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Essential Role for Independent, Civilian Oversight of Military Police

Ottawa – Civilian oversight of police has never been more relevant, according to Peter Tinsley, Chair of the Military Police Complaints Commission (MPCC).

In the Commission's 2006 Annual Report, tabled in Parliament today by the Honourable Gordon O'Connor, Minister of National Defence, Mr. Tinsley emphasized the vital role of civilian oversight of all of Canada's police and security agencies, including its military police.

"The Arar Commission recommended that the federal government consider an enhanced role for the Commission, one that would make it an integral part of a national network of federal oversight agencies," stated Mr. Tinsley. "In the context of the Commission's current investigations into allegations of wrongdoing in Afghanistan, the MPCC's independent role is more vital than ever before."

A copy of the MPCC's 2006 Annual Report can be downloaded from the Commission's Web site at www.mpcc-cppm.gc.ca. Report highlights include:

- The number of complaints under review or investigation doubled from 2005;
- The Commission staged its first-ever public hearing;
- A new service standard to reduce the time it takes to complete a review or investigation;
- The Commission's annual budget was reduced by 18 percent;
- Investments in new equipment and technology to assist investigators; and,
- The most recent Public Service Employee Survey showed a high level of job and workplace satisfaction amongst Commission staff.

Established by Parliament in 1998, the role of the MPCC is to assure Canadians that allegations of police misconduct are investigated fully and that Canada's 1,200 military police officers are able to carry out their investigations free of interference.

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