



Canada and Mexico: A Joint Action Plan for 2007-2008

Ottawa, August 21, 2007

Canada and Mexico share a dynamic and prosperous relationship, as friends, as North American neighbours and as strategic partners in the Americas and beyond. Through over 60 years of diplomatic relations, our cooperation has expanded steadily across a wide range of social, economic, business, environmental and security interests.

Our work is grounded in a number of important institutions and mechanisms, from the bilateral Canada-Mexico Partnership, to the trilateral North American Free Trade Agreement and Security and Prosperity Partnership, and our common membership in a wide range of hemispheric and international organizations. Most significantly, ours is a relationship that is founded upon common values and mutual respect, which are reflected in the ever-increasing contacts between our citizens and our governments.

On the occasion of the visit to Canada of President Felipe Calderón and members of his Cabinet, we have had the opportunity to review the robust and productive agenda for cooperation that is already in place between our countries, covering the areas of energy, housing, commerce, agri-business, human capital development, science & technology and others. We have also taken note of the immense growth in bilateral trade and investment over the past 10 years, and of the considerable tourism levels and people-to-people exchanges that are now a staple of our bilateral relationship.

Building upon this substantial foundation, we have agreed to hold the next Canada-Mexico Partnership meeting in late 2007, and to further enhance our bilateral collaboration with new work to be launched in the following areas:

1. Labour Mobility: As set out in a joint declaration by the Canadian Ministers of Human Resources and Social Development, and Citizenship and Immigration, and by the Mexican Secretary of External Affairs, we have agreed to establish a Working Group on Labour Mobility under the auspices of the Canada-Mexico Partnership framework. The Working Group will explore ways to facilitate labour mobility between Canada and Mexico in areas of mutual interest and to promote the protection of workers, as well as to share information on skills and credential recognition processes and requirements.

2. Security: We will initiate a multi-track process to increase our dialogue and cooperation on security, defence and public safety matters. We will launch

annual, government-wide security policy consultations later this year, which will be coordinated through our respective Foreign Affairs ministries. We have also created a Canada-Mexico Security Working Group to enhance cooperation under the security agenda of the SPP in areas like law-enforcement, border administration, emergency management and critical infrastructure protection, which will be led by Public Safety Canada and Mexico's Centre for Investigation and National Security (CISEN). These initiatives will complement the Canada-Mexico Political-Military talks, established in 2006, and which bring together our civilian and defence experts to share information and experiences on topics like political-military relations and peace support operations.

3. Environment and Forestry: A new bilateral Working Group will be established under the Canada-Mexico Partnership to advance our cooperation on the environment and sustainable forest management. The Working Group will focus its initial efforts in the areas of climate change, including as it relates to forests, on illegal wildlife trafficking, and on environmental services, and scientific and training issues related to forestry production and conservation. Provincial and state governments will be invited to join the Working Group, building upon the already strong links that exist in areas like forest fire management. This initiative will reinforce our ongoing collaboration in trilateral and multilateral fora, including discussions amongst Canada, Mexico and other like-minded countries on the possibility of a legally-binding international instrument on sustainable forest management.

4. Trade, Investment and Science & Technology: Taking note of the tremendous growth in our two-way commerce since the inception of the North American Free Trade Agreement, we have re-committed ourselves to the goal of increasing bilateral trade by 50% and bilateral investment by 100% from their 2005 levels, by the year 2010. We invite the Canada-Mexico Partnership working groups to continue the promotion of concrete initiatives to achieve these targets and to remain committed to enhancing our bilateral cooperation in innovation and science & technology, through initiatives fostering partnerships between businesses, researchers and governments that lead to new knowledge, new technologies and new business opportunities for our two countries.

5. Education and Youth: Governments will promote enhanced cooperation between Canadian and Mexican universities and colleges, including through the action-oriented workplan of the CMP Human Capital Working Group. A feature event in October 2007 will be a bilateral conference of University Presidents, to be organized by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutes of Mexico. Drawing from Canada's experience and leadership on distance education technologies, we will explore avenues for cooperation in this field. We will also renew our reciprocal scholarship programs, to promote student exchanges between our countries, and explore the potential for a future agreement on Youth Mobility.

6. Consular Cooperation: Increasing numbers of Canadians and Mexicans travel to each other's countries every year, for work, for holidays and for family reasons. Such experiences are most often positive and rewarding, but tragedies can, and sometimes do occur, and in those unfortunate instances, our two governments have re-affirmed their commitment to a concerted, rapid response mechanism in each country to assist citizens in distress and work with the appropriate authorities to address matters of concern.

7. Cooperation in the Americas and beyond: Canada and Mexico will place renewed emphasis on working together in areas of mutual concern on a bilateral basis and through the strengthening of Inter-American Institutions and mechanisms, such as the OAS and the Summit of the Americas process, to further our shared objective of a democratic, secure, and prosperous hemisphere. Working with our Latin American and Caribbean partners, areas of cooperation include, inter alia, disaster risk reduction in Central America and the Caribbean, opportunities for common action in Haiti, and promotion of regional economic integration and trade liberalization, including through collaboration in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.