

Confederation of Indian Industry

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Mumbai, India

I want to say how pleased I am to be in India, with the other members of Team Canada. It is especially exciting to be here in the dynamic city of Mumbai.

In particular, I am pleased to be invited to speak on behalf of Team Canada at the Centenary Partnership Summit of the Confederation of Indian Industry. Canada has had a long relationship with the CII.

In fact, just recently, the Canadian International Development Agency signed an agreement to establish an environmental management division within the CII. We look forward to other cooperative efforts in the future.

India and Canada share many of the same values, and our friendship goes back well before Indian independence. And it flourished in the decades that followed.

In those early days, despite the geographic distance that separated our countries, our bilateral relations were very strong.

For example, Canada was among the first here with a substantial development cooperation program under the Colombo Plan. And, in the 1950s and '60s, Canada was one of the top three suppliers of imports to India.

Our relationship developed through our joint participation in international organizations, such as the Commonwealth and the United Nations.

India was emerging after a long and difficult struggle for independence and taking its rightful place in the world. Canada was emerging too. At the end of World War Two, Canada was entering adulthood as a nation.

Canadians were inspired by the Indian struggle.

The example of Mahatma Gandhi influenced a generation of Canadians. And it made a deep impression on my country's leaders of the era.

In fact, the close relationship that Prime Ministers St. Laurent, Diefenbaker and Pearson had with Prime Minister Nehru symbolized the deep partnership between our countries in those early years.

But let's be completely honest. In recent decades, that relationship has not been as strong. The close ties between our countries that marked earlier decades have been absent.

There were reasons for this cooling. But now, it is time for us to start building again.

Canada is the seventh largest trading country in the world. And India is emerging as one of the economic giants of the coming century.

Canada has finally discovered its Pacific dimension, giving a new priority to trade with Asia. We are a full and very active member of APEC. And we are developing close ties with the leading countries of the Pacific.

Canada is ready to build a stronger, more vital link with India.

That is the reason for this Team Canada mission to this country. Believe me, if you are familiar with Canadian politics, you will know that it is not on every issue that the Prime Minister and provincial premiers agree. So the fact that we are all here as one team says something about the importance we place on renewing the relationship between our nations.

And I believe India is ready too. Changes that are taking place here are also helping to intensify our relationship. India is moving to realize its vast potential by opening up its market.

Canada strongly supports the bold steps the Indian Government has taken. It is these policies which provide the basis for a new dynamic and mutually beneficial bilateral relationship.

Canada and Canadian companies are also looking at new markets; we are using new strategies that go beyond exporting and include investment, joint ventures and technology transfers.

Governments and the private sector in Canada have cooperated on a new strategy known as *Focus India*. This will make it possible to coordinate the efforts of the federal and provincial governments and of the private sector, in order to take advantage of new economic opportunities.

Business activities will be supported by high-level visits both to and from India, as well as seminars, workshops and other initiatives. This Team Canada visit is proof of Canada's commitment to the "Focus India" program -- and to expanded bilateral relations.

There is much to be done in the area of bilateral trade. Our total bilateral trade in 1994 was worth only 723 million Canadian dollars. I believe we can do much better than that.

So I was extremely encouraged to see that the results for the first eight months of 1995 show a significant increase in trade -- an increase of 64% in Canadian exports to India, as well as an increase of almost 25% in Indian exports to Canada. We will likely surpass the \$1 billion mark this year.

These improvements are impressive, but I believe that much remains to be done. That is why Team Canada is here in India.

And we have an important connection that can link us in ways that were unthinkable in those early years of partnership. A connection that has emerged in recent decades, and that can -- and should -- provide a base on which to build a new renaissance in the relations between our countries.

There are now half-a-million Canadians of Indian origin living in Canada. They are full, active participants in the economic and public life of our communities and our country as a whole.

A number of these Canadians are part of this Team Canada mission to India. Many of the business people in our delegation. And two Canadian Members of Parliament -- Herb Dhaliwal and Gurbax Singh Malhi are also with us on Team Canada.

Canadians of Indian origin have enriched the quality of life in Canada, weaving a rich strand in the fabric of our country. Every day, in thousands of ways they help make Canada a better country.

And they are also the major link between Canada and India. With modern technology, they are able to communicate and maintain close contacts with their families, friends and business partners in India.

This is the most important element of our bilateral relationship -- the day-to-day contacts between individuals.

But thanks to initiatives like this Team Canada mission, we can build on this important base to give our relationship new energy, new relevance and a new dynamism.

My teammates on Team Canada are provincial premiers, federal ministers, and the hundreds of Canadian business leaders on this trade mission. I urge you to think of them as 250 potential business partners.

They want to forge relationships that will take our commercial relations to a new, higher plateau.

Already we see many examples of this. Earlier today I witnessed the signing of 31 business deals valued at \$444 million between Canadian and Indian companies.

What these agreements represent are jobs -- thousands of jobs -- and economic growth for both our countries for many years to come.

This is only the beginning.

I encourage each of you to take advantage of this CII Summit to enhance relationships, to develop strategies, and to turn opportunities into realities.

The relationship between our two countries was forged in the exciting years of the postwar world.

The common values that we share, the large number of Canadians of Indian origin, the economic and trade reforms we have both undertaken all these come together to set the stage for a whole new era of partnership between our two countries.

Let's make this historic Team Canada visit the catalyst for that new era. A new era that begins today.