

In the wake of an unprecedented rise in hate crimes in Ontario in recent years, Attorney General Michael Bryant and Community Safety and Corrections Minister Monte Kwinter appointed the Hate Crimes Community Working Group to advise the government on an overall strategy to address individual and community-based victimization and related issues arising from hate crime. The Working Group was also tasked with the responsibility of recommending ways to improve services for victims of hate crime and to prevent further victimization. We are honoured to have been given this opportunity to contribute to this very important area of concern to the Government of Ontario and of relevance to all Ontarians.

The membership of the Working Group reflected much of the diversity of Ontario's population and a wide variety of personal and professional experience. It is hardly surprising that the discussions within a group so composed would often feature differences of opinion or approach, differences that sometimes seemed more intense because of a shared sense of urgency about combating hate crime and the attitudes and circumstances that contribute to it. I am grateful to the members of the Working Group for their outstanding commitment, dedication and expertise, as well as for their collegiality and support, as together we have sought inclusive community and stakeholder input and worked our way through the issues surrounding hate crime and hate activity in order to arrive at consensus.

We gratefully acknowledge the advice and presentations we received from members of different communities, government officials, police service representatives, educators, academics, lawyers and, especially representatives throughout the province from the Aboriginal, racialized, religious, and other communities most vulnerable to hate activity today. While we recognize that there are some voices we did not hear, we were dedicated to hearing the voices of victimized communities and bringing forth their experience into a deserved central focus. We know that the expert contribution of all participants in the process assisted us in defining priorities for our work towards enhanced victim services and a more effective justice system response to hate and hate crime in Ontario.

We are especially grateful for the support we received from staff of the Ontario Victim Services Secretariat of the Ministry of the Attorney General, under the leadership of Irwin Glasberg and the management of Venier-WingSang Wong and Elizabeth Price. Thank you also to James Truman, Parminder Brar, Gabrielle Hezekiah, David Lampert, Daniel Naymark and Suzanne Dias for their valuable assistance, to Anna Deane of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and to consultants Charles Smith, Maureen Brown, Dominique Dennery, and Chandra Budhu for the research they facilitated. We are grateful to Elizabeth Price, Kerry Wilkins, and Chandra Budhu for the significant roles they played in the preparation of the final draft of the report, and to Marika Bishop for her generous contribution to the design and layout.

As Chair of the Working Group, I especially want to thank all the members (who are listed in Appendix A of this report) for the considerable volunteer time and energy they have diverted from their lives and professions to attend our regional consultations with community groups and our focus and discussion groups with experts and professionals, to conduct interviews of hate crime victims themselves, to read the substantial quantity of material our process generated, and to participate actively in our extensive and often challenging deliberations. We all now have a better understanding of hate activity and its differential impact on victims from a variety of viewpoints, and a stronger commitment to addressing and opposing all forms of hate, because of the efforts we have made as a group on behalf of victims of hate and hate crimes in Ontario.

Karen R. Mock

Chair, Hate Crimes Community Working Group

Preface

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Hate

[hatred] - Emotion of an intense and extreme nature that is clearly associated with vilification and detestation. Hatred against identifiable groups thrives on insensitivity, bigotry and destruction of both the target group and of the values of our society. Hatred is an emotion that, if exercised against members of an identifiable group, implies that those individuals are to be despised, scorned, denied respect and made subject to ill treatment on the basis of group affiliation. *Supreme Court of Canada - R. v. Keegstra.*