



**Deepak Obhrai, MP**  
Calgary East  
Parliamentary Secretary to the  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
(Asia-Pacific & Africa)

# Media Release

**For Immediate Release**

**December 1, 2006**

## **Obhrai says India a priority partner for Canada**

(Ottawa) Deepak Obhrai, M.P. and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, said today that Canada's new Conservative government is interested in significantly deepening its ties with India.

"We know that as we pursue our relationship with India, we do so with a country that shares our fundamental values. Our two countries, grounded in democracy, have a great deal to offer to each other and the world," Obhrai said, addressing a large gathering of experts at Ottawa's Department of Foreign Affairs.

Obhrai delivered the welcome address at a conference titled "India Emerging: Implications for Canada," which was organized by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs.

Obhrai pointed out that first and foremost, it was democracy that bound the two nations together. "A democracy that encourages new thinking, entrepreneurship, and individual success – a democracy that shares Canada's values. We will continue to strengthen our joint efforts toward keeping our democracies safe and expanding democracy to those dark places where it doesn't yet exist."

Obhrai said Canada aims to establish a free trade agreement with India. "That is why Canada has a commercial strategy in place to boost the trade and investment relationship. The priority sectors identified in the strategy are those where we are world leaders – agriculture and agri-food, infrastructure, information and communications technology, extractive industries, life sciences and enabling services, including financial."

"We intend to encourage more export-ready Canadian companies to pursue opportunities in India and increase knowledge of Canada's commercial capabilities and strengths in India's corporate and private sector."

**Ottawa Office:**  
Room 426-N Centre Block  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6  
Tel: (613) 947-4566  
Fax: (613) 947-4569



**Constituency Office:**  
Radisson Centre  
Suite 225, 525-28 Street East  
Calgary, AB  
T2A 6W9  
Tel: (403) 207-3030  
Fax: (403) 207-3035



**Deepak Obhrai, MP**  
Calgary East  
Parliamentary Secretary to the  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
(Asia-Pacific & Africa)

# Media Release

---

Obhrai also pointed out that access to Indian markets were restricted and that Canada sees a need to overcome obstacles to gaining access to Indian markets.

“We need improved access to certain areas of the Indian market for Canadian businesses, as well as increased foreign direct investment flows to Canada from India.”

Last year, two-way trade between Canada and India reached about \$3 billion – roughly the level of Canada’s annual trade with Switzerland. India is Canada’s 18<sup>th</sup> largest export market, while Canada is India’s 24<sup>th</sup> largest export market.

- 30 -

***For more information, contact Mohan Samarasinghe at (613) 947-4567***

---

**Ottawa Office:**  
Room 426-N Centre Block  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6  
Tel: (613) 947-4566  
Fax: (613) 947-4569



**Constituency Office:**  
Radisson Centre  
Suite 225, 525-28 Street East  
Calgary, AB  
T2A 6W9  
Tel: (403) 207-3030  
Fax: (403) 207-3035