

ronto, Montreal and Vancouver. “These centres”, Simon Fraser University President Andrew Petter insisted, will “truly connect education across continents”.²⁹

Trade and commercial relations kept pace as the two economies grew more complex and inter-connected during the first decade of the new millennium. In Ottawa, there was a fresh appreciation for Greece’s importance as a bridgehead to the large regional economy of south-eastern Europe. Though trade between the two countries fluctuated widely, its trend was slowly upwards. It was doubtless helped along the way by the work of the Canadian-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, established in 1996. Canadian exports grew from \$97 million in 1990 to \$120 million in 1996 to \$175 million in 2003. Greek exports to Canada, mostly preserved food, aluminum, and olive oil, mounted as well, totalling \$71 million in 1990, \$84 million in 1997, and \$113 million in 2003.³⁰ There were setbacks after 2005, when Greece restricted imports of Canadian wheat, and 2008, when the world economic crisis struck, drastically slowing the Greek economy. Clearly, more work was needed, and in 2009, Canada’s Conservative Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon headed to Athens to sign a new double taxation avoidance agreement. “The current global and financial downturn calls for the lifting of barriers on trade and investment,” the minister declared. “This tax treaty does just that, and will benefit both the Canadian and Greek economies”.³¹

There was better news elsewhere. Since the 1990s, Canadian trade officials had paid increased attention to the importance of trade in services, and when it came to Greece the numbers were good. In 2008, Canada exported services worth \$470 million, making Greece Canada’s 16th most important service export market in the world. Canada was even more important for Greece, which provided Canadians with \$1.3 billion dollars’ worth of serv-

Photographs

- 1 Resolution signed by King George B’ of Greece and cabinet members approving the establishment of a Greek Embassy in Ottawa, staffed by an ambassador, an administration officer and an assistant.
- 2 Letter from the office of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa to George Depasta, Minister Plenipotentiary of Greece to Canada, proposing the appointment of Brigadier George P. Vanier as Canadian Minister to Greece, located at the Canadian High Commission in London.
- 3 Letter from Major-General George P. Vanier to Georges S. Depasta, first Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Greece to Canada, on the occasion of the former’s visit to Ottawa.
- 4 Telegram announcing the appointment of Mr. George S. Depasta as the first Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Greece to Canada.
- 5 Farewell letter from Canada’s first Ambassador Greece, Léo Richer Laflèche, to Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Constantine Tsaldaris, on the occasion of the conclusion of the latter’s departure assignment in Greece.