

Thank you Mr. Soubry.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is most appropriate that the platform for the presentation of the first Canada Export Awards is such an auspicious event as the Canadian Export Association's (CEA) 40th Annual Convention.

The CEA has been known over the years as an Association dedicated to the promotion of Canadian exports and to the representation of the interests of Canadian exporters and those serving the export sector. On the occasion of your 40th Anniversary there is no doubt in my mind that these goals are being pursued by the Association and its members with more vigour than ever.

Your 40th birthday is a landmark event and so is tonight's presentation of the first of what I know will be a long series of presentations of the Canada Export Award.

Because of the convergence of these noteworthy events, the Prime Minister has asked me to convey the following message to you:

"I would like to congratulate the executive and members of the Canadian Export Association (CEA) on the occasion of the association's 40th Anniversary. The CEA has long been a vigorous proponent of government measures and private sector initiatives to support and expand Canadian exports. Few associations can look back over their history the way the CEA can and see a long record of service to Canada and Canadian industry. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the sound advice the government has received from the CEA over the years. I know that we and the Canadian exporting community may look forward to many more years of sound export counsel on trade issues from the CEA.

Il convient donc que la présentation des premiers prix d'excellence à l'exportation canadienne se fasse à ce moment-ci. Ces remises de prix, je l'espère, viendront chaque année souligner les efforts d'entreprises qui ont pris des risques et réussi dans un milieu extérieur très concurrentiel. Ayant personnellement favorisé les biens et services canadiens à l'étranger, je salue les entreprises canadiennes qui ont persévéré, qui ont affronté les défis des marchés étrangers et qui ont été encouragé, par leur succès à l'exportation, à présenter leur candidature.

A votre association et aux récipiendaires des prix de cette année, j'offre mes plus sincères félicitations."

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