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**PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND MEDIA
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(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Thank you very much, everyone. Thank you very much. Thank you, Stock, for that kind introduction, and for all that you are doing as part of our team, not just to advance the country's interests, but also to advance British Columbia's interests in Ottawa. You're the regional minister. Please, everybody give Stockwell Day a hand for the great work he has been doing. (APPLAUSE) And I have to tell you, Stock, you made some reference to it being a bit cold here today. I don't know, you weren't with me. There may be some who'll remember that I gave a press conference on a boat on the dock at Tuktoyaktuk. This is not cold. (LAUGHTER) I was so cold at that press conference, by the end I was having trouble forming the words to answer the questions. But in any case, this is a great day. I also want to bring my greetings to Minister Falcon. Thank you for your kind words. To Premier Campbell, to your Worship, and also to my colleagues from the federal Parliament who are here, Minister Gary Lunn, MPs Donna Cadman, Nina Grewall, Andrew Saxton, Mark Warawa and Senator St. Germaine.

Ladies and gentlemen, mesdames et messieurs, j'ai le plaisir aujourd'hui de me joindre au Premier ministre Campbell pour lancer officiellement le projet du périphérique de la rive sud du Fraser, une partie intégrale de l'initiative de la porte de l'Asie-Pacifique pour notre gouvernement.

Today we are here to announce the launch of the South Perimeter Road Project. As Premier Campbell and others will tell you, this is a very large project. Once constructed, it will help move countless thousands

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of commuters and tons of goods. And as it is being constructed, it will create a large number of well-paying jobs at a time when those jobs are most needed.

Mais cette annonce n'est pas au sujet d'un projet d'une route. C'est au sujet de vers où nous nous dirigeons en tant que pays. Pendant que le monde entier lutte contre les effets de la récession globale, nous, les Canadiens, regardons vers l'avant afin d'assurer que nous faisons partie des grandes possibilités économiques de notre siècle.

But this announcement is not about a road project. It is about where we are headed as a country. Our government has launched the Building Canada Fund, the largest series of infrastructure investments in this country in over half a century. As the world struggles with the effects of the global recession, we as Canadians are looking ahead. We are looking ahead in order to ensure that we are part of the great economic opportunities of the century before us, and whatever may happen in the next couple of years, there is no doubt that many of those opportunities will be located across the Pacific in the burgeoning economies of Asia. We want to, we will ensure that that future belongs to Canada. And we will be part of that future because of British Columbia. Because British Columbia is our gateway to the great opportunities of the Asia-Pacific region, to China, India, Korea, Indonesia, Japan and all of the rest. That's why, as I told the thousands assembled at the Legislature this past summer to celebrate this province's 150th anniversary, that's why British Columbia is more important to Canada today than at any point in our history. And I'd also like to thank the government of British Columbia and Premier Gordon Campbell, not just for being a partner in this project, but more importantly, for being a partner in this vision of our country, by looking forward, by making decisions, and by seizing the opportunities that will make

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Canada an economic leader in the world of the future. So without further ado, I will give you the Premier to give you the details of the project.
(APPLAUSE)

GORDON CAMPBELL (Premier of British Columbia):
(SPEECH)

(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Over here, Gordon.

GORDON CAMPBELL: I hope that was detailed.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Great, that was great.
Do you want a glass of water?

GORDON CAMPBELL: I would like some.

DIMITRI SOUDAS (Prime Minister's Press Secretary):
So we'll start our Q and A with Rob Brown, CTV. If you can just maybe get close to the boom mic, that'd be great, thank you.

REPORTER: Thanks. Prime Minister, President-Elect Obama is set to close down the military tribunals at Gitmo. As you know, Omar Khadr is set to come before one of those tribunals later on this month. You've always said you would respect the American process as it moved forward. Given where it's going, what are your plans for Mr. Khadr, and will that include bringing him back to Canada to face charges here?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Well, as you know, I've addressed this question before. The promise that President-Elect Obama made was that he would close down the facilities at Guantanamo. That's primarily, as I understand it, because of the objection to the fact that many of the people at that facility are not charged with anything. You know, I don't think you can necessarily leap to the conclusion that that will affect people who have in fact

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been charged and are facing a legal process. We don't know the answer to that question. Obviously we'll be working with the incoming administration to figure out what their policies will be in those particular cases.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: We'll continue with Ted Shernekie, Global Television.

