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UNIFORM LAW CONFERENCE OF CANADA
CONFÉRENCE POUR L'HARMONISATION DES LOIS AU CANADA

COMMUNIQUÉ

Fall 2026

Report of the ULCC Past President

Chloé Rousselle, Canada

In the spring *Communiqué*, I reflected on what this season represents for ULCC delegates, who eagerly anticipate the annual meeting held each summer. Now, fall is well underway and makes its presence felt across Canada in many ways. For some, it arrives with the vibrant colours of maple trees; for others, it stirs the appetite with the return of squash soups. Elsewhere, it is marked by the departure of migratory birds or the arrival of the first snowflakes. However, for everyone who participated in this year's annual meeting, fall is also a time to reflect on another productive year for the ULCC.

The 108th annual meeting of the ULCC was held from August 17 to 21, 2026, in the beautiful city of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Once again, the event was a great success, and the work accomplished was significant. Approximately 70 people attended, including 15 or so for the very first time. The strength of the ULCC lies in the diversity of expertise it brings together. I am therefore pleased to know that our most experienced members have helped create a welcoming environment, allowing everyone to find their place and contribute fully to the richness of our discussions.

Guests from the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) of the United States joined us during the week: Lisa Jacobs, President, Eric Weeks, Executive Director, and John McGarvey, liaison to a ULCC working group. I had the privilege of attending the ULC annual meetings in Santa Fe in 2025 and Chicago in 2026, where I received a warm welcome and had the opportunity to present the work of the ULCC.

Thanks to the careful planning of our Manitoba hosts and of the ULCC Executive Director, delegates benefited from ideal conditions for a productive week of work. As you will read in the reports from the Chairs of the Civil and Criminal Sections, exceptional work in support of law reform and harmonization in Canada was accomplished over these five days. In addition to the work carried out within each section, delegates participated in joint sessions, including to receive a report from the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and to discuss the policy report of the joint working group on the treatment of animals in Canadian law.

Social activities held alongside the working sessions offered great opportunities throughout the week in Winnipeg to reconnect with colleagues and make new connections. At the Clark W. Dalton, K.C., Reception, the Honourable Matt Wiebe, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Manitoba, and Ken Mandzuik of the Law Society of Manitoba generously shared their time and delivered remarks. The tradition of the friendly softball game between the East and West teams was, as always, a highlight — both teams gave it their all at Whittier Park in Saint-Boniface, with the East team ultimately taking the honours. Finally, the closing banquet was a wonderful chance to enjoy good company before the final day of a busy week. At the banquet, Isha Khan, CEO of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, delivered an inspiring address that resonated with many of the themes discussed throughout the week, especially those highlighted during the Earl Fruchtman Memorial Seminar. On behalf of all the participants at this year's annual meeting, I would like to once again acknowledge the remarkable efforts of each

member of the planning committee, as well as the support of the Manitoba Department of Justice.

Throughout the year, the ULCC engaged in various organizational projects, including the first review of annual contributions under the new process adopted in 2024, the revision of the by-laws to promote more neutral and inclusive language, and the launch of a brand-new website that is equally sleek and functional. I would like to once again express my gratitude to everyone who contributed their skill and enthusiasm to these projects or participated in the various committees and working groups of the ULCC. I am especially thankful to Alisia Adams, Tyler Nyvall, Gregory G. Blue, K.C., Peter Lown, K.C., Valérie Simard and Matthew Hinshaw for their capable leadership of a Section or Committee, to the members of the Executive Committee for their collaboration, as well as to Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson (Executive Director and Administrator) and Christina Croteau (Legal Project and Research Coordinator) for their invaluable support to the ULCC.

To everyone who participated in the annual meeting or its preparation: please know that nothing the ULCC achieved on this occasion would have been possible without your dedication and expertise. Thank you for being extraordinary ambassadors for the ULCC within your organizations, jurisdictions, or legal communities.

My year as President has passed by in the blink of an eye. While I am humbled by the breadth of what the ULCC has accomplished during this time, I also feel a touch of nostalgia now that this chapter is behind me. I take comfort in knowing that ongoing projects will continue to move forward, that new challenges await to be tackled, and that positive outcomes are still to come.

In closing, I would like to note that, in an organization as longstanding as the ULCC, passing the torch is a valued tradition — one that both honours our heritage and keeps us looking to the future. It is a pleasure to continue this tradition by passing the presidency torch to Valérie Simard. Over the past year, it has been a joy and a privilege to work closely with Valérie in her role as Vice-President and as Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. I look forward to supporting her as a member of her Executive Committee.



