



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

September 30, 2009

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am honored to invite you to the U.S. Department of Justice's Tribal Nations Listening Session on Public Safety and Law Enforcement.

As you well know, the U.S. Department of Justice bears a weighty responsibility to work with the sovereign Indian tribes in combating crime and securing the safety of Native American families. The Justice Department embraces this responsibility. We are actively reinvigorating our efforts to improve law enforcement and public safety in tribal communities by rebuilding true government-to-government partnerships.

To this end, we are convening a Tribal Nations Listening Session. We are committed to engaging in formal consultation on specific issues in the months and years ahead. But the Listening Session is something quite different: an opportunity for Justice Department leaders to hear directly from tribal leaders about the public-safety challenges in your communities and about how the Justice Department can better fulfill its responsibility to help solve those problems while supporting tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

The Listening Session will be held at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront in St. Paul, Minnesota, from 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 28, to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 29, 2009. (We also will reserve space for tribal caucusing the previous evening, on Tuesday, October 27, beginning at 5:00 p.m.)

We request that each tribe send no more than three representatives to the Listening Session. In addition to tribal chairs or chief executives, we welcome participation from tribal judges, police chiefs, prosecutors, victim advocates, and others who you feel have particular expertise in public safety and law enforcement.

In the coming weeks, the Department's Office of Tribal Justice will hold conference calls where we will invite you and other tribal leaders to help frame the issues to be discussed at the Listening Session. Possible topics include support for tribal justice systems, federal law-enforcement responsibilities, violence against women, and juvenile justice.

For much of the Listening Session's first day and a half, the tribal participants will meet in smaller breakout groups to discuss specific issues. Deputy Attorney General David W. Ogden and Associate Attorney General Thomas J. Perrelli (the Justice Department's second- and third-ranking officials) will participate in these smaller group discussions, as will other DOJ personnel from all levels of the Department and all parts of the country. The Listening Session's final afternoon will be a plenary session, where I will have the opportunity to hear reports from the breakout groups in panel presentations.

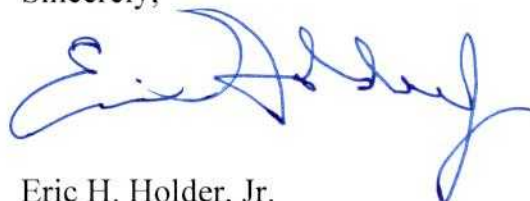
We believe this will be the first time in American history that the leaders of the tribal nations will meet with all three top officials from the Justice Department.

Attached please find information regarding some of the logistics, including how to register for this historic event. As more details become available, we will post them on the Listening Session's Web site.

On the day after the Listening Session (Friday, October 30), at the same location in Minnesota, the Department of Justice will hold its annual government-to-government consultation on violence against Native women. We hope that many of you will be able to stay for that event as well. You will receive a formal invitation to the government-to-government consultation on violence against Native women, along with additional information, under separate cover.

We have much work to do together, as governmental partners, to improve public safety and law enforcement in tribal communities. Although the Listening Session is just one step on a long path, we hope it will be a pivotal one. Please join us in Minnesota next month.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Holder", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General

Attachment