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News Release

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME CALLS FOR IMPROVED TREATMENT OF VICTIMS

OTTAWA (Ontario) February 2, 2012 – Canada's Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, Sue O'Sullivan, today released her first special report, recommending the Government take immediate action to enhance the treatment of victims within Canada's criminal justice system.

"This report draws on the valuable insights victims have shared with us over the past few years and tackles the issues we hear about most," said O'Sullivan. "The entire criminal justice continuum is important, but we need now to shift our focus towards victims' rights and how they are treated in the system. We see significant gaps that can be addressed through feasible changes to our laws and policies and we encourage the Government to move on these quickly."

The report, *Shifting the Conversation*, highlights three key areas where straightforward, practical changes could have a significant impact on victims' treatment:

- victims' need for more information about their rights and the offender who harmed them;
- the importance of ensuring victims can participate more meaningfully in the criminal justice process; and
- the need for increased tangible supports.

"The care and rights of victims should be equivalent to that of offenders. As it stands now in Canada, this is not the case. We must take action now to correct that imbalance."

Copies of the report, as well as a backgrounder and video synopsis can be found on the Office's website at: www.victimfirst.gc.ca

The Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime helps victims to address their needs, promotes their interests and makes recommendations to the federal government on issues that negatively impact victims.

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