

Opening Remarks - Alexandra Bugailiskis,

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Canada-EU Strategic Partnership Conference

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Allocutions d'ouverture - Alexandra Bugailiskis,

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Le Partenariat Stratégique entre l'UE et le Canada

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- Good afternoon Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you Ambassador Coninx for the invitation to speak today on Europe Day and in celebration also of the 40th anniversary of the first Canada-EU treaty on cooperation and the establishment of the EU Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa.
- I am delighted to be here to celebrate the very special partnership between Canada and the EU. And this conference offers us an opportunity to reflect not only on the current state of our strategic relationship but even more importantly how we can strengthen our cooperation in pursuit of our common interests.
- We are very proud of this unique partnership, the result of extensive historical, cultural, political, economic and above all people-to-people linkages.
- Despite the many current challenges Europe is facing at present, the EU remains a major player on all key global issues and a vital partner in promoting our common values and protecting and promoting our security and prosperity.
- Our collaboration is becoming ever more important for both sides as evidenced by the high number of Ministerial visits in both directions since the new Canadian Government came to power. Prime Minister Trudeau has already traveled to Europe four times, including for the historic COP21, and has met with Presidents Tusk, Juncker and Schulz.
- Together our three Global Affairs Ministers have travelled to Europe over a dozen times in the past six months for key events such as the World Economic Forum and the Syria donors' conference. Minister Freeland is just back from Brussels where she had very fruitful exchanges with President Schulz and Commissioner Malmström on the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement. She also met with the Delegation of the European Parliament's International Trade Committee during their visit here in March.

- These are but a few examples that illustrate the breadth and the intensity of our relationship. Next year Canada will celebrate its 150th anniversary. And yet despite these many decades and the ocean that separates us, the historic ties between Europe remain both tangible and contemporary.
- I found it remarkable during my last assignment as Ambassador to Poland, how frequently I would be told by Poles as well as other Europeans who had travelled to both Canada and the US – that they found Canada so much more ‘European’.
- They were not always able to fully articulate why they felt that way: some said it was language, others referenced the architecture but mostly they referred to the similarity they found in our values and in our global outlook.
- And this explains why Canada has been designated by the EU as one of its nine strategic partners. And to give both voice and greater substance to that relationship, we agreed to jointly develop the Canada-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement.
- As the Canadian Chief Negotiator for the agreement I found this an exciting opportunity to both strengthen our existing cooperation while identifying new areas for collaboration in the future.
- Despite its soothing acronym, the SPA is actually a powerful tool for stimulating, updating and expanding our partnership. The SPA outlines how we are committed to working together on key global foreign policy issues, in enhancing and expanding on our strategic dialogues.
- The SPA also represents a key achievement in multilevel stakeholder consultations. Approximately 20 Canadian Federal Departments were engaged in the negotiations, and we also consulted extensively with all the provinces and territories throughout the 3 years of negotiations.

- Together, the CETA and the SPA represent a progressive, 21st century agenda and approach to expanding trade, investment and international peace and security by promoting pluralism, democratic governance, environmental sustainability and sustainable development practices.

- The two panels this afternoon are designed to draw out how Canada and the EU are natural partners and allies on global issues. Already, we collaborate closely bilaterally and multilaterally.
- We have joined forces in fighting major health endemics such as Ebola, where Canada was a standing member of the EU's Crisis Task Force Platform.
- Canada and the EU have also joined forces in donor coordination such as in Afghanistan, where we both were founding members and remain partners in the Donor Dialogue Forum known as the "5+3 Donor Group".
- And we have joined together in promoting responsible and sustainable resource management, through efforts such as the Kimberley process to combat the trade in "blood diamonds".
- The EU has also been a great supporter of Canada's signature international efforts including our annual UN resolution on human rights in Iran and our flagship initiatives on women and girls including maternal and newborn child health (MNCH) and child, early and forced marriage (CEFM).
- On the issue of health, Prime Minister Trudeau announced earlier today that Canada will be hosting the Fifth Voluntary Replenishment of the Global Fund on September 16 in Montreal.

We will also increase our contribution from 2017 to 2019 by 20 percent to CAD 785 million. We look forward to welcoming global health partners from the EU and around the world.

