

Senator Austin,  
Mr. Liu Huaqiu,  
Mr. Sharp,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to thank the Canada-China Business Council for their kind invitation. It is a pleasure to be with you here today to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of Canadian-Chinese diplomatic relations.

Canada's bold decision to recognize China in 1970, over some American objections, exemplified an enduring quality of Canadian foreign policy under successive Liberal governments: pursuing an independent approach.

I look forward to hearing from my predecessor, Mitchell Sharp, on the events of 25 years ago that led to the establishment of these relations. No doubt he will offer us a unique "inside view."

Canada took a stand then that everything must be done to decrease China's isolation, to expose it to the cross-currents of international opinion and to work towards eventual Chinese co-operation in solving outstanding problems of international peace and security.

We saw clearly what was necessary: to promote our own national interests and at the same time our interest in global security. This is a dual-track policy, which we continue to pursue today under the government of Prime Minister Chrétien.

Twenty-five years is not long in the history of nations. In that quarter century we have seen immense changes in China, Canada and the world.

#### **China's development over the past 25 years**

In the last 25 years we have seen a transformation of the Chinese economy. We have seen a surge in the growth of markets and choices, an explosion of the middle class and a revolution in communication.

China's political role in the world has also evolved dramatically in the last 25 years.

China took its UN seat in 1971. It acceded to a handful of agreements in the 70s but the pace soon accelerated. In the 1980s, China joined the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and conventions facilitating business, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization. It acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1992 and supported the indefinite extension of the Treaty this past May.

In regard to human rights, China still has a long way to go. But we must be encouraged by the fact that China participated in the