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Media Release

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Sri Lanka remains a priority for Canada, Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai tells Sri Lanka's new High Commissioner to Ottawa

(OTTAWA) Deepak Obhrai, M.P. and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, this week had a positive discussion with Sri Lanka's new High Commissioner to Canada, Her Excellency Chitranganee Wagiswara.

Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai, who paid an official visit to Sri Lanka in July 2009, stressed to the High Commissioner that Sri Lanka remains a priority for Canada.

PS Obhrai conveyed the most important thing for Sri Lanka, is to ensure the start of the reconciliation process. After 30 years of war, reconciliation is crucial for lasting peace in Sri Lanka. The Government of Canada awaits to see what steps the Government of Sri Lanka will take towards this reconciliation.

Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai told High Commissioner Wagiswara that Canada is encouraged by the return of close to 160,000 internally displaced persons to their homes.

"Canada urges the government of Sri Lanka for an early safe return and resettlement of the approximately 100,000 individuals who remain displaced", Mr. Obhrai said.

Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai pointed out that Canada encourages the government of Sri Lanka to allow access by NGOs and the media to camps and resettlement areas and to continue to pursue effective coordination with humanitarian agencies and donors. He also urged the government of Sri Lanka to lift the state of emergency now that the conflict is over.

Canada looks forward to working with the Government of Sri Lanka to address many of these issues.

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