

Recommendation 1

That, when considering options to improve security and trade facilitation at the Canada-U.S. border, the Government of Canada remedy border concerns already in evidence before September 11. Ultimately, the goal should be to modernize border management to accommodate future security and trade needs.

The Government of Canada recognizes the crucial importance of the Canada-U.S. border to the economic well-being of both countries. In the aftermath of September 11, building upon the already excellent cooperative relationship that Canada enjoys with the U.S. on border management issues, both countries embarked upon a plan to enhance both the security and efficiency of the border.

Both in the December 2001 budget and the Smart Border Declaration, signed by Deputy Prime Minister Manley and Homeland Security Director Ridge, the Government of Canada committed itself to a secure and trade-efficient border. Consultations are ongoing with the U.S., but concrete progress has already been made.

These results include the re-opening of the Intransit Preclearance program at Vancouver airport, the re-opening of the NEXUS pilot project at the Sarnia-Port Huron crossing, and the announcement of the expansion of NEXUS to other border crossings (starting with 3 BC crossings in June), as well as the stationing of U.S. Customs officers at Halifax, Montreal and Vancouver and Canadian officers at Newark and Seattle to monitor container cargo. Consultations with the U.S. by Deputy Prime Minister Manley as well as working groups within existing bilateral fora (e.g. Shared Border Accord, Border Vision, Cross Border Crime Forum, Transportation Border Working Group) are ongoing. The objective of these initiatives is to fully implement the Smart Border Declaration and the 30 point Action Plan.

The goal of both Governments is not to return the border to its pre-September 11 state, but rather to move the Canada-U.S. border relationship forward, through the development of a smart, secure, trade-efficient border for the 21st Century.

Recommendation 2

That the Government of Canada, following consultations with U.S. authorities, outline to Canadians its plans for co-operating with its North American partners to improve continental security.

Both the Government of Canada and the Government of the U.S. recognize that the most effective means of ensuring the security of their citizens is to establish a cooperative partnership to coordinate border management policies. This cooperation involves not only policies in effect along the shared border, but also national policies that have a continental or global impact. The 30 point Action Plan of the Smart Border Declaration is based upon such issues of mutual