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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY VIA  
TELECONFERENCE ON MAYORAL SUMMIT ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**Fabien Levy, Press Secretary, Mayor's Office:** Thank you everybody for joining us today. We had a very productive weekend at the Criminal Justice Summit. Today we're going to start with hearing some remarks from New York City Mayor Eric Adams followed by Chief of Staff Frank Carone and then Chief Counsel to the Mayor and to City Hall Brendan McGuire. If you have a question, please utilize the raise hand feature so you can be called on. So without further ado, Mayor Adams.

**Mayor Eric Adams:** Thank you. Thank you, Fabian. And I thank all of you for joining today. And I'm hoping that whatever pieces of good luck charm you have, let's all touch it and hope that the Yankees are successful this afternoon so that we can continue moving forward in beating Houston. I am really pleased to be here with both my chief of staff and my chief counsel — Chief of Staff Frank Carone and my Chief Council Brendan McGuire — as we concluded the Mayoral Summit on Criminal Justice.

I've stated this over and over again that there are many rivers that feed the sea of violence and justice. The prerequisite to our prosperity as a city is justice and public safety. They go together. And today, sitting down with every area of the criminal justice system from judges to defense attorneys, district attorneys, lawmakers, police officers, those who are concerned about mental health issues — any part of the criminal justice system was represented. We wanted to have a real lively conversation and discussion.

I want to thank civil rights attorney Norman Siegel. He planted this seed with conversations with the attorneys in our office as well as with the Corporation Counsel Judge Sylvia Hinds-Radix, on how we can get everyone in the room.

And we walked away with a number of things, but two areas really stood out to me. Our focus must move to a place on justice, not simply winning, but how do we ensure that people are able to get the justice they deserve in a fair manner without clogging up or bottlenecking the criminal justice system.

We also want to be clear. Any time we engage in this conversation around the criminal justice system people highlight one term and that is bail reform. There are so many other aspects of the

criminal justice system that we were able to talk through and discuss, and we were extremely pleased with the conversations that we had.

We have been... a issue around the infrastructure of our criminal justice system. And we must be clear, this antiquated infrastructure is impacting on the ability of New Yorkers seeking justice on both ends of the spectrum. And that is what we walked away with. We are breaking into different groups to drill in on the infrastructure that we'd like to build is antiquated, so that we can build an infrastructure that will match the needs of our criminal justice system at this time.

And so I want to turn it over to my chief of staff, Frank Carone, who is extremely instrumental in bringing people together from all areas of government as we engage in this conversation. And then we will turn it over to my Chief Counsel Brendan McGuire. And then we'll open up for a few questions on this topic. Frank?

**Frank Carone, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office:** Sorry, everyone. I'm being told that I can't be heard, which is okay. So I hope everyone can hear me now.

What I was saying a few moments ago, and I'll repeat, was that today was really a culmination of circumstances that led us to conclude that, as the mayor said, there are many rivers that feed the sea of violence. One of those rivers is the adjudication and the lack thereof where individuals both unjustifiably accused and those perhaps justifiably and victims themselves who are not getting the adjudications that are necessary.

And it really crystallized for us as early as in January when a young 11-month-old baby was shot and we heard that there were over 1,300 gun arrests and one or two adjudications.

And from there, we started talking a lot and the mayor has been very clear that we should find areas where we have common ground and put those areas where we have differences of opinion — and he says all the time, 8.8 million New Yorkers and 30,000 opinions — but find the areas where we could find common ground on an issue. Not necessarily have the same suggestions on how to solve the issue, but get folks together in a room who have a single purpose which is making New York a better place to live. And that of course starts with justice and the criminal justice system.

So it was really rewarding to hear from all the thought leaders around the city, those who has made it their life's work in the pursuit of justice. To have representatives from both the Assembly and the Senate and the governor's office and all five DAs, including the special narcotics prosecutor, all in a room to just really exchange ideas.

