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Ottawa, March 13, 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write this letter with excitement and great pleasure in order to support the **Advancing Czech Studies** project submitted by the University of Toronto.

Czech Studies programme has a distinguished presence at the University of Toronto where Czech Language has been taught since 1967. In addition, the University of Toronto is the only university in Canada where the study of the Czech language, language and culture (in broader sense) can be undertaken from undergraduate through doctoral level. The Czech Studies programme is important not only in the context of Canada but in the entire North America as it is ranked among the top three programmes on the continent.

I am confident that the expanded programme with three pillars – Czech language training, Czech visiting scholars and International opportunities for students – is well conceived and will ensure promoting not only students' language skills, but also cultural and economic cooperation and mutual understanding between the Czech Republic and Canada. Institutionally, the quality of the academic programme is guaranteed by the Centre for European and Eurasian Studies and the Department of Slavic languages and Literatures of the University of Toronto.

It is important to mention the personalities of Ms. Georgina Steinsky-Schwartz and Dr. Josef Čermák, both of them successful professionals and distinguished members of the Czech community in Canada, who came up with the initiative. Dr. Josef Čermák was among the founders of the Czech Studies at the University of Toronto in 1967.

I fully support the effort of Ms. Georgina Steinsky-Schwartz and Dr. Josef Čermák as they seek funding to support the expansion of the programme.

Karel Žebrakovský  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of the Czech Republic to Canada