



For Immediate Release  
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**Extraordinary Stories Speaker Series kicks off season with Cherie Blair**

*-- President of The Loomba Foundation visits Canada in an effort to raise awareness --*

Toronto, ON - The Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA), The Globe and Mail and Ad Women of Toronto (AWT) are delighted to announce **Ms. Cherie Blair** as the keynote for the opening event in the new 2010 / 2011 Extraordinary Stories Speaker Series, in Toronto, on Tuesday October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Through her topic, “How women shaped my life... and will shape our economic future,” Mrs. Blair will share her personal journey and international experiences as a barrister in employment, public and human rights law. An active campaigner on equality, human rights and diversity issues, Mrs. Blair is involved in the work of many charities, including President of The Loomba Foundation ([www.theloombafoundation.org](http://www.theloombafoundation.org)). She is visiting Canada to introduce the organization, which raises awareness of the plight of widows around the world, while educating more than 3,000 children of poor widows in India. She will be joined in Toronto by Mr. Raj Loomba, founder and chairman trustee of The Loomba Foundation and Ms. Ruby Dhalla, patron of The Loomba Foundation and MP of Brampton, ON.

Mrs. Blair became the first patron and president of The Loomba Foundation in 1998, inaugurating the Loomba House in London in September 2004, in the presence of the Indian High Commissioner, HE Shri Kamlesh Sharma. Through fundraising and support, the Foundation is able to deliver aid and raise awareness of its mission and has hopes of expanding its presence in Canada.

“Mrs. Blair is an integral part of the success of The Loomba Foundation and plays a key role in the foundation’s great strides to help widows and children receive the care they need” says Mr. Loomba, founder and chairman trustee, The Loomba Foundation.

“We are committed to introducing the Foundation worldwide and our visit to Toronto is part of our ongoing effort to promote fundamental freedoms and human rights for all.”

Mrs. Blair has spoken in many countries on issues to do with human rights and diversity, and the need to improve the work/life balance for both women and men -- an issue that, as a working woman and mother, she feels strongly about.

“Mrs. Blair’s dedication to developing the rights and roles of women and children is extraordinary, as is her story,” says Gillian Graham, CEO, ICA. “We’re honoured that she is a part of our Speaker Series where she will share her story, both personal and professional and her involvement with The Loomba Foundation, acting as a voice for the many women and children she meets around the world.”

Mrs. Blair has also established the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, which works globally to provide women entrepreneurs with access to networks, finance and business development support. She works to improve the position of women throughout the world with a focus on improving women's health, ensuring girls are not denied education, promoting women entrepreneurs and keeping women safe. For more information on Cherie Blair visit [www.cherieblair.org](http://www.cherieblair.org).

### **About The Loomba Foundation**

Mr. Raj Loomba and his wife Mrs. Veena Loomba established The Loomba Foundation in 1997, in memory of Mr. Loomba’s mother, who became a widow in the Punjab in India in 1954. Although she had never received any formal schooling herself, she succeeded in educating her seven children single-handedly. The Loomba Foundation is a registered charity in the UK, USA and India and throughout the foundation’s 13 years, has helped thousands of widows and their children in South Asia and across Africa and provided education to more than 3,000 children of poor widows throughout India. For more information visit [www.theloombafoundation.org](http://www.theloombafoundation.org).

### **About Ad Women of Toronto**

Launched by the Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) in January 2009, Ad Women of Toronto is a unique initiative that enables women of all career stages to participate in, and contribute to, the marketing communications industry in a completely new way. Linking women through mentorship, education and entertainment, members include a diverse group of leading women in communications, advertising, and media. By facilitating diversity and debate, Ad Women of Toronto encourages various points of view, shared experiences and knowledge, and the promotion of unique talents and skills to propel future leaders to the top. For more information visit [www.adwomentoronto.ca](http://www.adwomentoronto.ca).

### **About the ICA**

The Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) represents Canada's communications and advertising agencies. ICA members collectively account for over 80 per cent of all national advertising in Canada, with an economic impact worth more than \$20 billion annually. ICA serves as a leading source of information, advice and industry education, promoting thought leadership, best practices and the elevation of professional standards. ICA-led initiatives include thought leadership events, such as *FutureFlash* and *Advertising Week*, professional development forums such as *Ad Women of Toronto* and certification programs, such as the *CAAP* accreditation and the *Master's Certificate in Brand Communications*. More information about the ICA and its initiatives can be found at [www.icacanada.ca](http://www.icacanada.ca).

For additional information, visuals or to arrange an interview with Mrs. Blair, Mr. Loomba or an ICA spokesperson, please contact Susan Willemsen, Danika Lochhead or Savi Pannu at The Siren Group Inc. Tel: 416-461-5270. Fax: 416-778-9047. E-mail: [info@thesirengroup.com](mailto:info@thesirengroup.com) or [www.thesirengroup.com](http://www.thesirengroup.com).