

Press release: 10th Meeting of Attorneys General places crime cooperation as international priority

The Attorneys General of the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand met from 27 to 30 August to share their experiences in dealing with complex and cross-border legal issues.

Attorney General, the Rt Hon Geoffrey Cox QC MP, represented the UK at the annual Attorneys General meeting, held this year in Queensland, Australia. Issues discussed included the investigation and prosecution of international criminals including terrorism offenders, trial processes, family law and family violence, and the over-representation of ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system.

One of the outcomes of this meeting was a commitment to share experiences on how evidence can be obtained and utilised more effectively in investigations and subsequent prosecutions for terrorists, including foreign fighters. The Attorneys General agreed that their countries faced a growing threat from international terrorism but also that there was already robust international crime cooperation between each of the five countries represented. The Attorneys General also tasked a working group to carry out a study into breaking the cycle of harm, victimisation, and offending for indigenous people and ethnic minorities. It was agreed that the next annual meeting will be held in London in 2019.

As part of the conference, Attorney General Geoffrey Cox took part in one-to-one meetings with his counterparts.

The Attorneys General also joined their respective Interior Ministers and Immigration Ministers in a joint session, known as the Five Country Ministerial meeting, to discuss wider governmental issues including countering foreign interference and espionage, encryption, criminal information sharing, and illicit finance activities. During these discussions it was agreed that the five countries condemn foreign interference activities and will work collectively to ensure that their sovereignties, values, and interests are upheld in the face of this threat. The UK Attorney General was joined at the Five Country Ministerial meeting by the UK Home Secretary, Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP.

Commenting on the meetings, Attorney General Geoffrey Cox said:

This year's meeting gave us the vital time needed to evaluate the escalating threats associated with terrorism and how we tackle common domestic issues like the over-representation of ethnic minorities in our justice systems.

I thank colleagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA for their cooperation and insight into the key issues we all face and look forward to welcoming them to London for next year's meeting.

Notes

This year's meeting of Attorneys General was the 10th to take place since the meeting was established. The first meeting took place in London in 2009.

The Communique, which sets out the issues discussed and actions resulting from the meeting, can be found [here](#)