledge to address systemic inequalities in the justice system and the over-representation of Indigenous people in jails and prisons.

The Throne speech promised to “take action to address the systemic inequities in all phases of the criminal justice system, from diversion to sentencing, from rehabilitation to records,” however it did not describe what measures would be taken or how those goals would be achieved.

“We are looking for specific reforms – ones the Liberals pledged to follow through on, like ending mandatory minimum sentences,” said Kim Beaudin, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. “He talked about addressing COVID in long-term care homes, but what about addressing COVID in jails and prisons, which are still holding low-risk and non-violent offenders, and seniors near the end of their sentences who are at risk of infection?”

As parliament resumes sitting, the priorities laid out in the Throne Speech will be guide the activities of the Minister of Public Safety Minister, Minister of Justice and Attorney General and the work of the government in the House of Commons.

“Our constituents will not be satisfied with more promises, we need to see action,” said Robert Bertrand, CAP National Chief. “This government has made promises before, and we expect to see those delivered on.”

-30-

For media interviews please contact:

Jessica Dawson, Executive Assistant
613-747-6022

j.dawson@abo-peoples.org

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the national voice representing the interests of Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous People living off-reserve. Today, over 70% of Indigenous people live off-reserve.