

REMARKS

FOR

**THE HONOURABLE BEVERLEY J. ODA
MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

AT THE

**OPENING RECEPTION
OF THE PDAC 2012 CONFERENCE**

**March 4, 2012
Toronto, ON**

Thank you for that warm welcome, Scott.

It is certainly my pleasure to be here this evening as you celebrate PDAC's 80th anniversary.

Tonight my colleagues join me:

- Minister Joe Oliver, our Minister for Natural Resources
- Minister Peter Kent, our Minister for the Environment
- Minister John Duncan, our Minister for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Lisa Raitt, our Minister of Labour
- Senator Dennis Patterson, from Nunavut

I know that colleagues from the House of Commons and representatives from all levels of government in Canada also join us here.

On behalf of Prime Minister Harper, and the Government of Canada, I would like to extend a special welcome to members of Governments of countries in which the Canadian industry is operating.

And the Members of the Diplomatic Corp here in Canada representing so many countries around the world.

You are all probably asking WHY of all the members of the Canadian government, is the Minister of International Cooperation here speaking tonight.

Well, according to some, the Canadian mining industry is MY new best friend.

As you know, today, Canada's extractive sector is the largest in the world.

60% of the world's mineral companies are publicly listed and/or headquartered here in Canada and more than 50% of all mining and exploration equity financing was raised in Canada last year.

And, we thank you for the contribution your industry makes to our country, keeping our economy strong and growing, creating jobs and employment, and offering opportunities in new communities, particularly in the North and in the aboriginal community.

On a global basis, at any one time, the Canadian mining sector has an estimated 1000 exploration projects in over 100 countries worldwide, and in 2010, almost 70% of Canadian mining assets were in non-North America countries.

Prime Minister Harper has acknowledged that Canadian investment in the extractive sector abroad can result in a win-win outcome for both the economy of Canada and other resource-rich countries.

And, I know that you agree.

I want to thank Ellworth Dickson for sending many editions of the magazine, Resource World, in which he wanted me to read about the many Corporate Social Responsibility projects that Canadian operations undertake in developing countries.

I know that your companies are making significant investments in development projects and improving the quality of life for thousands in countries where you work.

And I believe that all Canadians must be told your work to reduce poverty, build schools, health clinics, new roads for the community and the many other ways that you are making life better for local communities.

However, in flipping through the magazines, I also read:

“Mining plays a large role in the economic health of countries fortunate enough to host mineral deposits.”

“It is a huge economic boost to the country and lifting thousands of people out of poverty.”

“It is mining that can raise the standard of living for thousands of impoverished people who struggle to get by on less than \$2.50 per day, sometimes much less.”

“The mining industry is a huge contributor to a nation’s wealth and is one of the main building blocks of civilization.”

Well, I thought I was reading an International Aid and Development magazine.

Because our Government believes that economic growth in developing countries is the best way to reduce poverty.

In many developing countries, their natural resources industries will be the foundation for their future economic growth.

However, it was also noted in the articles that I read that most mining projects are not slam-dunks, as you have to deal with many problems, some in your control and some beyond your control.

And this is where, I believe your interests and our interests at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) can come together.

Along with NRCan, Foreign Affairs, and International Trade, CIDA takes an active part in cross-government efforts to support Canada’s interests abroad.

Moreover, we want to ensure that developing countries, that are rich in resources, make significant progress to improve the lives of their people.

The PriceWaterhouseCoopers report, Mine 2010, says that the game has changed – the mining industry has entered a new era.

The Deloitte Tracking Trends 2012 reports on the social, economic and political factors that are forcing your industry to re-think its strategic planning.

Well, at CIDA, we have also been re-thinking our strategy to support economic growth in developing countries.

We helped to create the Devonshire Initiative, to bring CEOs from your industry together with Canadian NGOs that are among the world's most experienced and trusted among development experts working in developing countries.

CIDA entered into tri-lateral partnerships with:

Barrick Gold, World Vision Canada in Peru.

Rio Tinto, World University Service Canada in Ghana.

IAM Gold, Plan Canada in Burkina Faso.

And, as you know, Canada supports the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and CIDA is helping some countries adopt and adhere to international standards of transparency and accountability.

However, we are doing more than that!

Both the Deloitte and PWC Report noted that one of the challenges you face is the shortage of a trained, skilled workforce.

That is why CIDA has adopted demand-driven vocational and skills training as one of its main areas of development work in its Economic Growth Strategy.

And, the 2010 PriceWaterhouseCooper report indicated that many governments were looking to reform their mining codes, reform their taxation and royalty regimes, and improve their policy frameworks, because these are critical indicators that foreign investment look to for stability and certainty and to make investment decisions.

And, I can attest that this is in fact happening.

More and more, when I meet with other country governments, either on my trips or in bilateral meetings, in addition to the Heads of State, the Ministers of Finance, Health, Education, and Agriculture, I am meeting with Ministers of Mining.

When I ask how Canada can help, they don't always ask for aid, some ask for Canadian technical expertise and assistance in the review of their mining policies, laws, and regulations as well as increasing the capacity in their Ministries of Mining.

That is why the Prime Minister announced the Canadian International Institute for the Extractive Industry and Development.

The Institute is primarily to focus on helping countries with just this area of work.

Consultations and discussions are currently underway to shape the institute and I extend an invitation to all countries represented here to take advantage of the Institute once established.

I commend the Mining Association of Canada on your plans to research and analyze the relevant international laws, standards, and host country laws and regulations that Canadian companies must work within in developing countries.

I know your work will contribute to the work of the Institute.

And so, I hope I have to some extent, explained why I am so pleased to be here with you this evening.

I look forward to learning from your industry on how to improve the effectiveness of Canada's development work internationally, and to working more closely together to create a better life for those living in poverty.

Thank you for your support and for becoming my "new best friend".

I wish you a productive and successful conference.

Thank you.