

## **CANADA-MEXICO JOINT STATEMENT**

At the invitation of President Enrique Peña Nieto, Prime Minister Stephen Harper made his first Official Visit to Mexico on February 17 - 18, 2014. The visit occurred in the context of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada-Mexico diplomatic relations, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canada-Mexico Partnership.

The leaders reaffirmed the importance they attach to this strategic bilateral relationship, and agreed on ways to further advance the extensive diplomatic, commercial and people-to-people ties between the two countries. They also underlined their long-standing commitment to cooperate on regional and global issues, including in the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, and in the context of the Pacific Alliance. President Peña Nieto and Prime Minister Harper agreed to continue enhancing collaboration on shared priorities, with a focus on the economic relationship. They also agreed to consider mechanisms to engage in further dialogue.

The two leaders welcomed the signature of the Third Mexico-Canada Joint Action Plan, which outlines shared bilateral priorities, and lists follow up actions for the period from 2014 to 2016. They committed to growing the bilateral trade and investment relationship and, in this regard, were pleased to note that bilateral merchandise trade has grown more than six-fold since the North American Free Trade Agreement took effect in 1994, amounting to more than \$31 billion in 2012. In light of Mexico's recent structural reforms, they welcomed ongoing efforts to increase two-way investment flows. Prime Minister Harper and President Peña Nieto agreed to encourage their private sectors to seize new opportunities in sectors such as energy, aerospace, automotive, mining and finance.

President Peña Nieto and Prime Minister Harper welcomed the conclusion of the Agreement on Air Transport between Mexico and Canada. This agreement is an important contribution to the promotion of significant business and tourism opportunities. They also welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Export Credits concluded between Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Mexican National Bank for Foreign Trade (Bancomext) to contribute to the development of new projects and to the exchange of experiences and best practices, and the Master Cooperation Agreement between these two institutions and major Canadian and Mexican banks, that will identify collaboration opportunities.

Prime Minister Harper and President Peña Nieto highlighted that cooperation on higher education and innovation is a powerful tool to strengthen the bilateral relationship in the short and long terms. They expressed their support for collaboration between Canada's Mitacs Globalink Program, funded under Canada's International Education Strategy, and the Mexican Secretary of Public Education, to develop a jointly funded exchange program. Over three years, the program will provide research internships for Canadian students in Mexico, and Mexican students in Canada.

President Peña Nieto and Prime Minister Harper reiterated their commitment to joint security, justice and defence efforts, within established bilateral mechanisms and in full compliance with their respective domestic legal frameworks. The two leaders expressed their support for the future signature of a Declaration of Intent on defence cooperation.

The two leaders reaffirmed their interest in working constructively together to address regional and global challenges, in issues such as the definition of the post-2015 Development Agenda. They took note of the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action carried out by PEMEX and the Department of Natural Resources Canada, as well as the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the Exchange of Resources for the Management of Forest Fires between the Canadian Forest Service and the Mexican Forest Commission. They highlighted the bilateral environmental cooperation underway between Environment Canada and Mexico's Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, including the Climate Change Cooperation Platform.

The leaders agreed on the importance of consular cooperation and support. In this regard, they commended the work of the Canada-Mexico Rapid Response Group on Consular Matters, and its intent to include on its agenda the exchange of best practices on responses to emergencies and natural disasters abroad. The two leaders value Mexico's decision to establish a consular agency in the city of Winnipeg, which will serve the Mexican population living in the region, and will bolster the political dialogue and commercial exchanges between the province of Manitoba and Mexico.

The leaders underlined their commitment to multilateral cooperation, including in the context of shared priorities in the Americas. In this context, they committed to work closely together in the Organization of American States, among other issues to strengthen the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Inter-American human rights

system. Canada and Mexico will foster a peaceful and prosperous region in Central America and the Caribbean, by contributing to the institutional strengthening of the region through triangular cooperation with the Central America Integration System (SICA).

As a symbolic recognition of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Mexico and Canada, Prime Minister Harper welcomed the forthcoming restoration of the Canadian Totem Pole located in iconic Chapultepec Park. The Totem Pole, donated to Mexico by the Government of Canada in 1960 on the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mexico's Independence, will be restored in part through funding from the Canadian business community in Mexico.

Prime Minister Harper conveyed his hope that the Governor General and he can welcome President Peña Nieto to Canada later this year. The invitation was duly accepted.

February 18, 2014