

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After months of uncertainty, the CETA free trade agreement between the EU and Canada finally headed in the right direction.

As we all know, this was not an easy path.

This CETA agreement is not only one of the best agreements the EU has ever negotiated, but through CETA, the European Commission demonstrates that free trade is important for sustained European growth.

CETA is a landmark accord that sets the benchmark for future agreements. It includes the most ambitious chapters on sustainable development, labour and the environment ever agreed upon in bilateral trade agreements.

CETA will not solely help boost trade and economic activity, but also promote and protect shared values.

It is an example of how Europe can leverage new partnerships in the world to promote its model of an open and social economy.

That is why I believe that “we’re all in this together” is a far better philosophy than “we’re all on our own.” ... And, believe me, it is !

I believe that this is how we can shape globalization – through progressive, state-of-the-art trade agreements that uphold our values and set new standards for global commerce.

Through the EU-Canada agreement, we build a bridge to one of our closest allies, making a real impact for our exporters, entrepreneurs and employees.

Trade simply works, and we know it from experience.

CETA will not only benefit more than 500 million European consumers and 35 million Canadians, this agreement is also an historic occasion that will reinforce the strong links between Canada and the EU.

Trade encourages the creation of wealth. Trade generates greater prosperity.

In today's global world, the link between economics and security - and between peace and prosperity - is stronger than ever. And it is particularly strong in the relationship between Europe and Canada.

Together, we represent the most powerful economic block the world has ever known. But with greater global competition, we need to work harder to ensure our prosperity for the future.

Because success is not final, failure is not fatal:
it is the courage to continue that counts,
Winston Churchill once said.

Thank you.

Raoul Delcorde, ambassador of Belgium to Canada.

