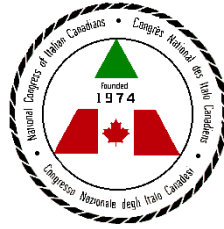


For Immediate Release:



**Government of Canada under the Community Historical Recognition Program
issues \$250,000 contribution funding
to our Italian Canadian Community through the National Congress of Italian
Canadians (Ottawa District)**

Ottawa, June 2nd, 2011 - The National Congress of Italian Canadians (Ottawa District) is pleased to announce the creation of the **Italian Canadian Historical Centre: A Centre for Learning** through the generous support of the Government of Canada under the Community Historical Recognition Program administered by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. In an official presentation ceremony held on June 2nd, 2011 in the residence of our Italian Ambassador, His Excellency Ambassador Andrea Meloni, on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Celebration of the Unification of Italy and the Italian National Day, the Honourable Minister Julian Fantino, Associate Minister of National Defence for the Government of Canada, on behalf of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, The Honourable Jason Kenney, announced a successful funding initiative of \$250,000.00 in favour of the National Congress of Italian Canadians (Ottawa District). The announcement, which was made in the presence of a number of dignitaries, community leaders and members of the local Ottawa community, was a result of the hard work and dedication of members of the local Congress, the organization representing Italian Canadians in the National Capital District, to bring forward a project of national significance which commemorates and educates our city and our country on the historical experiences of Italian Canadians affected by authorized wartime measures that were applied in Canada during the Second World War.

In partnership with Villa Marconi Long Term Care, the National Library and Archives Canada, the Embassy of Italy, local Universities, the Italian Canadian Business and Professional Association of Ottawa and the member Italian Canadian Associations and Clubs in Ottawa, the National Congress of Italian Canadians (Ottawa District) is so proud to undertake a project that will recognize and commemorate the internment of Italian Canadians during the Second World War.

Josephine Palumbo, President of the NCIC (Ottawa District) expressed her views as follows: "We are so pleased with today's announcement and thankful to Minister Kenney and the Government of Canada. The establishment of the *Italian Canadian Historical Centre: A Centre for Learning* (the **ACentre@**) at Villa Marconi is the key to ensuring that the Internment experience is captured in various forms

of literature, films, papers and objects being housed in one central location in Ottawa which will be available for many future generations to come. The Archival Centre, which will be open to the Italian community and the public at large, will be used for historical research on the Internment experience in Canadian history and will also recognize the achievements and successes of Italian Canadians across this country.

The creation of an Archival Centre is both educational and commemorative and will be a true long term symbolic gesture of recognition and acknowledgement of the contributions of Italians to this great country, Canada. “

The project advanced by the NCIC (Ottawa District) is to date the second largest funded project to the Italian Canadian community by Citizenship and Immigration Canada under the CHRP.

Background:

On June 10th, 1940, after officially declaring war on Italy, Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King announced that he was invoking a section of the War Measures Act and authorizing the round-up of Italian-Canadians identified by the RCMP as a threat to national security.

Thousands of people were interned as a result of this government action.

In 2008, the Conservative government established the Community Historical Recognition Program (CHRP). The CHRP is a four-year program ending on March 31, 2012 introduced by the Government of Canada that is designed to primarily recognize and/or commemorate the historical experiences of ethno-cultural communities affected by federally legislated or authorized wartime measures or immigration restrictions that were applied in Canada, and/or to educate Canadians in this respect.
