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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS

BY

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It is my pleasure to join you here today. I bring greetings from Josée Verner, Canada's Minister for International Cooperation and Canada's Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty.

Canada's new government has shown continuity of commitment to education and we have increased that commitment over time. In fact, among 22 OECD donor countries, Canada ranks eighth. We support initiatives that improve basic education, remove barriers to equal access for girls and boys, and provide education for children in conflict and emergency situations.

Today, I would like to touch on three issues:

1. Meeting our stated commitments to increased funding for education;
2. Accelerating access to education in fragile states; and
3. Developing innovative partnerships.

At the last G8 meeting, Canada committed to increasing bilateral financing to Africa from \$100 million each year to \$150 million by the year 2010, as well as making a contribution of \$25 million to the Fast Track Initiative multilateral funds. Our G8 commitment included a \$1 million contribution to the EFA Global Monitoring Fund.

We are on track to meet this commitment. In Senegal, for example, Canada is the largest contributor to the country's Ten-Year Program for Education Training.

In the last few months, Canada has approved \$45 million in education programs in Senegal. Over the years, we have played a key role in Senegal's education curriculum development, literacy program and improving conditions for some 10,000 volunteer teachers. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency—CIDA—supported the training of 307,000 youth and adults, three-quarters of whom are women.

In fragile states, we are accelerating access to education and building on past success by working in innovative ways with partners with whom we have longstanding relationships.

Afghanistan is an example of tremendous progress in access to education. School enrolment has risen from 700,000—and no girls—under the Taliban, to over six million today, including two million girls. Nevertheless, major challenges remain, particularly in rural areas. To meet these challenges, we are drawing upon experience and partnerships developed in other countries in the region.

We were one of the first to fund the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee's education project in Bangladesh in 1990 and that organization now operates schools that benefit some 15 million students there.

Ce modèle nous sert maintenant en Afghanistan. En collaboration avec le BRAC, le Canada finance présentement un projet qui permettra d'offrir une éducation primaire à 120 000 enfants — dont près de 85 pour cent de filles — dans 11 provinces de l'Afghanistan, y compris au Kandahar. Ce projet durera quatre ans. Il permettra d'aménager jusqu'à 4 000 écoles communautaires et de former 9 000 enseignants, dont au moins 4 000 seront des femmes. Cela illustre bien comment nous pouvons miser sur de bonnes idées et des expériences concluantes en matière de coopération Sud-Sud. En plus, c'est une approche simple, fructueuse, viable et mesurable. *[That model is now working for us in Afghanistan. Canada is now financing a project with BRAC that will deliver primary education to 120,000 children in 11 provinces of Afghanistan, including Kandahar—almost 85 percent of whom will be girls. This four-year project will establish up to 4,000 community-based schools and train 9,000 teachers. At least 4,000 of them will be women. This is a good example of building on great ideas and experience through South-South cooperation, and it's an approach that is simple, successful, sustainable and scaleable.]*

Le ministre afghan de l'Éducation, monsieur Hanif Atmar, nous a dit ceci : « Grâce à ce projet, les enfants auront plus de choix à l'âge adulte. Cela leur profitera, et cela profitera aussi à leurs familles, à leurs collectivités et à leur pays. » *[Afghanistan's Minister of Education, Hanif Atmar told us, "This project ... will enable these children to widen their*

opportunities in adulthood, benefiting themselves, their families and communities, and their country.”]

Nous élaborons aussi des initiatives fondées sur des partenariats novateurs. En voici un excellent exemple : dans le cadre d’un de nos projets d’éducation en Tanzanie, le nombre d’enseignants qualifiés a augmenté de près de 40 pour cent au cours des cinq dernières années, grâce aux efforts du gouvernement. Mais les classes demeurent bondées et la formation, cruciale. *[We are also developing initiatives that develop new, innovative partnerships. There is no better example than one of our education projects in Tanzania, where the government has increased the number of qualified teachers in the system by almost 40,000 in the past five years. But class size remains large and training is critical.]*

Avec l’appui de mécènes de Calgary, en provenance du secteur privé, l’ACDI et son partenaire de longue date — la Fondation Aga Khan Canada — aident à mettre sur pied un établissement d’enseignement et de formation de classe mondiale. Situé dans la ville de Dar es Salaam, cet établissement desservira l’Afrique de l’Est. Ainsi, en offrant de la formation aux enseignants et aux administrateurs, nous pourrions remédier aux lacunes qui existent en Tanzanie et en Afrique de l’Est au chapitre de l’éducation. *[With the aid of private-sector philanthropists from Calgary, CIDA and our longstanding partner, the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, are helping to establish a world-class education training institution in Dar es Salaam to serve the East Africa region. This will help us to unplug an important bottleneck to education in Tanzania and East Africa, by providing training to teachers and education administrators.]*

As Khalil Shariff, the head of Aga Khan Foundation Canada put it, “This initiative is a model for the way in which it brings together governments in both Canada and the developing world, individual philanthropists, and civil society institutions, to meet the ambitious MDG goal for education in East Africa.”

We are in education for the long haul. We consider education to be fundamental to sustainable development. We will work to ensure a predictable increase in funding, from

\$100 million to \$150 million in Africa. Equally important, we will work to ensure that our interventions are both innovative and effective. There is no surer way of reducing poverty in the long run. Thank you.