

**Colin Hansen, Minister of Economic Development  
Speech in Vancouver at the Olympic Flag Raising Ceremony**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2006**

**Check against Delivery**

Good afternoon, everybody. And let me just say how pleased I am to be here today. I see many faces here that joined us at Library Square on Sunday for the closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games.

I can't tell you how proud I was to watch the success of Canada in Italy. But let's keep one thing in mind. It may have been the closing of the Olympic Games, but it's not the closing of the Winter Games in Italy because starting next week, we get to enjoy the Paralympics Games from Turin, Italy, as well.

And I can tell you, I am so immensely proud of our athletes and what they accomplished in Torino. I am proud what have we have been able to accomplish as a province to share in some of our culture ask our history in Italy and to share with them the excitement of their Games there.

And I'm very proud of the enthusiasm that this city is showing for the Games. With four years to go, you can already feel it growing in our community. I'm proud to be a British Columbia. And the other feeling that I had was incredible excitement because now it's our turn to shine over the next four years.

I'm excited because I know we will put on an incredible show, when more than 6,500 athletes, more than 250,000 visitors and 10,000 media will arrive in Vancouver to cover the Olympic and Paralympics Games. We know that there will be some three billion viewers who will watch the Games in 2010. And they'll be struck by the wonder and beauty of what British Columbia is in the world.

And I know a lot of those people will want to come to experience our province first hand which presents to us a great opportunity. With 2010 Winter Games are about opportunities for tourism, opportunities for our athletes, opportunities to showcase our culture and our communities, opportunities for our businesses.

We're pleased to be working with the city of Vancouver, the Vancouver Organizing Committee, the resort municipality of Whistler, the city of Richmond and we're proud to be a partner with these organizations to celebrate and showcase our province to an international audience. There is no doubt that the world is going to join us in four years' time.

As many of you know, we established B.C.-Canada Place in downtown Turin, Italy with this log house showcase for what British Columbia is all about. And as you get inside that building and you see the multi-media presentation that really leaves everyone excited

about what British Columbia is and what Vancouver is, as a cosmopolitan, dynamic, exciting place to visit and to come and live and to come and do business.

I think one of the things that our visitors will be most struck by is how much British Columbia shares in the Olympic values, how much B.C., like the Olympics, represents determination, passion and excellence.

And by working together, we're ensuring that the world knows just how outstanding this province truly is. Thank you very much for being here. And let's work hard to make 2010 the best Olympic Games ever.

Thank you.