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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CANADA-INDIA EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Université Laval: May 15, 2015

Quebec City, May 15, 2015– A conference on the theme: Canada-India Education was jointly organized by Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) and co-hosted by Université Laval with the support from Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development (DFATD) on Friday, May 15, 2015.

This was the first major pan-Canadian meeting of major stakeholders in Canada-India Education sector since the joint declaration on 16th April 2015 by the two Prime Ministers: Stephen Harper of Canada and Narendra Modi of India to and maintain strong educational links between the two countries in April 2015.



Dr. Girish Shah speaking at the Plenary Session

Photo courtesy of Madame Louise Leblanc

The day-long meeting comprised of plenary session followed by three specific sessions devoted to (i) Canada-India Educational links; (ii) Building synergy among different partners in Canada-India Education sector; and (iii) Challenges and Rewards for Institutional Collaborations between Universities in Quebec and India.

At the conference, SICI was represented by its President Dr. Biju Abraham, Professor, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, and its incoming President Dr. Girish Shah, Professor, Université Laval, both of whom chaired the plenary session along with Prof Richard Poulin, Director of International Bureau of Univ. Laval. Prof Shah was also chair of the organizing

committee for the conference. In addition, several past, current and incoming members of SICI executive council including former Presidents of SICI played key roles in the conference



*Indian Dy. High Commissioner
Mr. Tsewang Namgyal*

as chairs and participants of different sessions, such as Prof. Margaret Walton-Roberts (Wilfrid Laurier), Mr Ron Byrne (Mount Allison), Prof. Rajesh Tyagi (HEC Montréal), and Prof. Mathieu Boisvert (UQAM), Prof. Braj Sinha (Saskatchewan), Prof. Sheila Embleton (York), Prof. Gary Van Loon (Queens) and Prof. Balbir Sahni (Concordia).

The conference brought together the full spectrum of players ranging from the decision makers in the three Governments (India, Canada and Quebec) to organizations and individuals who play a significant role in executing the collaborative programs between Canada and India, University representatives and students. The Welcome address was brought by Mr. Denis Brière, Rector, Université Laval. Among others who spoke at the event includes Mr. Tsewang Namgyal, Deputy High Commissioner of India in Canada, Mr. Jean Saintonge, Director General of Bilateral Affairs, Ministry of International Relations

and Francophonie (MRIF), Government of Québec, Mr. Richard Poulin, Director, International Bureau, Université Laval, Ms. Elise Racicot from DFATD, Mr. Paul Davidson, President and CEO, Universities Canada, Ms. Denise Amyot, President and CEO, Colleges and Institutes Canada, Dr. Nemy Banthia, CEO, IC-IMPACTS and Dr. Rob Annan, Chief Research Officer at MITACS.

The last session provided lively discussion on unique challenges faced by and solutions found by francophone Quebec institutions for collaborations with India. It included brief presentations of the experiences by Indian students studying in Québec and Quebecois students of their training experience in India as well as experiences of Quebecois and Indian Professors on initiating and maintaining academic links between Quebec and India. Dr. Prachi Kaul, Acting Director, of SICI office in India presented SICI's focus on promoting Quebec as a destination for Study among Indian students through its collaboration with Government of Quebec to administer the International Tuition Fee Waiver program, as well as activities of SICI office in India to facilitate the collaborative activities of Canadian and Indian students, faculties and administrators in India.

The participants in each session highlighted the need for synergy and sustained collaborations in multiple areas among different key players in promoting educational collaboration between the two countries.

This event, in important ways builds on the momentum gained by Engaging India events organized in the recent past by Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute in Halifax, Ottawa,

Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver, Montreal, Engaging French Canada event held in Pondicherry and the Engaging Canada events held in New Delhi.

The conference also received the financial and logistical support from Université Laval, and the Neuroscience axis of the CHU de Quebec Research Centre. The Indian Diaspora magazine provided a copy of the A-list of Indo-Canadians and Friends of India to all the conference participants.

The meeting concluded with a networking reception with the theme “India through the Quebecois lens” where presentations were made by Agathe Meurisse, Jeune Musicien de monde on “Kalkeri Sangeet Vidyalaya” in Karnataka, India and by Florence Piron, Professor, Université Laval on her project for French translation of “Knowledge Swaraj: An Indian Manifesto on Science and Technology” to make it accessible to French speaking developing countries as a model for social uplifting through modern technological innovations.

Letters of greetings were sent by the Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Multiculturalism, Honourable Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Madam Christine St-Pierre, Minister of International Relations and La Francophonie and Honourable Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In his letter Minister Jason Kenney quoted “Through the Canada India Education Conference educators from both countries can work together to open avenues of cooperation, to the benefit of both of our countries. It is also an excellent way for participants to exchange ideas and collaborate to move together by complementing the strengths of each country.” The Minister thanked the members of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute for their ongoing work in support of cooperation between Canada and India in the field of education.

Minister Chris Alexander, in his message said “The Indian Canadian community has grown rapidly over the past several years. This conference is a positive reflection of the energy, enthusiasm, and passion the community brings to our diverse nation. This event is also testament to the strong economic and cultural ties between Canada and India. As Canada’s Citizenship and Immigration Minister, I would like to convey our government’s appreciation for the contributions of the Shastri Indo-Canadian institute to the global



From Left: Prof. K. Gayathri , Mr. Sabu Alexander, Dr. Biju Abraham, Dr. Girish Shah, Prof. Suchorita Chattopadhyay, Mr. Ron Byrne, Mr. Richard Poulin, Dr. Prachi Kaul, Madame Monique G n reux and Ms. Mahmuda Aldeen

[Photo courtesy of Madame Louise Leblanc](#)

conversation on bilateral educational collaboration.”

In her message Minister Christine St-Pierre said “In its international action, the Government of Québec pays close attention to the potential and opportunities India offers for student and faculty mobility, as well as for developing research and joint publication projects.” The Minister congratulated the organizing committee and all those who made this event a success.

In his letter, Mr. Deepak Obhrai said “The conference is another example of the blossoming educational cooperation between Canada and India, which was further solidified with the visit of Prime Minister Shree Narendra Modi to Canada in April.”

A detailed report is being prepared by SICI and will be disseminated to all concerned including opinion, policy and decision makers.

If you would like to have more information about this event, please contact Professor Girish Shah at girish.shah@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca or SICI offices at Calgary and Delhi (www.sici.org and www.sici.org.in)