REPORTER: (Inaudible) offering other \$75 million more for the Olympic Games. I'm just wondering, we asked you then whether or not there would be any more contributions from the federal government to the Olympic Games in Vancouver and you said not a dollar more, or something to that effect. But since then, of course, the economy's melted down, and we're having big troubles here with our Olympic Village, which could cost taxpayers of Vancouver only a significant amount of money. So will the federal government, if asked, contribute more money to the Olympic Games?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: If I could just correct the preamble, I think I was here quite some time ago. It was not long after we were elected that we put some additional money into the Olympic Games. We said at that time that that was the final federal contribution for the games themselves, that we would not fund cost overruns. We still have to settle the issue of security costs, which is a separate issue, and ourselves and the province are very near an agreement on that. But on the games themselves, we will not be providing additional funding, and we will not fund cost overruns.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: On va continuer avec Anne Levasseur, Radio-Canada.

JOURNALISTE: Monsieur Harper, il semble que plusieurs sources et plusieurs conseillers juridiques ont émis des préoccupations quant à l'âge d'Omar Khadr et la façon dont il a été traité.

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Roméo Dallaire est présentement à Washington pour essayer de plaider pour sa cause et pour son rapatriement. Pourquoi de votre côté n'avoir rien fait pour la façon dont il a été traité en fonction de son âge?

TR. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Le gouvernement du Canada a pris une position sur cette question, prend une position sur cette question depuis longtemps. Ce n'est pas seulement une position de notre gouvernement, mais du gouvernement libéral précédent, et c'est notre position devant les tribunaux. Évidemment on va regarder les décisions de la prochaine administration des États-Unis, mais comme je viens de dire en anglais, la position du nouveau président est une position concernant des gens qui ne sont pas...qui sont à Guantanamo Bay sans des accusations. Nous avons une situation tout à fait différente avec Monsieur Khadr. Il est accusé des choses très sérieuses, et il y a un processus légal. Évidemment nous travaillerons avec la nouvelle administration pour voir si sa position a changé.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: Continue with Terry Milewski, CBC.

REPORTER: Prime Minister, point of clarification on your earlier answer respecting Olympic financing, does the financing of the Olympic Village fit your definition of "the games themselves"? You said no more money for the games themselves. Well, do you include the Olympic Village.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Thank you for giving me the opportunity, Terry, to clarify that, and I will be crystal clear. We will not be funding cost overruns of the Olympic Village.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: Continue with Kevin Lee, Fairchild.

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REPORTER: The President-Elect Obama does not seem to favour in the North American Free Trade. So if the US tighten its trade policies, does the government have any plans to face the problems?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: In terms of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, President Obama, as his campaign developed, and we followed his statements very closely, I think it could be categorized that while President Obama has expressed some concerns about some aspects of the working of NAFTA, I don't think his administration will question NAFTA in any fundamental way. I look forward to working with President Obama's administration on trade matters. I think we're going to find enormous common ground, not just in terms of promoting North American trade, but on the importance of keeping world markets open at this time. I've said many times before in many different countries, we all know we face a challenging world economy. One of the great dangers in a global recession is that people start erecting trade walls or tariff walls. That is one of the things that turned the stock market crash of 1929 into a depression. I think government leaders around the world understand that erecting protectionist barriers today would have enormous risk to the world economy, certainly enormous risk to the Canadian and North American economy. I believe that will be as well the position of the Obama administration based on all the discussions, everything we've seen and everything we've heard from them, and of course, I look forward to discussing these things with the President-Elect when he takes his first foreign trip to Canada in the not-too-distant future.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: And we have time for one last question, Laurie Colbert, Vancouver Sun.

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REPORTER: Prime Minister, the announcement that we're here today for is a P3 project, which seems to be the direction that our provincial government is going in as far as infrastructure spending in the province and infrastructure projects. Do you have any concern about the financial stability of these projects, given some of the economic challenges that are happening right now in the world markets and some of the banks and financial institutions that are backing these projects?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: No, I do not on this project. Obviously we monitor all these things carefully, but I would say it's actually the contrary. I would say that projects like this, with the involvement of both levels of government and the private sector, are exactly the kind of thing our economy needs and our private sector and our financial institutions need to bolster confidence. I think this is a great project at any time, but it's a particularly great project at this time for the very reasons you've outlined.

DIMITRI SOUDAS: Thank you very much everybody, merci beaucoup.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Thank you, and I think the Premier may stay and answer a few questions on his own. Great, thanks Gordon. (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE) Do you want to...?

GORDON CAMPBELL: I'll show you out here. I'm not...I'll come back.

MODERATOR: If the media could just be patient for a moment, the Premier will be right back to answer a few questions.

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