

Notes for Remarks by

The Honourable Christian Paradis, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Natural Resources

at the

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of the

Canadian Hydropower Association

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## **Introduction**

Merci beaucoup, XX, pour cette aimable introduction, et bonjour à tous.

I want to thank the Canadian Hydropower Association for its invitation to speak. It is an honour to be here today.

As you may know, Canada is the world's second largest producer of hydropower in the world. Your industry employs tens of thousands of people, such as engineers, geologists, construction workers, electricians and mechanics, and makes a significant contribution to Canada's economic growth and prosperity.

Prime Minister Harper has said that hydroelectricity projects "not only stimulate economic activity and boost employment where it is needed today, they also provide communities with the infrastructure needed to prosper in the future."<sup>1</sup>

Our Government sees hydropower as part of Canada's continued growth as both a natural resources powerhouse and a global clean energy superpower.

Since 2006 our Government has invested \$10 billion to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build a more sustainable environment and support the creation of jobs through investments in green infrastructure, clean energy technologies, the production of cleaner fuels, and energy efficiency.

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<sup>1</sup> PM's speech "Partnering to upgrade Yukon's Mayo B hydro facility" – Whitehorse, YK, August 21, 2009  
<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?category=2&featureId=6&pageId=46&id=2770>

For example, our ecoENERGY for Renewable Power program is supporting hydro projects such as the Brilliant Dam expansion project in Castlegar, BC, and the Centrale hydroélectrique Rivière Magpie project in Rivière Saint-Jean, Quebec. And our Clean Energy Fund is supporting demonstrations of smart grid and hydro technologies across the country.

Nous investissons dans la connaissance, la recherche et l'innovation, qui sont essentielles au succès dans une économie mondiale telle que la nôtre.

## **Rôle de l'hydroélectricité dans la lutte contre les changements climatiques**

Dans le cadre de l'Accord de Copenhague, notre gouvernement s'est engagé à réduire les émissions totales de gaz à effet de serre au pays de 17 % par rapport aux niveaux de 2005 d'ici 2020, une cible qui est en harmonie avec celle des États-Unis.

More than 75 percent of the electricity generated in Canada already comes from non-emitting sources. Hydro, which accounts for 60 percent of our electricity, is a big part of that.

Additional development of new hydro, solar, wind and other clean and renewable energy technologies has the potential to significantly reduce our emissions even further, helping us to meet our greenhouse gas reduction objectives while creating economic opportunities.

In addition to developing new clean energy sources, we are working to reduce the environmental impact of existing technologies. For example, our Government is developing regulations to limit emissions from Canada's coal-fired power plants. We are also making important investments in carbon capture and storage. These regulations will help us meet our commitment under the Copenhagen Accord.

## **North American context**

Going forward, Canada recognizes that only through cooperation at the continental level can we obtain our objectives.

An excellent example is the North American electricity grid which is one of our most important pieces of shared infrastructure. This type of integration gives us a good foundation to move forward on a continental energy approach.

Notre récente participation aux réunions ministérielles sur l'énergie propre a démontré que nous pouvions travailler à des objectifs communs en matière d'énergie et des émissions. Le Mexique, les États-Unis et le Canada se sont tous trois engagés à collaborer à des initiatives sur l'efficacité énergétique, sur les réseaux intelligents et sur le captage et le stockage du carbone.

### **Canada – US electricity trade**

En 2008, les exportations canadiennes vers les États-Unis étaient évaluées à un peu plus de 352 milliards de dollars. Les exportations d'énergie comptaient pour environ le tiers de ce montant.

Notre gouvernement s'efforce donc de tirer parti de ces solides relations commerciales.

We supply virtually all of the electricity the US imports.

One of the ways we're working to build on our trading relationship is through the Clean Energy Dialogue established by Prime Minister Harper and President Obama more than a year ago.

We're working with the US to spur rapid progress in clean energy technologies and to promote climate and energy security.

Our Government is also working with the US government and industry to identify potential resources and markets for increased clean electricity and supplementary services trade.

With our electricity grids so closely connected, cross-border trade in electricity between Canadian provinces and US states actually exceeds transfers between the provinces.

There is no question that hydropower can have a leading role as we work with the US on the supply of clean energy. Hydroelectricity exports already provide a renewable, reliable and affordable supply to many regions of the US – and we still have significant undeveloped potential in Canada.

En profitant de cette intégration considérable, nous pouvons optimiser nos ressources en énergie propre et tirer le maximum du réseau.

À titre d'exemple de la façon dont nous travaillons de concert avec nos voisins, j'aimerais prendre quelques minutes pour féliciter Hydro-Québec et souligner le rôle que cette société a joué dans la signature d'un contrat à long terme d'exportation d'électricité au Vermont. Cette entente créera des précédents en ce qui concerne la reconnaissance de l'hydroélectricité canadienne comme source d'électricité propre pour les États-Unis.

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

I mentioned a few moments ago the “untapped potential” of hydropower. In fact, I understand from your Association’s study<sup>2</sup> that we have untapped potential that is about double the current capacity. So hydropower will clearly be an expanding source of clean energy trade in North America. However, there are some challenges to realizing its full potential.

I want to assure you that our Government is aware of these challenges, such as the long lead-times that can be associated with the regulatory review process, and has already taken concrete actions to improve the situation.

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<sup>2</sup> Hydropower Association’s “Study of Hydro Potential in Canada” - 2006

For example, in 2008 our government established the Major Projects Management Office to provide overarching management of federal regulatory reviews for large natural resource projects.

Since opening its doors, this Office has led the development of new approaches to improve the predictability, accountability and transparency of federal regulatory review processes.

And this Office is now managing over 50 major projects, representing approximately \$100 billion of potential new investment in communities across Canada.

Notre gouvernement fait fond sur ces améliorations et est déterminé à mettre en œuvre des processus réglementaires simplifiés et plus clairs. Ces modifications permettront de mieux protéger l'environnement et d'offrir plus de certitudes à l'industrie alors que nous poursuivons le développement responsable des ressources énergétiques et minérales du pays.

These changes are positive first steps towards improving the current system.

## **Conclusion**

Hydropower is going to continue to be an important part of our clean energy mix. As we move towards a low carbon economy, hydroelectricity will play a key role in our government's action to continue as a clean energy superpower.

Je vous remercie de m'avoir donné l'occasion de vous adresser la parole ici aujourd'hui et je vous souhaite tout le succès possible pour la suite de votre congrès annuel.

Merci.