

## **Minister's Statement 53-14(3): Team Canada Trade Mission to China**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from heading a delegation that participated in the Team Canada Trade Mission to China. The official Northwest Territories delegation included Mr. John Bayly, principal secretary and my wife, Ms. Marie Wilson, who participated in the spouses' program. For those who may be wondering, the delegation's costs were covered by the federal government. We were accompanied by Mr. Darrell Beaulieu, who participated in the trade mission as a business representative of the Northwest Territories. Today, I would like to report to this House on the events of this trip to China and the meetings that took place there.*

*The trade mission provided two key opportunities for the Government of the Northwest Territories. It was an opportunity to explore first-hand what business opportunities may exist in China for Northwest Territories companies. Equally importantly, it was an opportunity for the Northwest Territories delegation to spend time with the other Canadian politicians, bureaucrats, private sector and banking representatives and Canadian business media representatives who participated in the mission.*

*On the domestic front, we took the opportunity while enroute to talk with the Prime Minister and his senior staff about economic development in Canada's North. I spoke to the Prime Minister about the Mackenzie Valley pipeline and Common Ground, the Northwest Territories' Economic Development Strategy. We talked with investment banks and business executives from across Canada and from Asia about the Northwest Territories' positive investment climate and resource development opportunities. Energy is on the national agenda and all those who took part in Team Canada are aware of the issues surrounding it.*

*Media representatives who were part of the Team Canada Mission were also interested in hearing about resource development in the Northwest Territories. The trade mission gave us an opportunity to continue to inform and educate the press about issues surrounding the development of our oil and gas resources and a Mackenzie Valley pipeline, about development of Northwest Territories diamonds and about our tremendous hydroelectric potential.*

*Once in China, we discovered a fascinating country with a huge population and a burgeoning middle class. It may come as a surprise to some to learn that China has an active diamond cutting and polishing industry. I had a number of meetings with Chinese mining and diamond industry representatives to share and exchange information. The Land and Resources Ministry is the highest government authority regulating natural resources in China, including minerals and diamonds. I met with Vice Minister Shou Jiahua and with several key members of her ministry. The meeting with Vice Minister Shou was very informative. We discussed the sharing of information and expertise.*

*At the invitation of the Vice Minister, the CEO of "Diamond," one of China's larger diamond cutting and polishing companies, also attended our meeting. Afterward, this gentleman met with Mr. Darrell Beaulieu of the Deton'cho Corporation. In his meetings, Mr. Beaulieu was briefed and assisted by Mr. Jian-Hua Sang, a Chinese mining and minerals specialist.*

*In Shanghai, Mr. Beaulieu joined us in a meeting with Mr. Nanhai Yan, the director and deputy general manager of the Shanghai Diamond Exchange. We toured the Shanghai Diamond Exchange. We discussed the advantages to China of setting up a diamond exchange. This discussion was very useful because we have been considering the future need for a North American diamond exchange that could be located in the Northwest Territories. Air transport issues are a shared interest with the Chinese and were discussed with Chinese officials during their visit to Yellowknife in 1998. So, while in Beijing, I met with Vice Minister Yang Yuan Yuan of the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China, who is responsible for international cooperation. He and I talked about the potential of Yellowknife as a staging, stopover and/or emergency landing spot for the airline industry. This was an introductory meeting only, but it was significant because we were the only Canadian delegation to arrange for a meeting with the Chinese General Administration of Civil Aviation in China.*

*We met with Chinese officials at both the national and provincial levels including the governors and vice-governors of several western provinces. They represent the less developed and more rural jurisdictions in China and, in spite of the great differences in our populations, we share many problems including the need for environmentally responsible development.*

*While in China, we were fortunate to have the assistance of Mr. Cameron Zubko in arranging meetings for us. Mr. Zubko, who is from Inuvik and once worked for our Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, now lives in Beijing where he has established a consulting firm. It was a pleasure to have a representative on site in China who knows the North, its people and its potential. Mr. Zubko, whose experience includes working as the Northwest Territories representative in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, helped us set up senior level meetings with Chinese government officials and offered sound advice on how to navigate through a system that in many ways is very different from our own. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him publicly for his able assistance throughout our trip.*

*Mr. Speaker, China has indicated its interest in entering the global economy as a full member of the World Trade Organization, where it will enjoy all of the advantages of full membership and be bound by the rules and policies of this organization. With the opening of Canada's first diamond mine and the establishment of a territorial cutting and polishing industry, the Northwest Territories has just entered the global economy in diamond mining. We are poised to enter the global economy in the production of oil and gas and hydroelectric power for export from the Northwest Territories. The emergence into world markets is something that we have in common with China.*

*The Team Canada Trade Mission to China introduced us to this interesting country and impressed upon us that, with its growing middle class, China offers new and exciting opportunities to the Northwest Territories in trade and in the exchange of information and expertise.*

*Thank you, Mr. Speaker.*