

**Press release
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Commissioner Viens issues a 3rd call to action

Montréal, March 23, 2018 – Following the March 21st and 22nd testimonies regarding the funding for Aboriginal police forces, Commissioner Jacques Viens has decided this morning to issue a 3rd call to action.

Commissioner Viens calls governmental authorities to postpone the March 31st, 2018 tripartite negotiation deadline with every Aboriginal police force that would manifest a desire to do so to a reasonable delay that could go up to one year while maintaining the upgraded funding. This delay will allow concerned Aboriginal police forces to truly negotiate with the authorities on their respective needs that may be different from one community to another.

Not a program, but an essential service

Just like the Sûreté du Québec, the SPVM or any other municipal police force, it looks obvious for the Commission that the Aboriginal police forces are also an essential service in their communities. With the upcoming deadline, First Nations are trapped in a situation where they have to sign an agreement in order to keep their police forces from being dissolved or to pursue their activities without any financial support.

In order to assure the sustainability of these essential services, a real negotiation needs to take place. According to the testimonies given before the Commission, offers were only transmitted recently to the concerned First Nations and, therefore, there was an absence of genuine negotiations.

During the March 22 hearings, Commissioner Viens said to the audience that it was obvious that Aboriginal citizens in Québec felt they would be better served by police forces which are in the communities, who know the language, the culture and the people in order to create a better contact with them.

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Source:

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