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"Creating partnerships for global peace, security and development"

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Mark Persaud, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian International Peace Project (CIPP) has been nominated for the prestigious 2006 Seoul Peace Prize.

"I am grateful for this recognition of our work. As Canadians, we should assume a more prominent leadership role in the international community. Hopefully, though our efforts at the Canadian International Peace Project, more Canadians and other global citizens will be prompted to lend their talents to building more peaceful, secure and stable communities domestically and internationally" stated Mr. Persaud

The Seoul Peace Prize was established in 1990 to commemorate the success of the 24th Olympic Games held in Seoul, Korea, an event in which 160 nations from across the world took part, creating harmony and friendship. The significance of the Seoul Olympic Games rests in the fact that the games heralded termination of age-old political and ideological conflict between the East and the West, fostering a worldwide atmosphere of peace and reconciliation. It also served as an occasion to confirm the possibility of achieving world peace through mutual understanding, cooperation and through the pursuit of global harmony and prosperity. The Prize encourages individuals and institutions in various fields to enhance world peace and harmony among mankind.

Past laureates of the Prize are:

- 2004 - Mr. Vaclav Havel, Former President of the Czech Republic;
- 2002 - Oxfam, Oxford Committee for Famine Relief;
- 2000 - Mrs. Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;
- 1998 - Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations;
- 1996 - Medecins Sans Frontieres, Doctors without Borders;
- 1992 - Dr. George Pratt Schultz, Former U.S. Secretary of State; and
- 1990 - Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the International Olympic Committee

The nominators of the Seoul Peace Prize are:

- renowned international institutions
- winners of international Prizes
- winners of the Prize
- members of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Arts of the Republic of Korea
- universities and press organizations in Korea
- incumbent and former members of the Seoul Peace Prize Selection Committee
- designated by the Seoul Peace Prize Selection Committee at home and abroad

Mark Persaud fled the turmoil of his country of origin and arrived in Canada in 1983. With no support on arrival and barely out of his teenage years, he started his life in Canada as a homeless person in Toronto. He was rescued off the streets in winter by the Scott Mission, a Toronto based Christian organisation that works with the destitute. He then went on to distinguish himself as a civic leader providing leadership as a tireless volunteer with numerous organisations, some of which he started, on a wide range of social issues including refugees, homelessness and poverty, discrimination, community development and bridge building among Canada's diverse communities.. He has earned a number of distinctions and recognitions for his work.

A lawyer by profession, after his arrival in Canada, he studied at York University, Harvard University and Osgoode Hall Law School where he earned both his LL.B. and LL.M. He held a broad range of positions as a prosecutor, counsel to the RCMP and civil litigation counsel. Prior to attending law school he was the Founder of TUCERR, a refugee and immigrant aid organization that he coordinated for five years, providing counseling and settlement services for refugees and immigrants from all regions of the world. Currently, he is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian International Peace Project (CIPP), a non-partisan organization that has brought together diverse Canadians and Canadian organisations to work on domestic and international issues of peace, security and development.

CIPP Governor, The Hon. David Kilgour said : "Mark Persaud has done many years of bridgebuilding among communities, peoples, nations and regions, based always on equal human dignity and opportunity for all. He deserves this Seoul Peace Prize and the Selection Committee should be encouraged to award it to him."

According to John Tory, Leader of the Ontario Progress Conservatives, "The quiet, consistent work Mark Persaud does to bring people and communities together is making an immense contribution to our ability to succeed in one of the most diverse societies on earth. He is known by many, respected by all and he is richly deserving of

recognition he does not seek for himself given the contribution he is making to greater harmony and understanding."

Bill Ayyad, prominent member of the Arab Canadian community in Ottawa and a Director of the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations stated that Mark Persaud's leadership, commitment and dedication to the betterment of multicultural communities is what led him to join the distinguished team of governors on the Canadian International Peace Project. " Mr. Ayyad said, " It is always a pleasure to deal with Mark and call upon his extensive experience to solve difficult issues in our communities. He is definitely a cut above the rest and is a pillar of strength, understanding, cooperation and leadership in Canada's multicultural communities.

'I want to congratulate Mark on being nominated for this prestigious award," stated Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine. "His perseverance in championing peace and harmony, and recognizing diversity among all nations truly make him deserving of this honour."

"It is because of people like Mark that Canada has gained the reputation of being a model of global citizenship. A man with vision and conviction, he made the establishment of peace his cause, respect his slogan and humanity his identity." said Imam Hamid Slimi of the International Muslims Organization and Secretary of the Council of Imams of Canada.

Ed Morgan, law professor at the University of Toronto and national president of Canadian Jewish Congress, described Mark Persaud as a Canadian national hero. "Mark works with a low profile, toiling constantly to bring communities together without calling attention to himself, all aimed at making this a better society for all. It's a truly Canadian approach to multicultural co-existence, and we need many more like him. Winning the Seoul Peace Prize would give him the recognition he so richly deserves," said Morgan.

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The Canadian International Peace Project (CIPP) is a novel and unique non-partisan organisation that has brought together diverse groups and individuals to work on issues and projects relating to local, national and international peace, security and development . Through partnership on events and projects, the CIPP fosters mutual respect and sustainable relationships among diverse groups including those in conflict with each other.