

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

COMMUNIQUÉ

Fall 2025

Report of the ULCC Past President

Maria Markatos, Saskatchewan

In the fall 2024 *Communiqué*, past President Matthew Hinshaw, channeling Ferris Bueller, counseled me that “12 months goes by really really fast. Blink and you’ll miss it.” He wasn’t kidding. My term as ULCC President came and went in a flash. Hundreds of hours of virtual calls over the past year culminated in the annual meeting in Halifax where we came, we saw, we softballed.

The annual meeting provides the unique opportunity for delegates to meet and deliberate on resolutions and policy matters that will affect Canadians from coast to coast. Many familiar faces were missing at the annual meeting this year, but the more than 60 delegates in attendance brought their “A” game to every item on the very full agendas by engaging in extensive deliberations and debate. We also welcomed 15 virtual observers who watched various parts of the Civil Section and joint sessions. Their experiences will inform future conversations on the format of the annual meeting.

The business of the two Sections is outlined below in the reports of the Section chairs, which detail the substantial work that was completed and undertaken at the annual meeting, as well as what lies ahead for the upcoming year. Thank you to James Meloche and Tyler Nyvall for all their efforts and to Christine Badcock for stepping in to chair the Civil Section agenda.

The opening reception was held in the Mezzanine at our host hotel, the Westin Nova Scotian, where attendees raised a glass in memory of Clark Dalton, K.C., former ULCC Project Coordinator and long-time ULCC delegate. Clark’s legacy of side bar conversations and understated gentle nudging in the right direction was remembered and toasted.

At the Earl Fruchtmann Memorial Seminar, titled *Mobilizing Canada’s Society-Wide Response to Gender-Based Violence – A Kitchen Table Conversation* and moderated by Susan MacKay from the Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Service, we heard from Lynn Gallant-Blackburn, who shared her personal experiences with us, Rhonda Fraser from the Nova Scotia Highest Risk Domestic Violence Table, and Grace Campbell from Office of L’nu Affairs in the Policy and Indigenous Relations Division. The stories shared by the panel from both their personal and professional lives were incredibly poignant and left delegates with a lot to contemplate.

The annual East vs. West ball game was held at the Halifax Commons, where the West, with a little help from our friends, took home all the hardware with outstanding West player Matthew Hinshaw emerging as MVP. We returned to the hotel for the traditional post-game dinner.

Invited guests from the United States, Uniform Law Commission (ULC) President Lisa Jacobs and ULC Executive Director Eric Weeks, also joined us for part of the week’s activities. Lisa and Eric hosted Vice-President Chloé Rousselle at the ULC meeting in Santa Fe in July and we were pleased to be able to reciprocate. Lisa presented to the Civil Section on the recent and upcoming work of her organization, and options for continued collaboration and sharing of experiences and ideas were discussed at the International Committee luncheon meeting.

The week finished with a delightful banquet in the Elements Room at the hotel, with some night-owl participants carrying on to listen to live music at the Lower Deck.

On behalf of all of the participants at this year's annual meeting, I would like to once again acknowledge the efforts of Tanisha Blackmore, Angus Gibbon, Allyson O'Shea, and Lori-Anne Thomas in planning our events, as well as the Nova Scotia Department of Justice for supporting the annual meeting.

In closing, I want to repeat my thanks and appreciation to the members of the Executive Committee, the Section chairs, Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, Christina Croteau, and Greg Blue, K.C., for their diligence and guidance during my term as President. Thank you also to all the Jurisdictional Representatives, working group chairs and committee members for their hard work throughout the year.

With these remarks, my last duty as President is complete. It was my honour to carry the torch for the past year, and I am pleased to hand it over to Chloé Rousselle. I look forward to supporting Chloé as a member of her Executive Committee and to seeing everyone in Winnipeg in 2026!



2025 Closing Banquet at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel

2024-2025 Criminal Section Chair James Meloche, Canada

I was honoured to chair the Criminal Section meeting this past summer in beautiful Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was a successful week filled with important discussions among all participants about criminal law reforms. This year's Criminal Section delegates represented many different perspectives from our criminal justice system, including criminal law policy experts, defence counsel, Crown prosecutors and members of the judiciary. In all, we considered 29 resolutions advanced from most parts of the country. They proposed amendments to the *Criminal Code* on topics reflecting rich and diverse areas of criminal

law such as bail, peace bonds, victim impact statements, contempt and driving prohibitions.

Following very constructive discussions, the Criminal Section adopted 21 resolutions about reforms including consideration of a possible amendment to the *Regulations Prescribing Certain Firearms and Other Weapons, Components and Parts of Weapons, Accessories, Cartridge Magazines, Ammunition and Projectiles as Prohibited or Restricted* to ensure that "brass knuckles" would capture weapons not made of metal; consideration of the creation of a new offence for smuggling unauthorized items into correctional institutions; a review of section 525 of the *Criminal Code* to clarify the onus that applies at the hearing; and a recommendation to study the revocation regime described at subsections 730(4) and 732.2(5) of the *Criminal Code*. I encourage everyone to visit the [2025 annual meeting web page](#) to review all resolutions presented at this year's Criminal Section meeting.