And we really had a great debate. It was very honest and open. We were very clear that we were not going into this with a set of objectives that were predetermined. We wanted to be really open-minded as possible and allow space for people to convince others perhaps that their idea was maybe the right one. And we're very pleased that we really were able to do this over the last two days. And it really crystallized for us this past week, speaking to Speaker Heastie who said to me, "Frank, justice doesn't end at arrest. There's still a process, there's still a system."

And I said, "Speaker, you said it more eloquently than I could ever." But that's exactly right. We're going to talk about those processes that need attention, that perhaps need legislative attention, perhaps need funding attention, or just intellectual attention.

And we're going to continue beyond this weekend and build off of this. And we really hope that we're going to be able to come up with a product that the city and the rest of the state could be proud of.

**Brendan McGuire, Chief Counsel to the Mayor and City Hall:** Good afternoon everyone, this is Brendan McGuire. In the months that we took in planning this summit, we had at least two overarching themes in mind: accountability and credibility.

Accountability in that we were all focused and we knew we could get all stakeholders to agree on the fact that this criminal justice system must be accountable. It must hold all those who are stakeholders in it, all those who come into it, as well as all those who work within it. Whether that's prosecutors, judges, law enforcement, as well as criminal defense practitioners and others. We all have to hold ourselves accountable as well as those who are in the system accountable. And some of that accountability has been lost for a whole host of reasons.

And then credibility. We felt like the best solutions are always the most credible solutions. And the most credible solutions are developed when you have all voices at the table so that, as the mayor and Frank noted, you can identify areas of common ground. You can see common ground while also seeking other priorities that are individual to your particular interest.

It doesn't mean that you forget about your other priorities. You put them aside, as Frank said, for a weekend and really focus on where you can be constructive with one another.

And so we did that. We worked through the discussion. And we also wanted to make sure that this was practical, that there were action items that we could move on from this and this wasn't just a debate that didn't then lead from talk to action.

And so we formed at least three task forces coming out of this on three particular topics. One with respect to discovery, one with respect to mental health, and one with respect to urgent action items that need to be addressed within the system.

And so there will be next steps. We obviously have just concluded today. And so we are working out those next steps and we'll be prepared to discuss those at the appropriate time. But there is certainly more to come. But this was a very satisfying and I think promising start.

**Mayor Adams:** So we'll open to any questions that you may have at this time. Either one of my counsels or chief of staff or I will answer it, try to be as informative as possible.

**Levy:** Thank you, mayor. As a reminder, to ask a question, please raise your hand. Our first question is from Steve Burns from radio. Steve, your mic is unmuted.

**Steve Burns, Reporter, WCBS 880:** Hey, good afternoon, Mr. Mayor. How are you?

**Mayor Adams:** Good, yourself?

**Burns:** I'm alright. Appreciate you taking the time. I know you mentioned that bail reform is one small piece of the puzzle, but I know I don't have to remind you, you've held several press conferences specifically on that issue. You've called for a dangerousness standard. You've called for some juveniles to be tried in criminal court. Are those still things that you are pushing for? And in general, what's behind the change in your concentration here?

**Mayor Adams:** No, always have been concentrated on the complete system. From time to time, when you look at the speech I gave the city and the report I gave out on those many rivers, we tend some time to focus on just one of those rivers. I have been complete in that there's a holistic approach and we must focus on our holistic approach.

The goal this weekend was to say, "Hey, let's find our common grounds." What are the common grounds we have? We're going to have disagreements, we're going to have things that one, they believe is more a top priority than others. But what are the common grounds? And we found some. We found some real common grounds about this antiquated infrastructure and we're going to zero in on them.

**Levy:** Thank you. Our next question is from Roger Stern from 1010 Radio. Roger, your mic is unmuted.

Roger? Okay, we'll move on to the next person. Mark Morales from CNN. Mark, your line is unmuted.

All right, we'll try another person. David Meyer from the New York Post.

**David Meyer, Reporter, New York Post:** Hey, can you hear me?

**Levy:** Yep, we can hear you. Go ahead.

**Meyer:** Alright. Hello, Mr. Mayor. Happy Sunday. How are you?

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you, David.