- The SPA also commits Canada and the EU to working even more closely together to promote international peace and security. We have aligned our sanctions policies to increase their effectiveness – to combat Russian aggression in Ukraine - and have aligned our positions and undertaken joint demarches on nuclear disarmament to increase their impact.
- Our cooperation in crisis management is also a key element of our strong partnership. Since 2003, Canada has participated in nine EU Common Security and Defence Program (CSDP) missions, and we currently contribute personnel to missions in Ukraine and the Palestinian Territories.
- Our like-minded approach to international peace and security issues was clearly on display recently as Canada and the EU held our second annual Security and Defence Dialogue. This followed by the third annual Common Security and Defence Policy Symposium, which was open to the public and I hope some of you had the opportunity to attend. We had very lively and insightful exchanges on Canada-EU cooperation on women, peace and security.

- Un autre domaine où notre collaboration est vitale est celui des changements climatiques. Le second panel se concentrera sur cette série d'enjeux complexes et inter-reliés.
- Le leadership global de l'UE au niveau des changements climatiques est bien connu et apprécié au Canada. Nous croyons par ailleurs que l'engagement de notre gouvernement à devenir un leader mondial dans la lutte contre les changements climatiques est également très apprécié en Europe.

- Suite aux résultats fructueux de la Conférence des Parties à Paris en décembre dernier, il est plus important que jamais que le Canada et l'UE travaillent de concert afin de promouvoir la mise en œuvre de l'Accord de Paris.
- L'Accord de partenariat stratégique (APS) souligne la grande importance de la protection et de la conservation de l'environnement et affirme également que nous devons trouver des solutions novatrices - diversifier nos sources d'énergie et augmenter notre efficacité énergétique afin d'atténuer et de nous adapter à ce défi.
- Nous avons maintenant la chance de renforcer nos efforts collectifs internationaux sur ces enjeux inter-reliés en revigorant nos dialogues de haut niveau sur l'environnement, les changements climatiques, et l'énergie.

- L'APS mentionne plusieurs autres domaines de coopération, tels que la promotion de la démocratie et de l'État de droit. Le Canada a d'ailleurs participé dans une vingtaine de missions d'observation électorale de l'UE dans la dernière décennie, le seul pays non-européen à participer à de telles missions.
- Le Canada et l'UE se sont aussi engagés, à travers l'APS, à travailler ensemble sur les enjeux de développement durable et de réduction de la pauvreté. Ceci ouvre un nouveau domaine de collaboration entre nous, alors que nous rehaussons notre dialogue sur les enjeux de développement et que nous travaillons à la mise en œuvre des objectifs de développement durable de l'agenda 2030 de l'ONU.
- Les domaines de la science, de la technologie, de la recherche et de l'innovation offrent également de grandes opportunités d'accroissement de notre partenariat. L'identification de solutions nouvelles et novatrices sera d'ailleurs cruciale afin de répondre aux défis globaux.

- L'APS peut aussi être utilisé comme levier afin d'appuyer l'accent renouvelé du gouvernement envers le multilatéralisme en augmentant les consultations et la coordination dans les forums multilatéraux, tels que l'ONU, l'OCDE, l'OTAN et l'OSCE. Comme plusieurs d'entre vous le savez, notre candidature pour un siège au Conseil de sécurité en 2021/2022 est l'un des signes tangibles de l'engagement renouvelé du Canada envers le système de l'ONU.
- Je n'ai présenté que quelques exemples de la collaboration passée et future entre le Canada et l'UE et de la façon dont l'APS va l'élargir. La mise en œuvre de l'APS aura un impact direct sur notre prospérité et notre sécurité commune.

- En conclusion, Mesdames et Messieurs, lorsque l'APS et l'Accord Économique et Commercial Global – l'AECG - seront signés plus tard en 2016, ceux-ci lanceront une nouvelle ère dans les relations entre le Canada et l'UE. Ils nous offriront de puissants outils pour la poursuite de nos intérêts communs au niveau bilatéral et international.
- Les paramètres de l'APS, ainsi que de l'AECG, cadrent très bien avec les priorités internationales de notre nouveau gouvernement, que ce soit pour les questions de diversité; de pluralisme; de la protection des droits de la personne, incluant ceux des femmes, des enfants et des réfugiés; de l'innovation; ou encore de notre engagement envers le multilatéralisme en tant qu'outil vital pour faire face aux enjeux globaux de plus en plus pressants
- Encore une fois, je remercie la délégation de l'UE d'avoir organisé cet événement prestigieux et il me tarde d'entendre les discussions qui vont suivre.

Merci beaucoup.