2026 Closing Banquet at the Delta Hotel in Winnipeg

2025-2026
Criminal Section Chair
Alisia Adams, British Columbia

Serving as Chair of the Criminal Section has been an honour and a pleasure. Throughout my term, I benefited greatly from the experience and support of our Secretary, Aleksander Godlewski, who played an integral role in modernizing the Criminal Section's processes over the past four years. This year's annual meeting was Aleks' last as Secretary, and I extend the Criminal Section's sincere thanks for his many contributions.

The success of our 2026 annual meeting in Winnipeg reflected considerable commitment throughout the year by the organizing committee, working group members, delegates, and Jurisdictional Representatives. The Criminal Section's working group on statutory exemptions to mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment presented its final report and the joint working group on the treatment of animals in Canadian law presented a policy report, which included comprehensive discussion and recommendations. Two other working groups reported on their continuing work: one examining restrictions on the publication of an accused person's name, and the other examining juries and fitness hearings. Delegates also voted to create a working group to study how to address the overrepresentation of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

At this year's annual meeting, the Criminal Section delegates adopted 24 resolutions addressing criminal procedure, substantive offences, sentencing provisions, protections for victims, and other criminal law issues. Our deliberations benefited from the expertise and collegiality of delegates from across Canada, whose diverse

perspectives were informed by their experience as prosecutors, defence counsel, government lawyers, judges, and members of legal organizations. We also welcomed colleagues from the Civil Section for a thought-provoking discussion on the Rule of Law during the Earl Fruchtman Memorial Seminar.

I am grateful to everyone who joined us in Winnipeg and contributed to the ULCC's long tradition of thoughtful law reform and constructive dialogue on issues affecting the criminal justice system.

I also wish to thank the ULCC's extraordinary Executive Director, Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, the Criminal Section Steering Committee, and the ULCC Executive Committee for their support. As I conclude my term, I am confident that, under the able leadership of our incoming Chair, Nicolas Abran, the Criminal Section will continue to play an important role in advancing thoughtful law reform.

2025-2026 Civil Section Chair

Tyler Nyvall, British Columbia

The 108th annual meeting was held in Winnipeg, during which the Civil Section was pleased to welcome in-person delegates from provincial, territorial and federal justice departments, academia and law reform bodies. We were also pleased to once again be joined by Lisa Jacobs, President of the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) of the United States, and ULC Executive Director Eric Weeks. European Law Institute (ELI) President Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballel was unable to attend in person but provided a 15-minute pre-recorded address describing the ELI's mission and vision, noting the strong relationship between the ELI and the ULCC and expressing a desire to continue to seek opportunities to connect and collaborate in the future.

At the annual meeting, the Civil Section received policy reports on its numerous ongoing projects, which included Defamation Law in the Internet Age, Hybrid Charitable Organizations, Definition of Charity, Class Actions, Intestate Succession, Enforcement of Foreign Judgments, and Treatment of Animals (which is a joint project between the Civil and Criminal Sections). We look forward to receiving final reports from many of these projects at the next annual meeting, to be held in Whitehorse, Yukon, in August 2027.

We also received final reports on two working group projects at the 2026 annual meeting, those on Cash Payments and on Non-Disclosure Agreements.

Lively discussion followed the presentation of both final reports. The result of both discussions was conditional approval of the presented draft legislation. Approval was conditional; while the legislation was approved in principle, the working groups were directed to make amendments to the draft legislation. The revised legislation will be provided to the Jurisdictional Representatives (JRs) later in 2026 and, provided that the required revisions are made, the legislation will be finalized and published.

The nature of the proceedings for Cash Payments and Non-Disclosure Agreements at the annual meeting highlights the importance of jurisdictions having in-person representatives to ensure that their unique perspectives are reflected in final ULCC uniform legislation. Jurisdictions are always encouraged to have members on as many working groups as possible, as such participation allows for the greatest impact on the legislation produced. However, as this past annual meeting has shown, participation on a working group is not necessary to ensure that a jurisdiction can have some influence on ULCC legislation. The impact that a jurisdiction's in-person delegates can have on ULCC legislation at an annual meeting cannot be overstated.

The Civil Section also received a report from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management (ACPDM), Greg Blue, K.C., who advised that work to update and formalize the process for approving new projects was nearly complete. He again made JRs aware of the importance of provinces and territories making their legislative counsel available to draft uniform legislation, given that several projects will be moving into the drafting phase this year.

The 2026 annual meeting concludes my term as Chair of the Civil Section. I would like to thank Christine Badcock, past Chair of the Civil Section, for her continued help recording the minutes of the monthly Civil Section Steering Committee meetings and her willingness to act as a sounding board and provide advice on request. I also wish to thank Christine, Dave Cordingley, Elizabeth Strange, Greg Blue, and Christina Croteau for sharing master of ceremonies duties during the 2026 annual meeting in my absence. These individuals deserve particular recognition because, as noted above, the proceedings were somewhat livelier than usual this year. As in my first year as Chair, the JRs this past year have all been a credit to their various

jurisdictions, remaining engaged and collaborative in the goal of ensuring that the ULCC continues to produce top notch research and draft legislation. I would also like to thank the ULCC staff, Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, Christina Croteau and Greg Blue for their excellent work throughout the year. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all members of the ULCC's various working groups; we value their expertise.



