

Joy Smith, M.P.
Kildonan-St. Paul



News Release

MP Smith Highlights Visit by Director of U.S. Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ottawa, ON – Today Joy Smith, Member of Parliament for Kildonan – St. Paul highlighted the visit of Ambassador Luis CdeBaca to Canada. Ambassador CdeBaca serves as the Senior Advisor to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and is the director of the US State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

"Ambassador CdeBaca has been instrumental in leading the U.S. effort to combat modern day slavery within the U.S. and internationally," said MP Joy Smith. "I am delighted that he has visited Canada to further strengthen the joint efforts between Canada and the U.S."

On Wednesday, MP Smith met one on one with Ambassador CdeBaca to discuss some of the key issues surrounding modern day slavery and the next steps in the fight against human trafficking. Ambassador CdeBaca also met with officials and law enforcement from federal departments during his visit to Ottawa on Canada-U.S. anti-human trafficking efforts.

On Thursday, MP Smith hosted a luncheon on Parliament Hill in honour of the Ambassador's visit to promote dialogue among Parliamentarians about modern day slavery. The bipartisan event was attended by Cabinet Ministers, Senators, Members of Parliament, Ambassadors, and representatives from the nongovernmental community.

At the luncheon, MP Smith and Ambassador CdeBaca emphasized the value of strong partnerships between nations and the responsibility of elected officials to take action against slavery, both within Canada and abroad.

"The United States and Canada are standing side by side in the fight against modern slavery. Combating this heinous crime is not just a shared goal, but a reflection of our common values," said Amb. CdeBaca. "I want to thank MP Smith for working to strengthen the partnership between our countries and for her leadership in Canada to

move this effort forward. With continued strong commitment of her and other lawmakers, we can make real progress in meeting this challenge."

The partnership between Canada and the U.S. grew stronger on March 2, 2012, as the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center and the Canadian Human Trafficking National Coordination Center. This important agreement will facilitate the sharing of critical information on human trafficking to combat and disrupt transnational criminal organizations.

MP Smith and Ambassador CdeBaca also addressed the importance of recognizing human trafficking as modern day slavery.

"We need to call it what it is. Human trafficking at its roots is a heinous abuse of basic human rights, namely the right to freedom," said MP Joy Smith. "Whether we are dealing with forced labour, forced prostitution, debt bondage, human trafficking is modern day slavery.

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