



## Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades

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# PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## IMMIGRANTS TO QUESTION PREMIER

### APT UNIT SHIFT THREATENS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR IMMIGRANT PROFESSIONALS SAYS PROMPT

TORONTO – In a press conference being held at Queen's Park today, PROMPT is submitting an **Open Letter to the Premier** and is calling for assurances from the Premier that the move of the Access to Professions and Trades (APT) Unit from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, as announced on 29 June 2005, will **create a seamless settlement and employment process for immigrants**, says PROMPT spokesperson Nikhat Rasheed.

PROMPT will be joined by **Rosario Marchese**, MPP Trinity-Spadina, New Democratic Party (Ontario) critic for Education; Training, Colleges and Universities and Citizenship and Immigration portfolios.

PROMPT recognises that access to professions and trades (APT) is an integral part of the settlement process but it is posing the following questions today, in response to the move:

1. Will the move of the APT unit from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration address the main issue of **employment at a skills commensurate** level for immigrants with professional backgrounds?
2. This shift of the APT Unit reflects a shift away from the main thrust of the May budget, in which the monies have been allocated to education and health. If APT is no longer linked to education, this will create a **policy vacuum**.

PROMPT is making the following recommendations in response to the questions raised in its Open Letter:

1. Take an **integrated approach** to access to professions and trades by involving three relevant ministries - the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the newly created Ministry of Research and Innovation.
2. PROMPT suggests setting up a multi-stakeholder secretariat on access to professions and trades to ensure **policy coherence** on the issue.

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PROMPT is the collective voice of over twenty thousand internationally educated professionals and tradespeople across Ontario. PROMPT puts forward research-based policy recommendations for the settlement and employment of immigrants from the perspective of internationally educated professionals and tradespeople.

PROMPT has released four influential policy papers in the last year around the issues of access to professions and trades in the regulated fields, PROMPT's vision for the Canadian labour market, equitable employment, diversity and regional development.

**- 30 -**

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