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PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AFTER RECEIVING DOCTORAT
HONORIS CAUSA

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UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Prime Minister, if you would.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Thank you, Lea. I'm going to stay and answer a few questions, but I thought I would begin with a few words of heartfelt thanks.

Je voudrai remercier l'Université de Tel Aviv pour ce diplôme honorifique, et en le faisant, en reconnaissant aussi que c'est seulement un de plusieurs grands honneurs qui m'ont été offerts depuis mon arrivée ici, et je suis bien reconnaissant.

I want to thank everybody for this great distinction that you've conferred upon me. There's many things I could say. Mr. Mayor, let me just begin by saying this: that my mother is not Jewish (LAUGHTER), but I can tell you two things when I tell her that I am now a doctor. One, she will be very happy, and two, she will still expect more. (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE) I do want to just say this: I was offered this several years ago. This was actually the first honorary degree that any university anywhere had offered me after I became Prime Minister, and I was very pleased to accept it, and had hoped to accept it shortly thereafter. It obviously has been several years since I indicated my willingness, and am just tremendously pleased not only that it was offered, but that you waited so long in the confirmation of this. I'm glad I did not do anything in the meantime to jeopardize this award. It is... (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE)

It is wonderful to receive it here in the Jewish state of Israel, a perfect way to conclude what has been a wonderful visit for Laureen, for myself, and I know for our entire Canadian delegation. We have just enjoyed the warmest of hospitality everywhere we have gone. And let me maybe just say this: while I am extremely flattered by the degree and by the

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reasons for which it was awarded, let me just say this, that I want to accept it on behalf, not just Laureen and myself, but the entire Jewish Canadian community, who have in our country and really for both of our countries merited this award a million times over, and... (APPLAUSE) So thank you once again to the university. I'm delighted to be part of your community and look forward to returning sometime in the future. Thanks. (APPLAUSE)

(418 words)

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