

5th Leaders' Summit on North American Relations Joint Statement

QUÉBEC CITY, June 3rd 2009 – On June 3rd 2009, Canadian provincial premiers and Mexican and US state governors gathered for the 5th Leaders' Summit on North American Relations, in order to exchange views about various measures aimed at boosting North American competitiveness and enhancing trilateral cooperation.

Coinciding with the 15th anniversary of the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Summit was an opportunity for the Leaders to:

- review NAFTA's track record and future prospects;
- agree to work together to address North America's economic, labor, social and environmental challenges.

In attending this 5th Leaders' Summit on North American Relations, the Leaders reaffirmed their belief that there is an important need for provincial and state governments to take part in forums aimed at promoting ongoing dialogue on issues of mutual interest.

They reaffirmed the essential role that Canadian provinces and the Mexican and US states have in developing trilateral relations and enhancing North America's strategic positioning in the international arena.

Economic context and financial crisis

The current economic and financial crisis is having a direct impact on individuals and businesses in North America. Many provincial, state and federal governments have already taken steps to support those who have been hardest hit by the economic downturn and to stimulate economic activity. However, the Leaders agreed that there is much more that can be done.

The Leaders agreed to:

- implementing initiatives with a view to creating jobs, protecting workers, reinforcing trade relations and facilitating the resumption of economic growth, in accordance with the principle of free trade;
- resisting and resolving protectionism in all three countries;
- promoting trade flows;
- supporting the efforts of the Canadian, Mexican and US federal governments to work with the other G-20 countries in implementing the necessary reforms to the international financial system.

North American integration: NAFTA's track record and future prospects

Fifteen years following the implementation of NAFTA on January 1, 1994, the resulting deeper integration of the Canadian, Mexican and US markets has spurred economic growth in all three countries, enhancing the lives of many people in their respective societies. In a bid to boost competitiveness in the global economy, retaining and building upon our individual and collective North American competitiveness will be key to future success. Building better and stronger conduits for trade and investment, as are provided for under NAFTA, should be key targets.

In view of the global economic crisis, North America must address the twin challenges of increasing its competitiveness and leveraging its capacity for innovation and adaptation. The Leaders agreed that the necessary improvements in these areas can be made within the existing NAFTA framework.

To that end, they committed to:

- using the comparative advantages that exist among the three NAFTA partners to make North America more competitive in the global economy;
- encouraging the three national governments to look at NAFTA as a dynamic process rather than a static 15 year old agreement;
- involving the private sector in the improvement of NAFTA;
- enhancing business competitiveness by continuing to reducing administrative obstacles and regulation disparities;
- promoting mutual recognition of standards to facilitate trade;
- facilitating the links, joint projects and partnerships between centers, networks and groups dedicated to research in science and technology.

Transportation and infrastructure

Economic relations between the NAFTA countries are measured by the volume of cross-border trade flows, and the movement of goods is dependent upon the concerted efforts of those responsible for transportation logistics and the quality of North America's transportation infrastructure.

Meeting both the need for security and the need for the efficient movement of goods and people is critical for North American prosperity and competitiveness. Provincial and state governments agreed to make an effective contribution by:

- increasing cooperation in border security matters;
- investing in transportation and border infrastructure;
- taking appropriate administrative and logistical measures to facilitate the movement of goods and people at border crossings;
- strengthening existing and emerging economic corridors.

Energy and climate change

Canadian provinces and Mexican and US States represented at the Summit agree that efforts must be taken to provide adequate environmental protections while ensuring the availability of energy supplies required for day-to-day living, economic stability and growth.

The phenomenon of climate change transcends national borders. By virtue of its direct impact on personal health, economic activity and the natural environment, governments at all levels must take decisive action. Provincial and state governments across North America have shown that they are capable of assuming a leadership role in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to:

- recognizing that there should be a cap on greenhouse gas emissions;
- acknowledging that their respective legislatures are working on initiatives to meet this objective;
- calling on the three national governments to work on a common North American approach in view of the upcoming UN Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009;
- promoting increased cooperation aimed at strengthening the North American energy market;
- devising strategies aimed at developing and improving technologies in the area of clean and renewable energy;
- implementing measures to promote and support energy efficiency;
- strengthening energy relations between Canada, Mexico and the US in order to contribute to North American energy security.

Next steps

Canadian provincial premiers and Mexican and US state governors agreed to continue meeting and to pursue their discussions on strengthening relations across North America. They also committed to encouraging the participation of the other Canadian provinces and Mexican and US states.

The Governor of Iowa, Chet Culver, invites the Leaders to attend the next Leaders' Summit on North American Relations, which will be held in Des Moines in 2010.

Leaders' Summit Attendees

Canada

Premier Jean Charest
Québec

Premier Gary Doer
Manitoba

Premier Shawn Graham
New Brunswick

Minister Shawn Skinner
Newfoundland and Labrador

Mexico

Governor Amalia García Medina
Zacatecas

Governor José Natividad González Parás
Nuevo León

Governor Juan Manuel Oliva Ramírez
Guanajuato

Secretary Jorge Reynoso Martínez
Durango

Secretary Eloy Vargas Arreola
Michoacán

United States

Governor Chet Culver
Iowa

Governor James H. Douglas
Vermont

Observers

Jalisco

State of Mexico