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THE PRESIDENT



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Joint statement on EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement by President Herman Van Rompuy and President José Manuel Barroso

President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso issued the following statement following their meeting with Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper today in the margins of the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague:

"Today we concluded politically, together with Prime Minister Harper, the negotiations for a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). With the agreement the EU and Canada have taken a crucial step forward in strengthening our strategic relations. Both sides are now committed to finalising the remaining technical and legal work expeditiously, so that it can be formally concluded as soon as possible."

Background:

The SPA enshrines the EU and Canada's joint values and will strengthen political dialogue and set the framework for cooperation in a broad range of areas. Beyond improving the institutional structure of the relationship, it will contribute considerably to the deepening of ties in all fields of cooperation such as education, transport, energy, the Arctic, as well as science and technology. Most importantly it enriches the political dimension of the EU-Canada relationship through enhanced foreign policy cooperation and by a heightened focus on issues such as crisis management and security.

Relations between Canada and the EU have seen a significant strengthening in recent years Today's breakthrough on SPA, together with the ongoing work towards the finalisation of CETA, mark the start of a new, stronger chapter in the long standing partnership between the EU and Canada.

P R E S S

Dirk De Backer - Spokesperson of the President - ☎ +32 (0)2 281 9768 - +32 (0)497 59 99 19
Preben Aamann - Deputy Spokesperson of the President - ☎ +32 (0)2 281 2060 - +32 (0)476 85 05 43
Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen - EU Commission spokeswoman - tel.: +32 (0) 498 953 070
press.president@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>