



For Immediate Release
November 20, 2007

United Nations Slams Conservative Children's Policies

OTTAWA – A new United Nations report on the plight of children confirms what many Canadians already know – the Conservative government of Stephen Harper is content to let children fend for themselves, Liberal Social Development Critic Ruby Dhalla said today.

“This report is a loud wake up call for anyone who cares about children in this country,” said Dr. Dhalla. “The real tragedy is that I don’t think anyone in this Conservative government is listening.”

The annual report was released today, the 18th anniversary of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. It builds on an earlier UN report this year on the well-being of children, in which Canada placed 12th out of 21 countries, behind nations such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Spain and Switzerland. The United States ranked 21st.

Of particular concern in Canada is the high number of children in the justice and welfare systems. The report also focuses on the plight of Canada’s aboriginal children, who lack housing, clean water and educational opportunities.

“The Conservative government’s decision to eliminate the Kelowna Accord and cancel the previous Liberal government’s national child care agreements have been major setbacks for this country’s children,” said Dr. Dhalla. “A new Liberal government will address these challenges, just as we will address poverty with our 30-50 poverty reduction plan.

“The state of Canada’s children is a national concern and the UN’s report is a sharp indictment the negligence of this government. The Conservatives have had ample opportunity to act on child poverty, national child care and the needs of aboriginal children and have chosen to do nothing. There has been no leadership and no action for the children of Canada.”

Contact:

Office of Dr. Ruby Dhalla
613-995-4843