

We are the people who carved a nation out of the toughest land and most unforgiving climate on earth. We live, in mutual peace if not always in mutual understanding, with the most competitive and vigorous neighbours anywhere. In today's world, a free trade deal with the United States is a way of affirming Canada's historic reality: that Canadians can compete with Americans and win; that we can compete with Americans and remain proudly Canadian.

Exactly a century ago, a distinguished French-Canadian told the Canadian Club of New York, "Be Canadians and the future is yours". Everyone in this room knows how much sports have contributed to make that promise a reality -- just as everyone in this room can help to ensure that it remains true.

Thank you.