

BRIEFING ROOM

Remarks by President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada in Joint Press Statements

FEBRUARY 23, 2021 • SPEECHES AND REMARKS

East Room

6:22 P.M. EST

PRESIDENT BIDEN: Good evening, everyone. Justin, we had good meetings.

Prime Minister Trudeau and I just concluded a very productive bilateral meeting, the first of what I'm sure will be many close and cooperative

sessions.

One of our last foreign trips I made was — as Vice President was to visit the Prime Minister in Ottawa. And today, we were able to drive right into the many vital issues of importance for both our nations.

For both our nations, getting COVID-19 under control at home and around the world is the immediate priority. And we committed to work together to help prevent future biological threats by strengthening the World Health Organization, supporting our bold targets under the Global Health Security Agenda, cooperating on the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons [and Materials] of Mass Destruction, and engaging in — other multilateral institutions to promote transparency, build capacity, and strengthening global norms.

We also agreed to work in close cooperation to strengthen the supply chain security and resilience, and to ensure that Canada and the United States are driving a robust economic recovery that

benefits everyone, not just those at the top.

That's especially important because we know that this pandemic is not affecting everyone the same way.

Women are dropping out of work — the workforce at alarming rates. Black, Latino, and Native are also — and other minority communities are particularly hard hit.

And we also agreed to work together on a inclusive recovery, using the tools available to us through the Small and Medium Enterprise chapter of our trade agreement to support women- and minority-owned businesses.

And we also doubled down on our efforts to tackle climate change. It was really, really encouraging. Now that the United States is back in the Paris Agreement, we intend to demonstrate our leadership in order to spur other countries to raise their own ambitions.

Canada and the United States are going to work in lockstep to display the seriousness of our commitment at both home and abroad.

To that end, we're launching a high-level Climate Ambition Min- — Ambition Ministerial and to align our policies and our goals, and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Prime Minister Trudeau and I share an unwavering faith in the capacity of our peoples to meet the challenges of this new age if we lead with our core strengths: our democratic values, our diverse and dynamic peoples.

We both recognize our responsibility, as leading democracies, to defend our shared values around the world and to strengthen our own democracies at home. That means rooting out systemic racism and unconscious bias from our institutions and our laws, as well as our hearts.

Today, we agreed to re-establish the Cross-Border Crime Forum and work together to modernize our approach to community safety, and to do all — the most — the most we can — do more to take on racism and discrimination in both our systems.

Canada and the United States are not only vital partners, we're NATO Allies

committed to shared defense. The Prime Minister and I discussed our work with our European allies to bolster transatlantic security, which includes meeting our Wales commitments.

We also agreed to modernize the North American Aerospace Defense Command – NORAD – which is still the only bi-national military command of its kind. And we will launch an expanded U.S.-Canadian Arctic dialogue to cover issues related to continental security, economic and social development, and Arctic governance.

And finally, coming on the heels of the G7 meeting last Friday, it was an opportunity for Tr- – Prime Minister Trudeau and I to explore our bilateral partnership to reinforce and help drive issues of concern in our hemisphere and globally. That includes coordinating our approaches to better compete with China and to counter threats to our interest and values.

Let me reiterate our support for the release of the detained Chinese – the detained in China, two Canadians: Michael Spavor and Michael Koving

[sic] – Kovrig, excuse me. Human beings are not bartering chips. You know, we're going to work together until we get their safe return.

Canada and the United States will stand together against the abuse of universal rights and democratic freedoms. We're going to strengthen our shared commitment to providing safe haven for refugees and asylum seekers, and so much more.

The United States has no closer and no more important friend than Canada. Our nations share a close geography and history that will forever bind us together, but our values are even more consequential.

It's — but it's the shared spirit of our people that's going to ensure ours is the future of hope and opportunity.

Canadians and Americans are innovative, creative, entrepreneurial, competitive, open-hearted, and rights-respecting. There's nothing we cannot achieve when we commit ourselves to it. And when we work together, as the closest of friends should, we only make each other stronger.

So thank you again, Mr. Prime Minister, for your friendship and for your leadership. And I look forward to when we're able to meet in person and — and all that Canada and the United States are going to accomplish together.

So, God bless you, and thanks for today.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: Thank you so much, Joe. Thank you. Let me begin by saying that all of us are thinking of our friends in Texas right now. I know SaskPower has been sending electricity down. And as I told the President, Canada is here to help however we can.

Mr. President, it's been great to sit down with you this afternoon. This is, of course, not the first time we've worked together.

Back in 2016, I had the pleasure of hosting you here in Ottawa as Vice President. Over dinner, I remember talking about how the extraordinary friendship between Canada and the United States has not just weathered changing seasons; it has grown ever deeper and stronger.

Well, today, we're taking our next step forward. The President and I discussed the ambitious new partnership roadmap, based on shared values and priorities, that will guide our countries work together over the coming years.

In the face of COVID-19, of climate change, of rising inequality, this is our moment to act.

So we're not wasting any time in getting down to work. Job one remains keeping people safe and ending this pandemic.

This afternoon, the President and I discussed collaboration to beat COVID-19 – from keeping key supplies moving and supporting science and research, to joint efforts through international institutions. We're standing united in this fight.

I know the President and I are on the same page when it comes to standing up for the middle class and people working hard to join it.

And with millions of families relying on the Canada-U.S partnership, this is work we must do together. Just take

the energy industry. Canadian energy workers power homes on both sides of the border. It goes to show that we're all better off for this partnership.

Today, the President and I discussed leveraging supply chains and support for businesses to create good — good wal- — well-paying jobs and help people who've been hardest hit get back on their feet.

We're facing tough times, there's no doubt, but we're not facing them alone. Canada and the United States are each other's closest allies, most important trading partners, and oldest friends.

And we stand united to beat this pandemic and build a better tomorrow. And I know our bone [sic] — bond will grow even stronger.

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Joe, for your leadership, for your engagement. And thank you in advance for all the great work we're going to be doing together. *Merci beaucoup.*

PRESIDENT BIDEN: Thank you, Justin. *Au revoir.*

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU:

Bonsoir.

6:32 P.M. EST