

We are a country whose people come from every corner and every culture of the world. But not only do we come from every corner that also means we have lines that reach out to every corner. When you are a Foreign Minister and interested in trade that gives you special advantages. Because a country like ours has credentials around the world that few others can equal. What we have to do is put those to work. We have to put them to work in a cultural sense because it is easier for Canadians coming from a nation that is different at home to understand the complexity of differences abroad. It comes natural to us because we live in a world the way we have to live at home.

It's also a very real economic advantage. An economic advantage that I think we haven't taken enough advantage of. We have excellent people who work at the Department of External Affairs for our country. They can only do part of the job. What is really needed is for citizens to connect with citizens and opportunities in other parts of the world. That is true commercially, in terms of trade as well as it is in other parts of policy.

One of the two things that we have to do through Chambers like yours - which connect our two countries- and through other organizations that take advantage of all the things we have in common, is to take advantage of the natural benefit, the natural advantage of Canada that comes from the fact that we come from so many places and are in contact with so many places.

Thank you.