

“We rise together or we fall together”

In a major address to the Economic Club of Canada, Alberta’s new premier, Alison Redford, staked a claim to leadership of the sustainable energy debate as well as to Alberta’s role as a leader in the Canadian federation. “I speak for all Albertans when I say that we are proud to join with Ontario in making this country strong,” she declared. “We rise together or we fall together. There is no other way.”

Dans cet important discours prononcé devant l’Economic Club of Canada, la nouvelle première ministre de l’Alberta Alison Redford marque son rôle de leader dans le débat sur l’énergie durable tout comme elle réclame cette place pour sa province au sein de la fédération canadienne. « Je parle au nom de tous les Albertains en disant que nous sommes fiers de nous joindre à l’Ontario pour faire de ce pays une nation forte, déclare-t-elle. Nous n’avons d’autre choix que de réussir ou d’échouer ensemble. »

I am especially grateful to have the chance to address Ontarians at this critical juncture in global affairs. Parts of Europe are teetering on the brink of collapse. And our biggest trading partner, the United States, is beset by rising debt, sharp political divisions and lasting unemployment.

However, even as the developed world falters, the developing world is becoming increasingly hungry for our energy. I think the indecision around the Keystone XL pipeline demonstrates the necessity of looking to new markets, and I will touch on this later.

But no matter where our search takes us, we can deliver. In Alberta’s case, this is thanks to Ontario. You invested in the oil sands at a time when other businesses were pulling out. Ontario’s help has been crucial to our success. I speak for all Albertans when I say I am grateful for Ontario’s support.

But when I speak of delivering energy, I am not just talking about Alberta. Every province and territory must contribute to making this country a global energy leader.

It is no secret the United States is our largest trading partner. Its influence on Canada has been felt for generations. Its influence today, as a country struggling to escape a recession, as an economy striving to meet the demands of its citizens, continues

to press upon Canada and all Canadians.

The United States is Canada’s partner. And now, our partner is asking us to change. They need our energy. They are asking us to be the leader in energy production that is safe, secure and free from strife. We can meet that challenge.

Canada is rare in being energy-rich, innovative and having a skilled workforce capable of expanding production in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable way. Our energy is therefore not only a profitable resource, but a strategic one.

Canada is well positioned to weather economic uncertainty and can play a global leadership role in meeting the world’s energy demands in a just and environmentally sustainable manner, if we take up that challenge. To do so, we must be determined to become a preferred international supplier of both energy and innovation.

We have multiple sources of energy that will allow us to reach this status. Together, the provinces need to start a dialogue about the outcomes we want, without taking any energy source off the table.

We must recognize the diversity of energy production across Canada. We are a mosaic of peoples, regions and interests and we have always celebrat-

ed this diversity. It should be no different with energy. We are blessed with many sources of energy, which is a strength rather than a liability.

Alberta is known for the oil sands, but we also have massive amounts of wind power. British Columbia is known as a hydro province, but it is developing natural gas resources rapidly. Ontario has a focus on renewables, but nuclear power will continue to play an important role. Newfoundland has offshore oil production and is expanding its hydro capacity. And Saskatchewan is developing its own energy projects, ranging from heavy oil to natural gas.

No single source is better than any other or can stand on its own. Innovation is the key to developing our capacity to produce them all at competitive rates.

The oil sands are one example of a technology-driven resource that became commercially accessible with the efforts of Canada’s best and brightest engineers and scientists.

Canadian engineers and scientists have played leadership roles in the development of nuclear power, hydro, and alternatives and renewables. We must begin a dialogue based on these realities, to develop shared outcomes that our energy system can serve. Collectively, we should use energy to

foster our economic growth and competitiveness, seeking out new markets.

But we must expand in a sustainable manner. The desire to attract new customers can never trump our responsibility to keep this country beautiful for Canadians.

We must call on our best and brightest to lead innovation so we can produce more energy, more efficiently.

We must expand in a sustainable manner. The desire to attract new customers can never trump our responsibility to keep this country beautiful for Canadians.

Energy firms are only as good as the communities in which they are based, and they can't forget this basic fact.

Energy leadership will thus require true partnership across governments if we are to fulfill all these conditions. True partnership requires openness and a readiness to act together to further Canada's aims. We need to put old antagonisms behind us. The complexity of the challenges we face will demand no less. No one province can achieve success alone.

We all face similar challenges — notwithstanding the different forms of energy we are developing. The challenges include international market uncertainty, fiscal issues, social license, environmental protection and regulatory concerns. We must resolve them together.

