

Ambassador Bruce A. Heyman's Remarks
City Council, Markham, ON
December 15, 2014

Good morning! It is my pleasure to be here in Markham this morning -- a city that exemplifies innovation. Thank you, Mayor Scarpitti and Stephen Chaith and team for organizing this visit for me today. I look forward to a discussion with all of you today and to learning more from leaders in your community during a packed day of meetings in the area.

Cities play an important role in the second-to-none bilateral relationship between our two countries. Here in Markham I see a city that is not just one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in Canada, but one of the most innovative as well, and that is exciting.

I have been in Canada for eight months -- note that I say CANADA, not OTTAWA -- that is because I have spent a lot of time on the road. And in my travels throughout this beautiful country of yours, I have talked and talked and talked about the economic partnership between our two nations. The largest, most efficient, most integrated, most dynamic, and MOST IMPORTANT bilateral economic relationship in the world:

- A relationship that trades \$2 billion a day in goods and services EVERY DAY.
- A relationship where the two-way merchandise trade is greater than the total annual economic output of all but 20 countries in the world.
- And a relationship where our trade relationship with just one province -- this one -- is larger than with our fourth largest trading partner, Japan.

Cities like Markham (especially Markham) are the driving force of those trade numbers -- especially the increase in those trade numbers. You are home to nearly 900 high technology and life sciences companies, including such greats as IBM, Advanced Micro Devices, American Express, Johnson & Johnson, just to name a few.

My team here in Toronto has explained to me that there are many factors behind Markham's success:

- One of the fastest growing and most-diverse populations anywhere in the world.
- A highly educated workforce with expertise in engineering, commerce, and business management.
- Global Connections: nearly half your population is foreign-born, bringing the richness of other cultures and other languages (90 of them!)...AND a
- Business-friendly environment focused on growth clusters

But Markham also works because you have you forged an excellent cooperative relationship between the public and private spheres, based on mutual respect and recognition of mutual interests and you are smartly investing in your people.

You have excellent intellectual capital being generated here. Markham is leading the way in how to leverage that capital for economic growth and a better community.

All this explains why Markham is one of the fastest growing communities in Ontario, and why companies have made their national headquarters here. It also explains why cities like yours are essential partners in continued bilateral growth.

Our relationship, however, extends far beyond the economic partnership.

I am delighted to hear that Markham will be hosting four of the Pan Am competitions at your newly-completed Pan Am/Parapan Centre, which I will have the pleasure of touring later today. The Pan Am and Parapan Games represent a unique opportunity for us.

Sports transcend linguistic and cultural barriers.

The Games will also bring athletes and public and private sector leaders from across Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America. Looking ahead, let us work together to not only celebrate the Games as a sporting event, but to leverage them as platform to increase bilateral growth, tourism, investment, cultural exchange, and enhanced understanding of shared traditions and values.

In closing, our bilateral relationship is strong and thriving.

In the past several weeks we have had a string of high-level, including 6 cabinet level, U.S. officials come visit Canada. We even have one more coming later this week. They come because Canada is seen as more than just a neighbor. Canada is seen as a key partner, important ally, and invaluable contributor to the shared success of North America. Your input as stakeholders and public and private sector leaders is just one reason why. And I look forward to hearing from you how we can best continue to grow our economies and our partnership.

Thank you.