



For Immediate Release
June 28th 2010

Dhalla meets with Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh at G20 Summit

Toronto- Dr. Ruby Dhalla, Member of Parliament for Brampton Springdale met with the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh today to discuss a range of issues important to the residents of Brampton-Springdale.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is the first Sikh Prime Minister of India and is listed by TIME magazine as among the 100 most influential people in the world. He met with Dr. Dhalla during his visit to the G20 summit in Toronto.

During her meeting with the Prime Minister, Dr. Dhalla addressed a number of concerns important to her constituents of Brampton-Springdale including opportunities for strengthening and mobilizing trade between Canada and India especially in the areas of education and health care, and between small and medium sized businesses. Dr. Dhalla also attended a guest lecture hosted at the University of Toronto entitled "The G20 and the Emerging Global Financial Architecture" by Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission for the Government of India.

"With the middle class of India larger than the entire population of the United States and 65% of India's population under the age of 35 there are tremendous opportunities for both India and Canada. There is unlimited potential to build bridges and partnerships with Canadians and Canadian owned businesses especially in the area of education and healthcare. With the Indian Diaspora as one of the largest ethnic communities in Canada there is a natural advantage for Canada to build a partnership with India," said Dr. Dhalla.

On behalf of her constituents Dr. Dhalla also raised a number of issues relating to property rights, fraudulent immigration consultants and the issue of fraud marriages. In addition, Dr. Dhalla also encouraged the Prime Minister to sign a reciprocal agreement with Canada which would allow immigrant seniors coming from India to receive their pensions sooner than the current 10 year period.

"As a female MP I have had a number of women come forward in regards to the issue of fraud marriages. Policies and legislation must be put into place by both Canadian and Indian governments to deter men and women from using marriage solely as a tool for entry into Canada. There are far too many shattered dreams, families, and broken

hearts." said Dr. Dhalla.

In addition Dr. Dhalla also requested the Prime Minister to support her initiative of having a state holiday declared in India for the celebration and recognition of the achievements of women. Celebrating mothers, daughters and sisters with a state holiday will help raise awareness of the issues and challenges faced by girls and women such as female-feticide, education of young girls and the involvement of women in the political arena.

In 2004, Dr. Dhalla made history as one of the first Sikh women to be elected to Canadian Parliament and is also one of the first women of Indian origin to be elected to a federal parliament in the western world. Dr. Dhalla has been a strong champion for strengthening, enhancing, and mobilizing economic, cultural and trade relations between Canada and India.

A prominent supporter of human rights Dr. Dhalla made history on May 15, 2008 when her private members motion asking the Government of Canada to officially apologize to the Indo-Canadian community and the individuals impacted in the 1914 Komagata Maru injustice was passed.

As a result Dr. Dhalla is frequently invited to speak at various conferences in India and was most recently invited as a guest from the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in India, to speak as a panelist at a conference which brought together the global Diaspora of Indians from over 40 countries. While in India Dr. Dhalla was also a keynote speaker at a roundtable hosted by the Indo-Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Confederation of Indian Industries on fostering India-Canada Trade relations for small and medium sized businesses. During her trip Dr. Dhalla was honoured with various awards including the NRI (Non Resident Indian) Award for political leadership and the Global Punjabi Award for her work in ensuring that children from underprivileged homes in India have the opportunity to receive an education.

As one of the youngest women currently in Canadian Parliament, Dr. Dhalla has been a strong advocate for issues impacting women, youth, and new immigrants. She is currently serving as the Special Advisor to Opposition Leader Michael Ignatieff on Child Poverty.

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