

Mr. Minister, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to welcome to Calgary and to Canada the distinguished Minister of State for External Affairs of India, Mr. K. Natwar Singh.

Mr. Singh has come to Calgary for our annual Canada-India ministerial consultations, and to speak tomorrow at the Canada-India Opportunities Conference '88. Both events are testimony to the close and growing cooperation that has developed between Canada and India.

This is the fortieth year of India's independence. But the short four decades of independence bely the rich and historic heritage of India. A perspective of more like one hundred times forty years is necessary to begin to understand the traditions, culture and society that is today modern India.

The history of Canada's relations with India, however, must be viewed largely in the period since Indian independence -- since 1947. Canada and India come from the same British Commonwealth tradition, and have each built dynamic distinct nations from those roots. India is the tenth largest industrial economy in the world; Canada the eighth largest. India is the architect of the Non-Aligned Movement; Canada an architect of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Economic Summit. India is Asia and people and potential. Canada is North America and geography and potential. Together, we can be powerful partners -- and these meetings, and the contacts of our business people, build that partnership.

I have visited India three times since our 1984 election, and Mr. Singh and I have now met four times in the past year -- in New Delhi, in Vancouver, in Lusaka, and now in Calgary. The locations of our meetings confirm why the airlines do not allow foreign ministers to accumulate travel points.

I will again welcome Mr. Singh to Canada in August as we, and other Commonwealth Foreign Ministers, meet to consider ways to bring peace to Southern Africa.

Events in India affect Canada directly, and vice versa. Much of that mutual influence can be highly positive, particularly if we develop stronger commercial ties, in projects like Yamunanagar, and Chamera Two, and Raj Mahal.

But one issue raises the deepest worry in both India and Canada, and that is the situation in Punjab. Mr. Singh and I had the opportunity today to discuss the tension and the killings there. I know the importance of maintaining the integrity of the world's largest democracy, the world's most complex democracy; just as Natwar Singh knows the profound concern of Canada about escalating violence, and the effect on human rights.