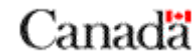


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ADDRESS BY PRIME MINISTER PAUL MARTIN TO THE CANADA-CHINA BUSINESS COUNCIL DINNER

January 21, 2005
Beijing, China

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It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to again address the Canada-China Business Council, this time here in Beijing, where so many of you are achieving success. The CCBC embodies the longstanding and rapidly growing commercial connection between China and Canada – a relationship that offers benefits to the people of both nations, and symbolizes our shared desire to pursue and capitalize on the great potential that remains untapped.

Let me begin this evening by saying that I have had a busy and productive time in Beijing. I want to thank my hosts, President Hu and Premier Wen, for their warm welcome, for their gracious hospitality and for our discussions – which were thought-provoking, fruitful and candid. Tonight, I'd like to tell you how I see Canada-China relations – now and in the years to come.

I first came to China in 1972, during the waning years of the Cultural Revolution. I was in business then. At that time, China was a mystery to me and to much of the western world, an exotic stranger. I have come back many times since. I've watched the evolution and growth of this great country.

In the 21st century, there is a new dynamism at play and China is at its forefront. New economies are rising. The global power structure is undergoing its first wide-ranging evolution in more than five decades. And China has come to occupy an increasingly pivotal role on the international stage.

Canada welcomes this. We seek to enhance our engagement with China -- to foster a real partnership that comprises not just economic pursuits, but also the global political agenda: public health, environmental issues, human rights, and culture. In essence, we strive to more closely connect our two nations – encouraging the two-way flow of capital, goods and services, while at the same time expanding our dialogue, our exchange of ideas and beliefs. For that is how friendships are deepened and the world made stronger.

In 2003, China became Canada's second-largest trading partner. Our two-way trade has grown to some \$25-billion annually, up from \$5-billion a year only a decade ago. In fact, our trade increased by another 50 per cent last year alone, and there is no doubt that it will continue to expand.

This growth is taking place as both Canada and China evolve as trading nations. The changing face of China has been well-documented – a country once regarded primarily as a low-cost manufacturer is being transformed into a nation that boasts a highly educated and innovative work force.

In Canada, commodity-driven growth is still important to us, but our nation has expanded and diversified into a knowledge-based economy powered by ingenuity. We have taken important steps to create a strong economy that will serve us well in a changing world.

We are investing aggressively in early learning, in education and in research and innovation in new technologies – for we have long understood that these are the keys to the successful construction of a 21st century economy, and of a nation capable of competing world wide.

We know that countries such as China will demonstrate an increased need for the world's natural resources, as consumer demand increases. Canada will benefit from this. But over the past decade, our resource sector has become, first and foremost, an exporter of management know-how and technology. Our industry is active around the world now, pursuing joint ventures, managing new discoveries, achieving new successes, because of its expertise.

The same is true of other important segments of our economy. Those who work with Canadian financial services companies here in China are aware of the diverse strength of Canada's endeavour. So are people who buy aircraft simulators, who are collaborating on research on environment technologies or telecommunications, who partner with Canadian educators or makers of flat-screen technology, who build rail cars.

The list is very long. And it showcases the many areas in which our two nations, integrated by compatible economies, are able to take advantage of what might be called an opportunity gateway to enhance prosperity and build economic success.

And speaking of opportunity, let me talk about another opportunity that exists -- the infrastructure that permits the flow of goods between China and Canada, Asia and North America. In a world of global commerce, the North American economy remains a potent engine of growth. It's still the marketplace everyone wants to access. And thanks to 15 years of free trade, and a decade of NAFTA, Canada can provide assured access to a continent that is largely barrier-free.

For businesses in China, the closest major deep-water port and the closest major international airport in North America are located in Vancouver, British Columbia. Farther north in British Columbia, Prince Rupert is another important and expanding deep-water port with increasingly strong ties to trade concerns in Asia. The facts are plain: From British Columbia, Canada is the ideal gateway from China to North America, and from North America to China.

Our remarkable increase in two-way trade has resulted in the emergence of temporary capacity issues. But make no mistake: These are being addressed. For instance, the premier of British Columbia is committed to decisively establishing the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert as North America's Opportunity Gateway -- a nexus of trans-Pacific trade. It's common sense from a geographic perspective. And through measures such as increasing rail capacity across Western Canada, we're going to make certain that it's common sense from an overall business perspective.

The public and private sectors in Canada are already investing close to \$2-billion in highway, rail, port, and border infrastructure in British Columbia to ensure that goods moves more efficiently there and across Western Canada. And more will be done as we seek to nurture and enhance the trade connection between our two nations.

In China, there is the tradition of decorated doorways, to help bring good fortune to all who enter. It is my belief that the gateway between our countries will bring the same blessings and benefits – that prosperity will visit those who pass under it.

The path already exists, building on more than 30 years of Canada-China relations and on the arrival over the past decade of many immigrants from the mainland and throughout the Chinese diaspora -- people who have enriched our culture and helped to make the Canadian economy more dynamic in nature and international in scope. Many of these people are now engaged in the promotion of trade, technology transfer or investment between Canada and China. They know both countries and understand both countries. They are a bridge between our lands.

This is why I am very pleased that Premier Wen and I reviewed the progress of, and gave new impetus to, the Canada-China Strategic Working Group – which has been established by our governments to encourage cooperation in multilateral forums, promote two-way investment flows, protect foreign investment and identify ways of increasing our trade and investment.

