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# Media Release

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai participates in the Pacific Islands Forum in New Zealand**

(OTTAWA, September 12, 2011) Deepak Obhrai, M.P. and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, participated in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum in Auckland, New Zealand. Obhrai headed the Canadian delegation to the forum, which was held on September 7-8, 2011.

"Canada appreciates this opportunity to engage in discussion on issues of concern to our partners in the South Pacific region," said Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai. "It was a very productive meeting."

The Pacific Islands Forum – in which Canada is a dialogue partner – includes 16 independent and self-governing states in the Pacific. The Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organization. Forum leaders meet annually to develop collective responses to regional issues.

Among the topics that featured at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Forum were: Sustainable economic development; fisheries; transport and energy; tourism; education; trade and labour mobility.

"Our government was given a strong mandate by Canadians to focus on our economic recovery. It was heartening to note that the member nations were equally committed towards regional and economic integration to improve the prospects of stable, long-term economic growth in Pacific communities." Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai said.

Obhrai also noted the value of Canada participating in events such as this, where Canada can support the organization's agenda with respect to the promotion of freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law.

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