

Press Release
For immediate release

Lawyers' Association states Toronto Councillor Mammoliti's call to arms is unnecessary

Toronto, ON, December 7, 2007 – The Criminal Lawyers' Association deplores the proliferation of gun violence in Toronto. However, solutions to the problem should be sought at home – not in totalitarian countries. We strongly disagree with Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti who has suggested using the army for a civilian crime problem.

The suggestion that martial law and the suspension of civil liberties is necessary to combat a localized problem demonstrates a shocking ignorance of our values and history. There is no apprehended insurrection or other emergency that would justify martial law. The destruction of a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law is not the solution. The Toronto police, who are governed by civilian authority, are perfectly capable of investigating crime and arresting criminals. If Councillor Mammoliti thinks they are not, he should have the courage to say so. If he thinks the army can prevent crime, he is deeply confused about the role of the military. If he really wants to prevent gun crime, the Councillor's breath would be better spent encouraging local and provincial politicians to focus on the root causes of the problem – poverty, deficient educational and recreational resources, and a neighbour to the south that will not assist our government in tracking and disabling handguns.

There are solutions to the gun crime problem in Toronto, but they will not be manufactured by silly, headline-grabbing proposals.

The Criminal Lawyers' Association (CLA) is one of the largest specialty legal organizations in Canada, comprising of more than 1,000 members, including associate members from across Canada. The Association is a strong voice for criminal lawyers and everyone concerned with the quality of criminal justice, and regularly consults with all levels of government and the judiciary on all issues relating to the legislation and administration of criminal justice in Ontario and throughout the country. The Criminal Lawyers' Association strives to assist its members in every aspect of the practice of criminal litigation.

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