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The President

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**Press statement by the President of the European Council
Herman Van Rompuy
following the EU-Canada Summit in Ottawa**

It is a great pleasure to be in Ottawa today and I wish to thank Prime Minister Harper warmly for his hospitality. This summit is marked by a qualitative jump in the relations between the European Union and Canada. Indeed after determined efforts on both sides -and I express my gratitude for the key role played by Prime Minister Harper- we have successfully finalized negotiations on a Strategic Partnership Agreement and on a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. This will help us drive our relations to new levels of depth and understanding.

Les relations entre le Canada et l'Europe vont bien au-delà de l'économie et la politique. Nous avons une communauté de valeurs, une communauté profondément enracinée et qui date déjà de longtemps. L'Europe n'a pas oublié que des milliers de Canadiens sont morts il y a cent ans et il y a soixante-dix ans pour libérer l'Europe. Nous sommes conscients que sans ces sacrifices l'Union européenne n'existerait pas et nous ne serions pas ici.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement are embodiments of this much larger bond. The Strategic Partnership Agreement is a broad framework agreement. It will facilitate our consultations and cooperation on a multitude of issues, ranging from promoting international peace and security, to education and research, sustainable development and justice. It also acknowledges the principles our relationship is based upon, and which guide our action. The Comprehensive Economic and Free Trade Agreement will be the first trade agreement concluded by the European Union with one of the leading industrialised countries and one of the most ambitious agreements it has ever negotiated. It is about generating more trade and investment for both sides, about creating growth and jobs. These are key interests and concerns for both of us.

Together with Prime Minister Harper we have discussed the practical implementation of these agreements. We are both interested in reaping the benefits they will bring as early as possible.

In the current security situation it is timely that Canada and the European Union have further strengthened their bonds. Broad international cooperation is required to tackle the pressing and dramatic challenges we are facing. Prime Minister Harper, President Barroso, and myself have just arrived from New York. At the United Nations, together with other world leaders, we have discussed how to respond to some of the worst crises including those affecting Iraq, Syria and Libya. Fighting the dangers of extremism and terrorism requires unity and determination. Today in Ottawa we have therefore recommitted to cooperate closely with each other in pursuing international efforts aimed at stabilising the Middle East and the broader Northern Africa region.

While ISIL is an enemy we need to confront head-on, we will only be fully successful when the situations that have allowed such movements to flourish are properly addressed. In addition, we need to work together in order to stem the risks of foreign fighters originating in our own countries, and to act globally to prevent radicalisation. We are engaged in a long-term battle. We cannot relax our guard. We know only too well that the security of our citizens, and of all countries, is at stake. Even more, it is a battle between civilisation and barbarism.

We talked about the violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and national sovereignty. The use of force cannot become the means of settling international disputes. Canada has joined the European Union, and other G7 countries in imposing sanctions in order to convince and pressure Russia to cooperate on a political solution. We must ensure that the peace process initiated in Minsk will advance positively. At the same time, we strongly encourage Ukrainian authorities to move forward in the reform process. Here as well, Canada and the European Union see eye to eye. We have agreed to remain in close contact and coordinate future actions.

Many other issues bring Canada and the European Union together, including common responsibilities in the Arctic region, where we look forward to enhanced cooperation through the Arctic Council. There is no doubt that the new Strategic Partnership Agreement will help facilitate our cooperation overall and the coordination of our positions. While we therefore have reasons to celebrate, today is more a new point of departure. The effort and energy we have put into concluding these agreements, must now be transferred to working together in contributing to build a safer and better world.
