

Merci, Monsieur Langdon

Bonjour, mesdames et messieurs.

Je suis très content d'être ici au Bourget. J'aimerais vous adresser en français, mais c'est très évident que je ne le peux pas. So I will speak in English.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here at the Canadian Pavilion at le Bourget. It is a thrill to see so many of the products and capabilities that have made the Canadian aerospace industry so widely respected in the world.

This is the twelfth time that Canada has officially participated in the Paris International Air Show, and it is our best show so far. More than 40 Canadian aerospace companies are represented here, and your displays reinforce the excellence that you stand for.

Paris has grown over the years to become the largest and most prestigious of all the aerospace Trade Fairs. It attracts hundreds of thousands of professional visitors from all parts of the world. Paris has become the place to show and to be seen if you are anybody in the aerospace industry.

The Canadian industry, in order to remain viable, must export more than 80% of its products and services. It relies heavily on trade fair promotions to support its marketing efforts, and it is fully aware that it must present itself in a high profile way in Paris, at this massive bi-annual event, if it wants to keep its excellence and diversity known in the market.

It is excellent and it is diverse. Your product line here in Paris covers a very wide range--from the Canadarm that orbits up in space to air navigation beacons that are anchored to the ground, and everything in between, including utility STOL aircraft and Challenger executive jets. Indeed, you are in the forefront of Canadian technology, and your sophistication and innovation are spreading to other products--and other industries--as well. In the changing and competitive world we live in, this is exactly what the doctor ordered for Canada, and we in the Government are doing our best to encourage other sectors of our business community to follow your lead, to sharpen their competitiveness, both at home and in the world marketplace.

Last year Canada's aerospace industry exported three billion dollars worth of goods and services, and it employed 45,000 Canadians in meaningful high technology jobs in Canada. Your ratio of exports to total production makes you the most successful aerospace exporters in the world.