

# WELCOMING REMARKS

**Presented by: Allen M. Fowlis**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Seaspan International Ltd.

Mr. Fowlis is President and CEO of Seaspan International Ltd. He is the immediate past Chairman of the Business Council of B.C., and a past chairman of the Vancouver Board of Trade and the Council of Marine Carriers. He holds degrees from the University of Manitoba and the Banff School of Advanced Management.

My address to you this morning is, in fact, my swan song as Chairman of the Business Council of British Columbia. A new chairman takes over this morning. I would like to welcome you to the conference and advise that I will be acting as chairperson during the day to facilitate the proceedings. We hope this conference will be very informative and useful for your business experience. The intent of the conference has been to assemble together a comprehensive selection of Canadian and U.S. experts who are most knowledgeable in their fields on the Free Trade Agreement. Please be sure to avail yourselves of the opportunity to visit with the presenters and panelists during the breaks, workshops and the meet-the-speakers reception at the end of the day.

An audio transcript of the conference will be taken and form the basis of the proceedings which will be distributed to you. Because there is an audio record being kept of the proceedings, if you have a question, please identify yourself and use one of the two microphones on the aisle.

We have invited many students from the universities, colleges and BCIT to participate in today's conference. I would encourage you to talk with these students and perhaps consider future opportunities for them.

You have been given a questionnaire prepared by BCIT. Students will collect them at the end of the first plenary session this morning.

This room is a non-smoking room and we would ask that you not smoke during the plenary session. Smoking is available in the hallway outside if you wish to have a cigarette.

We have a tight schedule planned and will attempt to stay on time in order to meet the challenge of providing you with a great deal of information in a short period of time. We would encourage you to move quickly to the workshops in the afternoon, staying within the time frames identified on the agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our sponsors, particularly our corporate sponsors who have assisted us financially in putting on this conference. We have had government as well as business support and I would like to thank all organizations who have helped to put on this conference. All have been acknowledged in your agenda book.

If anyone has a problem finding any of the rooms, just go to the conference registration desk which will be staffed all day. As well, any emergency messages will be directed to the registration table.

I believe this more or less covers all of the housekeeping items I need to bring to your attention and will now call upon the first speaker. Again, on behalf of the seven organizations that were part of the Free Trade Coalition and sponsors of this conference, welcome. I hope that you will have an informative and productive day here at the Trade and Convention Centre.