The Criminal Section unanimously adopted a resolution to accept and approve recommendations presented in the final report of the Working Group on Sections 278.1-278.94 of the *Criminal Code* (the "records regime"). This report is the result of the hard work and dedication of the working group Chair, Melanie Webb, and group members from across the country who devoted significant time and effort to produce an authoritative and comprehensive review of the records regime provisions. Progress reports were also received by four other ULCC working groups examining areas of criminal law such as statutory exemptions to mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment, restrictions to the publication of identifying information of an accused person, provisions in the *Criminal Code* about the determination of fitness when an accused person has elected trial by judge and jury, and the legal treatment of animals.

This year, the Earl Fruchtmann Memorial Seminar featured a moving and important panel discussion about mobilizing Canada's society-wide response to the gender-based violence epidemic. The panel was moderated by Susan MacKay with presentations from Lynn Gallant-Blackburn, Rhonda Fraser and Grace Campbell. I am grateful to all presenters for giving their time and sharing their expertise and experiences with the ULCC.

With a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction, I have come to the end of my mandate as Chair of the Criminal Section. I now pass the torch to Alisia Adams from British Columbia. The Criminal Section will thrive under her leadership. I am indebted to the Criminal Section Steering Committee

members for their encouragement and guidance throughout the year. A special note of appreciation and gratitude goes out to the Criminal Section Secretary, Aleksander Godlewski, for his tireless work behind and in front of the scenes. Quite simply, he was the engine that got us to the finish line! A sincere thank you as well to 2024-2025 President Maria Markatos, Civil Section Chair Tyler Nyvall (along with Christine Badcock), and ULCC Executive Director and Administrator Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, for their invaluable assistance and collaboration throughout the year. I look forward to seeing everyone again next summer in Winnipeg!

2024-2025 Civil Section Chair

Tyler Nyvall, British Columbia

The 107th annual meeting of the Civil Section was held in Halifax. We were pleased to welcome in-person delegates and online observers from provincial, territorial and federal justice departments, academia and law reform bodies. We were also pleased to once again be joined by Lisa Jacobs, recently elected as President of the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) of the United States, and to also be joined by Eric Weeks, the new Executive Director of the ULC.

At the annual meeting, the Civil Section received policy reports on its numerous ongoing projects, which include:

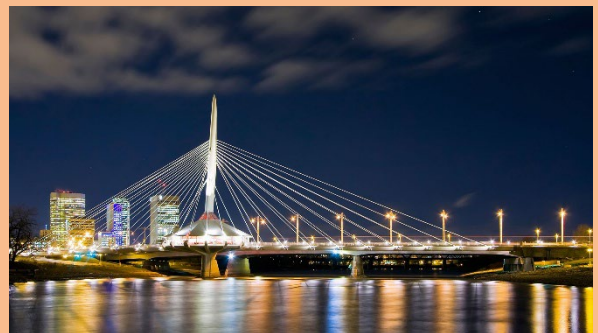
- The Hague Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters (2019),
- Joint Ventures,
- Intestate Succession,
- Enforcement of Foreign Judgments,
- Class Actions,
- Cash Payments,
- Non-Disclosure Agreements,
- Uniform Charity Act,
- Defamation Law in the Internet Age, and
- Treatment of Animals (which is a joint project between the Civil and Criminal Sections).

At the next annual meeting, to be held in Winnipeg, in August 2026, we look forward to receiving draft uniform legislation for several of these projects, which will be considered for adoption at that time.

The ULCC 2026 annual meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Plan to join us for the ULCC 2026 annual meeting, which will be held in beautiful downtown Winnipeg, from Monday to Friday, August 17 to 21.

Mark your calendars! More information to come in the spring 2026 *Communiqué*.



Note: Only those invited can attend ULCC annual meetings.

The Civil Section received a report from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management, Greg Blue, K.C., who advised on the progress of work to update and formalize the process for approving new projects. He also made Jurisdictional Representatives (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 Institut québécois de réforme du droit et de la justice (the Québec Institute for Law and Justice Reform) presented a report summarizing recent law reform projects in civil law jurisdictions and proposed a new ULCC project on Privacy Protection in the Digital Age, which includes concepts such as the right to be forgotten, right to anonymization, right to explainability, right to disconnect, right to depersonalization, etc. This proposal will be taken under advisement.

I have enjoyed serving as Chair of the Civil Section this past year. I would like to thank Christine Badcock, Immediate Past Chair of the Civil Section, for her help throughout the year and particularly for chairing the Civil Section meetings at the annual meeting in my absence. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the JRs for their ongoing engagement during Steering Committee meetings and their commitment to improving the ULCC and its processes. I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude for Christina Croteau, Legal Project and Research Coordinator, and Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, Executive Director and Administrator, who keep me on track. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all members of the ULCC's various working groups, who volunteer their expertise to the improvement of laws in Canada; without their contributions the work of the ULCC could not continue.