That was just one of a wide range of agreements we signed yesterday. These reflect the growing depth and breadth of the China-Canada relationship -- in cultural cooperation, sustainable development, scientific cooperation, agriculture, research and development

of civil nuclear energy and many other areas, including domestic governance.

For example, Canada is supporting projects to help China to reform its public prosecutors' service; develop a system of legal aid; better protect women's rights; and to develop its justice system in accordance with international stands. And we have a parliamentary cooperation project on developing a system of legislative hearings.

We are also involved in a project to strengthen the capacity of the Human Rights Research Centre in Beijing in contributing to efforts to ratify and implement an early date international human rights covenants. As China grows as an economic and political force, there will be new opportunities -- and there will be new obligations, too. Rights must be respected. But they must also be cultivated. In this regard, there must be a positive transformation that matches the pace of China's economic transformation. Premier Wen and I talked about this. With power and influence will come greater prospects and greater responsibility, at home and abroad.

I also discussed with the Premier and the President the need to work to reform global institutions -- to better reflect the changing world and the common humanity we share. This age, with all its technology, may in some ways seem cold and impersonal. But the truth is that we have never been more connected as people on this Earth. I began my Asian visit in Sri Lanka and Thailand, two of many places where the worldwide response to the tsunami disaster has illustrated our growing bond. A vast planet has in our lifetime become an intimate community in which people are more aware of each other, more concerned about other.

Our institutions must sustain the faith and the optimism of the world's people. They must be able to act, quickly and effectively, on their behalf in times of need. The United Nations is doing a good job of helping to co-ordinate relief efforts and manage the international response to the tsunamis. What we need to do now is to ensure that it can act as effectively and as promptly in a wider range of human interaction, such as in countries where the traditional definition of sovereignty is preventing the world from intervening to help embattled peoples in failed or failing states.

The world's institutions will always be imperfect tools, but progressive nations have a duty to try to ensure they reflect the reality of the world today, not of the world in which the institutions were created. That's why Canada has been advocating a New Multilateralism that sees the world as it is, and as it will be -- not as it was. A world that enshrines the responsibility to protect its peoples. A world that dedicates itself to devising real solutions to pressing concerns in a timely manner.

For the same reason, Canada believes that nations can build on the success of the G8 - that we should take the next logical step and gather not only the leaders of the world's industrial nations but also its regional powers, such as South Africa, Brazil and India -- and of course the new global power, China. Bring them together, these 20 world leaders, and let them deal decisively with such pressing global issues as terrorism, public health and the degradation of the environment. No speeches, no scripted sessions: just a new, efficient way to devise concerted, effective multilateral action that produces real results. President Hu and Premier Wen have told me they support the idea of an L-20 meeting, and I hope that we can be partners in making it a reality.

Ladies and gentlemen, my visit to Asia serves to describe part of what we as a government are dedicated to accomplishing with our foreign policy. Canada has a long history of being active as a progressive force in the world, and it will remain so. In Sri Lanka, our Disaster Assistance Response Team has been deployed to help victims of Asia's deadly waves. There, in Thailand, and elsewhere, we are committed to making tangible and focused contributions to help people in need. In New Delhi, Tokyo and here in Beijing, we engaged the leaders of these nations in discussions about the need to fashion international institutions that reflect modern times and effectively address modern problems. We as a government are committed to a New Multilateralism as a means by which to enhance global security, foster a more inclusive prosperity and more effectively help the world's embattled peoples.

China will be central to the success of a New Multilateralism, and that is why we are dedicated to building a mutually beneficial relationship -- a partnership that recognizes the changes that are occurring in how the world interacts, and also in how economic activity is undertaken. We are determined to bring to Beijing and to the world the message that Canada's highly educated, skilled work force and its diverse, innovative export economy make it an ideal partner in the international commercial world of the 21st century. Indeed, we believe that globalization and the specialization it often calls for will create new opportunities for advanced economies such as our own.

This relationship will have challenges, to be sure. We need to work together, for example, on investment protection, full implementation of World Trade Organization commitments, development of a more transparent legal system and full application of the rule of law in commercial disputes. There will be times when we disagree, as friends sometimes do.

But I believe most strongly that the will is there on both sides to develop a true partnership between Canada and China. Everything I have heard and discussed today with our Chinese hosts convinces me of that.

In conclusion tonight, let me say this: Toward the end of this decade, the Olympic flag will fly over Beijing, host of the 2008 Summer Games, and then over Vancouver, host of the 2010 Winter Games. It is my hope that this connection will by then be symbolic of a relationship that has grown stronger and deeper.

That is why we are working to enrich the Opportunity Gateway – not only as a practical means of establishing greater connection between our economies and our entrepreneurs, but as a symbol of openness, confidence and a willingness to explore new friendships, new ways of doing things together through partnership, imagination, hard work.

We want to build a partnership that embraces the complexity and growing influence of 21st century China. A new China linked in new ways to an evolving and rapidly changing world. It is a world that stands to benefit immensely from China's engagement with it.

Let me leave you with one final thought: China's foreign minister, Li Zhaoxing, recently wrote a poem about Canadian-Chinese relations. It's called We Are Essentially One. And it concludes with these lines.

From Fragrant Hill in Beijing to Vancouver, the maples rule,
The sun dawns on the same crimson landscape, fiery and full.

As these words and images suggest, there is much we have in common as nations. Let us build on that connection. Let us walk together through the gateway and towards the future together.

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Date published: 2005-01-21

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