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**ONTARIO GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH INTER-PROVINCIAL  
AGREEMENT TO FIGHT ORGANIZED CRIME**

*Will Partner With Manitoba And Quebec On Information Sharing, Training*

TORONTO — The Ontario government is in the process of entering into an inter-provincial agreement with Manitoba and Quebec to better combat organized crime, Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant announced today.

“In Ontario, the best response to organized crime is organized justice,” Bryant said. “This agreement will demonstrate our shared will to fight organized crime and ensure well-resourced criminals cannot exploit potential divisions between provincial jurisdictions.”

The Inter-Provincial Agreement on the Prevention and Effective Prosecution of Organized Crime will build on existing partnerships and provide procedures to allow even more effective information sharing between the Attorneys General of Ontario, Manitoba and Quebec. Through the agreement, the provinces intend to strengthen joint efforts to fight organized crime by:

- holding an annual summit to share successes and lessons learned based on major prosecutions and policies
- collaborating on inter-provincial training on topics such as:
  - methods to present compelling evidence
  - use and interpretation of criminal organization *Criminal Code* provisions
  - wiretap evidence
  - search and seizure
  - proceeds of crime and criminal forfeiture.

“Organized crime costs Canadians, and it can be deadly,” Manitoba Attorney General Gord Mackintosh said. “This agreement will build on existing, informal and effective partnerships between law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to ensure criminals don’t slip through any inter-jurisdictional cracks.”

“Organized crime doesn’t stop at provincial borders,” Quebec Attorney General Yvon Marcoux said. “With this agreement, we are working on expanding communication links between our provinces to better prosecute and prevent organized crime.”

Organized crime in Canada can take many forms, including illegal narcotics, money laundering, contraband cigarettes, credit card fraud and auto theft.

The McGuinty government is on the side of Ontarians concerned about crime and safety. Other initiatives to combat crime include:

- establishing a state-of-the-art provincial operations centre to allow for highly coordinated investigations and prosecutions of guns and gang-related offences
- fast tracking the hiring of 1,000 additional police officers so that they can be on the streets by the end of 2006
- setting up major crime courts to deal with complex prosecutions with multiple defendants.

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