Participants in the 2025 East vs. West softball game in Halifax

President's Report

Chloé Rousselle, Canada

I am grateful for the opportunity to take on a new role within the ULCC for 2025-2026. My readiness in assuming the presidency is grounded in the assurance that I can rely on the unwavering dedication and expertise of the highly competent members who make up this organization. Indeed, since attending my very first annual meeting in 2017 in Regina, Saskatchewan, I have been consistently impressed by the ULCC's remarkable ability to bring together individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds, all united by a shared ambition: the ongoing improvement and modernization of the legal framework in Canada. The collaborative spirit that defines the ULCC is evident at every level, including across federal, provincial, and territorial delegations, between the Civil and Criminal Sections, within our working groups and committees and through our exchanges with the Uniform Law Commission of the United States.

As I look ahead to the coming year, I am genuinely delighted to be surrounded by an outstanding Executive Committee, composed of individuals from both Sections, representing a broad spectrum of regions, and bringing a wealth of diverse and invaluable experience. This committee includes: Maria Markatos (Immediate Past President, Saskatchewan), Valérie Simard (Vice-President, Canada), Greg Blue, K.C. (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management, British Columbia), Tyler Nyvall (Chair of the Civil Section, British Columbia), Alisia Adams (Chair of the Criminal Section, British Columbia), Christine Badcock (Yukon), Matthew Hinshaw (Alberta), Laurence Bergeron (Quebec), Elizabeth Strange (New Brunswick), Laura Pitcairn (Canada), and Aleksander Godlewski (Canada). We are also privileged to benefit from the indispensable support of Michelle Lemieux Wilkinson, Executive Director and Administrator, and Christina Croteau, Project and Legal Research Coordinator, whose contributions are essential.

Beyond the substantive legal work undertaken by the Sections — whether independently or jointly — several major organizational initiatives will require our focused attention this year. Among other things, we will undertake a review of the annual contributions in accordance with the new process adopted in 2024. Recognizing that constituent jurisdictions are both the sole funders and principal beneficiaries of the ULCC's work, the Budget and Finance Committee will, as part of

its detailed review of assessments, consult with all Jurisdictional Representatives (JRs). Also, in light of recent experiences that have allowed many to observe certain sessions remotely, we will be discussing options for the upcoming annual meeting. In addition, we will continue to advance the development of the new ULCC website, while remaining committed to welcoming the new members. We will ensure that every initiative is firmly anchored in the values of inclusion, transparency, and excellence, which have long defined the ULCC's distinguished reputation.

As I emphasized during the closing plenary session of the August 2025 annual meeting, it is of paramount importance to me that each of these projects be guided by a broader vision: to ensure the long-term sustainability and continued relevance of the ULCC. Since its 100th anniversary in 2018, the ULCC has consistently produced significant and impactful work, while meeting new challenges and promoting diversity, judicious adoption of technologies, and rigour in its budget management. In an organization with such a rich history, the passing of the torch has become a cherished tradition—one that honours its legacy while ensuring it remains resolutely oriented toward the future. Year after year, the ULCC demonstrates its capacity to evolve and remain an organization attuned to the needs of its time. In this spirit, the achievements of 2024-2025 are noteworthy. At the August 2025 annual meeting, for example, the Civil Section received policy reports on nine projects, while the Criminal Section examined 29 resolutions spanning a

broad and complex range of topics. I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to Maria Markatos for her inspiring leadership and for the tireless efforts that have made the past year such a success.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all those — experienced members and newcomers alike — who will play a vital role in the ULCC's accomplishments in 2025-2026. Whether you serve as a member of a committee or working group, as a JR, or as a delegate, your engagement is truly invaluable and remains the cornerstone of the ULCC's ongoing success.

I look forward to collaborating with you throughout the year and seeing you in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in August 2026.

2025 annual meeting materials

Visit our [2025 annual meeting web page](#) for reports, resolutions, minutes, and other documents stemming from the meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, this past August.

The ULCC introduces new members of the Executive Committee for 2025-2026

Valérie Simard, Vice-President

Valérie Simard is legal counsel at Justice Canada, with over 15 years of experience in international private law. Her work encompasses policy development and the provision of legal advice in this field. She leads Canada's delegations to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH). A contributor to the ULCC since 2010, she currently serves as Vice President (2025-2026) and sits on its Executive Committee, Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management, International Committee, and Budget and Finance Committee. She holds law degrees in both common law and civil law from McGill University, as well as a Linguistics degree from the University of Ottawa.

Alisia Adams, Criminal Section Chair

Alisia Adams started her career as Crown Counsel in 2002 and is currently the British Columbia (BC) Prosecution Service's Director of Policy and Justice Issues. She has served as BC's Jurisdictional Representative for the Criminal Section since 2021 and is a member of the ULCC's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Executive Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, and Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management.