

Reception Speech

1. Honorable Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Honorable President of St. Mary's University, distinguished guests,
2. On behalf of the Bhutanese delegation I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the warm welcome to Nova Scotia and for the gracious hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I would like to convey the regrets of His Excellency Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley, Minister of Home Affairs and leader of the Bhutanese delegation for not being able to be present as he arrives only later this evening.
3. I am greatly honored to be here as part of the Bhutanese delegation to participate in this landmark international conference on Gross National Happiness. We in Bhutan are greatly encouraged by the increasing interest and appreciation of our development approach and aspirations. While the circumstances, challenges, and needs may differ from that of Bhutan's, it is my sincere hope that governments, businesses, and non-governmental organizations from around the world find some relevance and purpose in the concept of GNH. I am confident that this Conference with such a distinguished group of participants will contribute towards this end and give impetus to our common efforts as a global community to chart a more enlightened and sustainable path to development at the national and international level.
4. On behalf of the Bhutanese delegation, I would like to thank President Dodds, distinguished faculty members, and the student body of St. Mary's University for hosting this gracious reception.
5. Relations between our two countries dates back to 1963 when late Reverend Father William Mackey, a Canadian Jesuit, played a pioneering role in the development of the modern education system in Bhutan. Since then, Bhutan has always looked to Canada for support in further improving its education system. The Royal Government and people of Bhutan place great importance to this historical relationship with Canada in the education sector. More than 50 Canadians have taught in schools of Bhutan and more than 80 Bhutanese have studied in institutes all over Canada, strengthening friendship and cooperation between the people of our two countries. Canada through its significant contributions in the education sector has played a vital role in Bhutan's overall development process. On behalf of the people and Government of Bhutan, I take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the people, the Government, and the various educational institutions of Canada for their invaluable support to Bhutan.
6. As the Ambassador of Bhutan to Canada, I shall endeavor to work towards further strengthening the close ties between our two countries. May I propose a toast to the continued friendship, goodwill, and cooperation between Canada and Bhutan and for the success in our common efforts to engage the world in working towards a humane and sustainable approach to development.

Thank you and Tashi Delek.