

Remarks given by Guy Saint-Jacques, Deputy Head of Mission at the reception given for the members of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Washington, December 3, 2008.

Good evening.

We are delighted to have so many advocates of free trade here on Canadian soil. With the Newseum just next door, combined with the fact that Canada is the only country with an Embassy between the Capitol and the White House, we welcome you to the most dynamic block on Pennsylvania Avenue.

I am here tonight to amplify Canada's already strong voice for free trade. We are proud of the fact that more than 7 million U.S. jobs are supported by trade with Canada. That means 1 out of every 25 American jobs is linked to trade with Canada. And for every one dollar of U.S. goods that China buys, Canada buys four.

Canada is also the number one customer for 35 states – only 15 more to reach our goal. Canadian-owned companies operate at more than 16,000 locations in the United States, directly employing more than 550,000 Americans.

In fact, amid continuing overall job losses in the United States, our two countries have seen a substantial **increase** in American jobs that depend on trade with Canada. Since March of this year, the number of Americans employed by Canadian-owned companies increased by more than 38,000 – with an increase of almost 1,400 Canadian business locations across the United States.

In terms of our North American competitiveness, North American Free Trade Agreement has benefitted all three of our countries. Since 1993, total merchandise trade between Canada and the U.S. has more than doubled.

Moving forward, Canada believes there is ample scope in the NAFTA to make sure the agreement continues to respond to current challenges. During this period of global economic uncertainty, we believe that it is important to keep markets open, resist protectionist pressures, engage trading partners and provide opportunities for our businesses to prosper both at home and in our respective markets.

As an open trading economy like the United States, Canada is being affected by the significant volatility in global capital markets. Canada has taken a number of steps to ensure the stability of our financial markets, and to support the flow of credit to businesses and households. We will continue to work in a co-ordinated fashion with the United States and our G7/G20 partners to support and protect the international financial system.

Canada is also a key partner of the United States in another key economic sector: energy. Canada, not Saudi Arabia, is the largest supplier of energy to the United States. Last year, Canada supplied more crude oil to the U.S. than Saudi Arabia and Iraq combined. In fact, the U.S. imported far more oil and energy products from Canada than from any other country. As the new US Administration defines its energy policy, it is important to keep in mind that America's largest supplier of energy is your neighbour to the North.

So, as you interact with Congress and the new U.S. Administration, remember that this "one voice for trade" involves Canadians and Americans. We make things

together and we create jobs together during good and bad economic times. This encompasses - in fact is symbolically defined by – our shared auto industry. And Canada, like the US, is looking at how our governments can support our car-makers for a sustainable future in the manufacture of more fuel-efficient vehicles. Our mutual competitiveness in the global marketplace – not only for cars but for all of our products - depends on it.

Thank you for being here and we look forward to a productive dialogue in 2009.