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**PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT CANADA WINTER GAMES**

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(MUSIC)

TR. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Premier ministre du Canada): Merci M. le Président. Honoured guests, volunteers and organizers, athletes, ladies and gentlemen, mesdames et messieurs, well, it may be well below zero outside, but it's always a warm welcome in Whitehorse. (APPLAUSE) And I've got to say this: from east to west, from north to south, isn't it great to be Canadian together? (APPLAUSE) Canadians, over the next two weeks, this city is going to host one of Canada's premier athletic sporting events.

Les Jeux d'hiver du Canada sont les célébrations de nos idéaux sportifs nationaux.

The Canada Winter Games are a celebration of our national athletic ideals, dedication to high level competition, a spirit of fair play, and the pursuit of excellence. The Canada Games have embodied these ideals for over 40 years.

Des milliers de jeunes athlètes canadiens qui incarnent ces idéaux importants ont pris part aux jeux depuis leur première édition en 1967 à Québec dans le cadre des fêtes du centenaire canadien. (APPLAUDISSEMENTS) Certains d'entre ces milliers ont même représenté le pays à des compétitions nationales, notamment les jeux olympiques

Thousands of young Canadian athletes before you who embody these high ideals have participated in the games since they were first held in 1967 in Quebec City as part of Canada's centennial celebrations. Included among those thousand of Canadians who went on to represent

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Canada in international competitions, including the Olympic Games, are heroes like Catriona Lemay-Doane, Brian Orser, Rob Boyde.

Sans oublier les légendes, Gaétan Boucher, Sylvie Daigle.

Your games will carry on this great tradition. A new generation of world-class athletes will emerge from the competition here in Whitehorse.

Nous sommes tous et toutes impatients de vous voir repousser les limites d'excellence athlétique et par le fait même de démontrer les sommets que les athlètes canadiens peuvent atteindre.

We're all looking forward to watching you push the limits of athletic excellence, and in doing so, demonstrate the greatness of which Canadian athletes are capable. Now I have to say, standing on this stage looking at all the organizers and volunteers, feeling the energy in the air, seeing the faces...(APPLAUSE) Seeing the faces, seeing the faces of you young athletes, I know these are going to be the best Canada games yet. (APPLAUSE)

C'est donc, M. le Président, avec grand plaisir que je déclare les Jeux d'hiver du Canada 2007 officiellement ouverts.

It gives me great pleasure to declare the 2007 Canada Winter Games officially open. Thank you. (MUSIC, APPLAUSE)

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