

and Punjabis and Orissians and Biharis and Tamils and Maharastrians have all come and have all added immeasurably to the richness of Canadian society. They are valued members of the Canadian society, and are the bridge that ties our distant countries closer than geographical proximity could.

The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute has done pioneering work in this regard, and as it now celebrates its twentieth anniversary, we look to many more years of its valuable contribution to fostering understanding and closer ties between Canada and India. The University of Calgary has for many years been an active member of the institute, and has provided its Canadian home. Yesterday the University hosted the institute's annual board of governors meeting, and I was pleased to learn recently that the Government of India has given permission for the construction of the institute's new headquarters in New Delhi.

At our meeting today, I suggested to Minister Singh that the expanding cultural and educational relations between Canada and India warranted closer attention and support. We are hopeful that, in the coming months, we will be able to agree to put in place a government to government framework. I want to encourage and facilitate cultural and educational ties, because they will do much to reinforce the understanding from which closer relations in all areas must derive.