**Meyer:** Good to hear your voice. So I wanted to ask you two questions if I could. One is following up on my colleague Dean Balsamini's reporting that was on our front page today in the Post. He reported that the NYPD is on track to lose over 4,000 people this year to retirement or resignation, more than any year since 9/11.

**Levy:** David, we're focused on on-topic today, if you have an on-topic question.

**Meyer:** It's a public safety question. That's on-topic, I think. Does that concern you given all these pronouncements and goals you have on public safety, Mr. Mayor?

**Mayor Adams:** What I found, David, is that those were large classes. If you go back and you look at the years that many of the officers are reaching their 20 years, these were times when we were having large classes.

And what I'm excited about is in my meeting with the police commissioner is that we don't have a deficit of people who want to come on the Police Department. We sat down with DCAS and the Police Department to expedite the examination process. And we found that there were some issues around how frequent we were doing the exams.

We have just an overwhelming abundance of young men and women who are excited about being a member of the greatest Police Department in this country. And we know when you have these large classes that reach their 20 year, their 21st year, you get these large turnovers.

So we're excited that those who are leaving are going to be met with those who are coming in. And we are going to continue to move forward and have the Police Department that we expect in the city.

**Levy:** Great, thank you. The next question is from Grace Ashford from the New York Times. Grace, your line is unmuted.

**Grace Ashford, Reporter, New York Times:** Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor Adams:** Good afternoon.

**Ashford:** Good afternoon. I was wondering if you could share what some of the urgent action items are that are going to be taken up by that task force?

**Mayor Adams:** A couple of things. And one of my counsels can also jump in. But one of the number one things that jumped off at me is the sharing of information and discovery. We made a change in the discovery system without changing the antiquated method that information is shared.

There's no reason we're not using a centralized portal to share that information. And we are going to look at the technology that's out there that allow us to look at the mounds of information and evidence that both defense attorneys and prosecutors must look at, and judges must look at. There must be a better way of doing that.

And the second thing is the time that we're using. It is really antiquated that defense attorneys, prosecutors, and others spend hours waiting to just have a 30 second appearance in front of a judge where we could use a better use of the manpower. Particularly where all of the areas have stated that they're seeing a decrease in the number of lawyers that they had. Prosecutors stated this, defense attorneys stated this.

And so we are seeing common ground that is really bottlenecking the system. And that is saying, this system is not built for the 21st century of criminal justice. Anything you want to add, guys?

**McGuire:** I'll add one other issue on top of what the mayor said, just to give you an example. We're obviously just coming out of this and so we're still formulating the list of urgent action items.

But one issue that all of us found common ground on was the need to provide mental health resources immediately to those who are coming out of a first court appearance. Not providing

them with an appointment in the future, not asking them on their own to get to a location on their own at some defined date in the future. But to immediately engage with them right away outside of the courthouse.

So we're going to be exploring... There's some successful models on that. And so one model there is, which has been one phrase that has been used, is a Care Van where you have resources outside, mobile resources outside of a courthouse where immediately treatment and other options can be provided to those who need it. And the question is how do we scale that in the right way across all the boroughs? But that's one example of what that particular committee (inaudible).

**Carone:** Another specific example was, we're exploring technological fixes in the use of discovery. We heard that the different district attorneys' offices across the various boroughs have different systems. They all have their own cloud-based way of saving and uploading the information that comes from the Police Department and from other relevant areas on the prosecution of cases.

And that also that system is not readily available to the defense nor to inmates, for example, on Rikers Island who also need to have access to materials that they're being charged with.

So we're looking at ways of using technology to make one unified system or where it could be readily available to all the relevant parties, including the judges as well. And that was surprising to a lot of us, and I think something that can be fixed if we're intentional about it.

**Levy:** As a reminder, if you have a question, please raise your hand. We'll try Roger Stern from 1010 WINS again. Roger, your line is unmuted.

We'll try Mark Morales from CNN again. Mark, your line is unmuted. Okay, those are all the questions we have for today. Thank you everyone for participating. Have a good day.

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you.

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