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Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai Attends African Union Summit and Concludes Visit to Ethiopia

(No. 47 - February 3, 2011 - 3:20 p.m. ET) Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, has completed a productive visit to Addis Ababa from January 24 to 28, 2011. While in the Ethiopian capital, Mr. Obhrai attended the 18th session of the African Union Executive Council.

At the African Union Summit, in his discussions with African leaders and officials, Mr. Obhrai underlined Canadian support for African solutions to regional crises, such as that in Côte d'Ivoire. He reiterated Canada's ongoing commitment to the continent and discussed partnership with Canada in a variety of sectors.

"As the leading African multilateral forum, whose vision is an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa, the African Union is an essential partner for Canada in promoting shared values, preventing and reducing conflict, and encouraging political and economic development in Africa," said Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai.

During his visit, Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai announced, on behalf of the Honourable Beverley J. Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, Canada's contribution of **\$18.75 million to the Agricultural Growth Program in Ethiopia**, which is also being supported by a number of other donors.

"Agriculture is the lifeblood of African countries," said Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai. "This funding, through the Canadian International Development Agency, will help to strengthen farmer organizations and supply systems for key agricultural inputs, such as seed and livestock breeds. It will also help develop rural infrastructure and implement better soil and water conservation practices."

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