



For Immediate Release  
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### **Ruby Dhalla invited as Guest Panelist for the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

Ottawa – Dr. Ruby Dhalla, Member of Parliament for Brampton Springdale, has been invited as a guest panelist for the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKnow Politics) Forum entitled “Getting Ahead: testimonials from Women Political Leaders.”

The event will be held at the United Nation Headquarters in New York on March 4th, 2009. The forum is part of the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women and will bring together women politicians from around the World including, Namibia, Egypt, and Belgium. The event is expected to gather more than 200 guests, including women leaders from around the world, activists, and policy makers.

“I am honored to be invited to speak and participate in an event that promotes women in politics. Women provide a unique insight, perspective, and experience to the political arena and contribute to enhancing the quality of debate and championing issues important to families” said Dr Dhalla.

The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics) is an online workspace designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students and other practitioners interested in advancing women in politics. The goal of iKNOW Politics is to increase the participation and effectiveness of women in political life by utilizing a technology-enabled forum. It is a joint project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

In 2004 Dr. Dhalla made history as one of the first South Asian Woman to be elected to federal parliament in the western world. Currently one of the youngest female MP's in Canadian Parliament, she has been a strong advocate for women and youth in politics. Dr. Dhalla has been a founder for a number of non profit organizations including Ethno-Cultural Canadian Women's Organization (ECCO) to raise awareness and empower women of ethnic communities affected by domestic violence.

In addition Dr. Dhalla has also been active in the global arena, as a guest speaker at numerous conferences and as an advocate for increasing funding to medicine for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Dhalla currently serves as the Official Opposition Critic for Multiculturalism and Youth for the Liberal Party of Canada under the leadership of the Hon. Michael Ignatieff.

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