

PRESS RELEASE

Unlocking Potential: Future of Canada India Partnership

Ottawa Roundtable: November 19, 2013

Ottawa, Parliament Hill, November 19, 2013: A roundtable on: “Unlocking Potential : Future of Canada India Partnership” was jointly organized by Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) and Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) with support from the Honourable Senator Dr. Asha Seth at the Parliament Hill, Ottawa on Tuesday, November 19, 2013.

At the roundtable Shastri Indo Canadian Institute was represented by President Dr.



Shanthi Johnson and Dr. Rajesh Tyagi and ICCC was represented by its President Naval Bajaj and Ambassador (Retd.) Kant K. Bhargava, Honorary Advisor of ICCC.

The opening session of the Roundtable was held at Hotel Westin, Ottawa where representatives from the business community, academia and government came together to discuss four different themes pertaining to Canada India bilateral relations;

- Education, skill development and vocational training
- Innovation, science and technology, and sustainable development
- Investment
- Roles of diaspora and bridge-builders, Canadian provinces and Indian states

Among the Roundtable participants included His Excellency Admiral Nirmal Varma, Indian High Commissioner, Mr. Don Stephenson, Chief Negotiator, CEPA, Ms. Denise Amyot, President and CEO, Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Mr. Sriram

Iyer, President & CEO, ICICI Bank, Canada, Mr. Brian Lee Crowley, Managing Director, Mc Donald Laurier Institute, Mr. V.I. Lakshmanan, Chair, Canada India Foundation, Douglas Gould, Director, Asia Pacific Foundation and representatives from AUCC, Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development and various other organizations.

In his speech, Mr. Don Stephenson stressed on the importance of Canada India trade relationship and the challenges it faced in signing of CEPA. He highlighted the various agreements between Canada and India that were signed and also those that are in their final stages which includes the Social Security Agreement, Nuclear Co-operation Agreement and also agreements on Audio Visual Co-production, Science and Technology Partnership Program, International Education Strategy, Investment Protection Agreement, Sector Practices established in key economic areas and expanded Trade Commissioner Services in India to promote Canadian businesses.



His Excellency Admiral Nirmal Varma emphasized the importance of SMEs in the trade corridor between Canada and India which should move on even in the absence of CEPA.

“Tonight, we will have an opportunity to discuss at length how Canada and India are working together to develop and strengthen key relations in the areas of education, research, and commerce”, Senator Asha Seth stated over the dinner attended by delegates from across the country and Parliamentarians including Minister Bal Gosal and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate Yonah Martin. Senator Seth congratulated Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute and Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce for their efforts in organizing the Roundtable meeting.

In his speech, Mr. Naval Bajaj, ICCC President said “At the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce, we believe that for unlocking the full potential of Canada-India partnerships, our discussions during the roundtable must factor the need for evolving a cohesive and coordinated approach by the



governments of Canada and India by involving in this exercise industry, academia and governments at provincial and local levels.”

The event concluded with a speech by Dr. Shanthi Johnson, President of the Shastri-Indo Canadian Institute, in which the importance of academic and research exchanges were stressed as a measure to further unlock potential for Canada and India. In her speech, Dr. Johnson said "Education is the most effective tool we have to bring social change and economic prosperity. Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute will continue to play a significant role in building and improving academic relationships between the two great nations, Canada and India."

A joint report is being prepared by SICI and ICCC and will be disseminated to all concerned opinion, policy and decision makers.

If you would like more information about Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, please visit www.sici.org/www.sici.org.in