



Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades

820-2 Carlton St. Toronto, ON M5B 1J3 Phone (416) 979-8611 Fax (416) 979-9853
Email: mail@promptinfo.on.ca Web: www.promptinfo.ca

PRESS RELEASE

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NEW IMMIGRATION POLICY IDEAS IMMORAL

TORONTO – Bringing in more immigrant professionals is unwise and immoral, says PROMPT, a roundtable representing the collective voice of internationally educated persons, in response to the latest spiel out of Parliament Hill.

Minister Volpe’s annual report to Parliament to be tabled today will indicate that Canada hopes to be taking in as many as 320,000 new immigrants by 2010. Thousands of immigrants with professional backgrounds are already unemployed and underemployed currently. Their skills and experience are already being wasted by the systematic exclusion they face from accessing the labour market.

“To bring in even more immigrants by spending federal dollars in recruiting them abroad, instead of ensuring that those that are present, as well as those who are to come, can obtain employment commensurate with their skills, is immoral. Resources need to be allocated to ensuring equitable access to: licensure and registration in the regulated professions, and skills commensurate employment for all professionals”, says Nikhat Rasheed, PROMPT Project Coordinator.

Bringing in workers on temporary visas creates another potential problem: “You’re creating another class of people who won’t even have the basic citizenship rights – they will be migrant workers without any kind of stability or any stake in society – and that’s immoral. For a country that’s prided itself on inviting people to become citizens, I don’t think this bodes well for Canada,” says Uzma Shakir, Executive Director, and Council of Agencies Serving South Asians.

PROMPT’s view is that as part of the global movement of peoples, it is not the numbers of immigrants that count - although they are important too – but rather the need for sustained efforts to reducing systemic barriers that hinder immigrants with professional backgrounds from accessing skills commensurate employment.

– 30 –

For more information contact PROMPT Project Coordinator:
Nikhat Rasheed at (416) 979-8611 ext. 4310 / (416) 305 7830 (cellular)