Participants in the 2026 East vs. West softball game in Saint-Boniface, Manitoba

President's Report

Valérie Simard, Canada

I am honoured to serve as President of the ULCC for the coming year. Since 2010, I have witnessed what makes the ULCC unique: its ability to bring together legal professionals from across Canada in support of law reform and harmonization. Its unique bilingual and bijural character, together with the participation of representatives from governments, the judiciary, law reform agencies, academia and the practising bar, brings a diversity of experiences and perspectives that enriches our work. For over a century, generations of members have carried forward a spirit of collegiality and public service, shaping the organization's lasting impact on Canada's legal landscape. I look forward to serving as President in that same spirit.

The year ahead promises to be a busy and productive one. While both sections will continue advancing several important projects, we will also remain focused on ensuring that the ULCC is well positioned for the future by strengthening its long-term sustainability, raising its profile, and continuing to engage our members. The perspectives and ideas of our members enrich our discussions and are vital to ensuring that our work remains relevant and responsive. I encourage all members to contribute, each in their own way, to the work and visibility of the ULCC within their organizations and legal communities.

I am fortunate to be supported by an outstanding Executive Committee whose experience and diverse perspectives will strengthen our work in the year ahead. The Executive Committee also benefits from the support of Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, the ULCC's Executive Director and Administrator, whose leadership, judgment and dedication are instrumental to the success of the ULCC.

At the outset of my term, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Chloé Rousselle, for her exceptional leadership over the past year. Through her dedication, sound judgment and unwavering commitment to the values that define the ULCC, she has strengthened our organization and helped advance its important work. I particularly appreciated her openness to different viewpoints and her ability to foster respectful and productive dialogue. I am grateful for her support and friendship and know that I will benefit from her advice during the year ahead.

Over the coming year, I look forward to engaging with members and welcome your ideas, observations and suggestions as we advance our common objectives. Together, we are stewards of an institution with a remarkable history and an important future. Building on that legacy, we can ensure that the ULCC continues to play a vital role in law reform and harmonization in Canada.

New ULCC website!

If you haven't checked it out yet, we invite you to visit our new website, which was launched in June this year.

The site features a contemporary new look and greatly improved search functionality, particularly as it relates to the Civil Section uniform acts and the Criminal Section resolutions.

The ULCC 2027 annual meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon

Plan to join us for the ULCC 2027 annual meeting, which will be held in stunning Whitehorse, Yukon, from Monday, August 16, to Friday, August 20.

Mark your calendars! More information to come in the spring 2027 *Communiqué*.







Note: Only those invited can attend ULCC annual meetings.

The ULCC introduces new members of the Executive Committee for 2026-2027

James Meloche, Vice-President (Canada)

James Meloche is Senior Counsel with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) at its headquarters in Ottawa. He graduated from the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law in 2004 and was called to the Law Society of Ontario in 2005. After completing his articles with the Department of Justice Canada through the Legal Excellence Program, he began his legal career with the PPSC. Throughout his career, James has prosecuted major drug cases across Ontario, as well as offences under the *Income Tax Act*, *Copyright Act*, and *Aeronautics Act*. He has also prosecuted *Criminal Code* offences in Nunavut. James has lectured at the Canadian Police College and the PPSC School for Prosecutors, and he is a part-time instructor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law. He served as Chair of the Criminal Section in 2024-2025 and is honoured to serve as the ULCC's Vice-President.

Nicolas Abran, Criminal Section Chair (Québec)

Nicolas Abran was called to the bar in 2012. After articling at the Québec Court of Appeal, he joined the Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales as a prosecutor, primarily handling appeals, until he was appointed Deputy Chief Prosecutor in January 2024. He has appeared before all criminal divisions of Québec's courts and has argued numerous cases before the Supreme Court of Canada. Nicolas has been involved with the ULCC's work since 2019 and served as Québec's Criminal Section Jurisdictional Representative from fall 2024 to fall 2026.

Dave Cordingley, Civil Section Chair (Manitoba)

Dave Cordingley is Director of the Crown Law and Analysis Development Branch of Manitoba Justice and has been Manitoba's Jurisdictional Representative to the ULCC Civil Section for three years. Dave was called to the bar in 2008 and, prior to joining Manitoba Justice, had a general litigation practice in Winnipeg.