The relationship between Alberta and Ontario is a good example of integrated energy development. The oil sands, as one of the few energy-rich areas outside the unstable Middle East, is poised for growth, and will be essential in fuelling the world.

Alberta currently produces 1.6 million barrels per day and creates jobs, not just for Albertans. Workers and families all across this great country are benefitting.

In fact, over 23 percent of oil sands-related jobs are outside the province. Over the next 25 years, the oil sands will fuel 450,000 positions country-wide.

Ontario plays a key role in that success. You provide the skills, expertise and materials we need to run the

oil sands and are recouping a fair portion of the resulting benefits.

Ontario firms are thriving as a result. These business partnerships will continue. Over the next 25 years, Alberta-based energy companies will buy \$55 billion worth of goods and services from Ontario.

Canadians are not subsidizing the oil sands, they are sharing in the prof-

its. The same goes for Ontario's energy initiatives.

Ontario is working hard to put its energy production on a sustainable footing. You are building a smart grid and shifting to renewables like wind, solar and bioenergy with incredible ambitiousness.

You are diversifying Canadian energy expertise, and Alberta will benefit economically in the same way you do from the oil sands. Our respective sources of energy complement each other.

I speak for all Albertans when I say that we are proud to join with Ontario in making this country strong. We rise together or we fall together. There is no other way.

The same commitment and leadership must be focused on the environment.

The federal and provincial governments must demonstrate their willingness to pursue flexible solutions. It is not enough to produce energy; we must work together to use it efficiently.

Canadians count on their governments to keep the environment clean in return for the social license to develop their resources. We must uphold our end of the bargain.

Close collaboration will ensure that federal regulations do not stifle innovation at the provincial level, or limit each province's potential to find unique ways of lowering emissions.

This is crucial because environmental sustainability is our most important shared outcome. In expand-

ing our energy sectors, we must avoid compromising the health, safety and competitiveness of our agricultural, fishery and forestry industries.

Greening our energy on a global scale is also critical. More than ever, consumers are demanding environmentally responsible products. In refashioning Canada as an energy leader, we must fill their requirements.

Alberta has demonstrated real environmental leadership and we are adding to it every year.

We already have more than 800 MW of wind generation capacity, with much more in the queue for consideration. By 2020, our installed capacity is expected to reach 2500 MW.

We are working flat-out to reduce the oil sands' impact. Over the last 20 years, greenhouse gas emissions per barrel from oil sands operations declined by almost one-third. Oil sands projects recycle up to 90 percent of the water they use.

We are working hard to limit water usage in other areas too. Under stringent new regulations, oil companies must halt the growth of fluid tailings by 2016 and process them at the rate they are produced after that year. Last year, Suncor Pond One became the first tailings pond in Alberta to be successfully retired and reclaimed.

And Canadian Natural Resources is working on new technology which involves injecting CO₂ into tailings slurry. The added CO₂ causes the components in the tailings to settle much faster, allowing water to be recycled quicker.

Emerging trends like natural gas-fuelled cogeneration will permit us to derive electricity from the gas and steam currently used as part of deep reserve extraction.

We have begun reclamation of the boreal forest. In fact, under our Responsible Actions Plan for the oil sands, energy firms must meet all project reclamation requirements in a timely manner as a condition of further development.

We have also set aside over 2 million hectares in the oil sands, many of them boreal forest, for conservation. This land will be closely monitored to protect and maintain its ecological integrity.

This commitment to innovation and sustainability means Canada can become a world leader in supply as well as in environmental, technical and regulatory expertise.

Alberta and British Columbia both put a price on carbon and in Alberta, large emitters must meet mandatory reduction targets. Those who fail must pay \$15 per tonne into a clean energy technology fund.

Between 2010 and 2014, more than \$6 billion will be invested in climate-friendly technology in Alberta, more than all the other provinces combined. We are pushing ahead aggressively.

The environmental management systems we develop in Canada in areas of intense development like our oil sands should be viewed as a world standard. We use a cumulative approach that considers all aspects of development on the environment and brings together disparate public bodies to mitigate them. We should demand that our competitors are held to the same level of transparency and accountability.

These are only some of the innovative practices we are implementing to address our unique issues. Here in Ontario and across the country, the provinces and territories are putting many other leading practices into place to address their unique energy and environmental challenges.

Canada has much to be proud of, and together we can show the world how these issues can be addressed.

Becoming a global energy hub requires us to pursue an ambitious agenda. To be successful, we must learn the lessons of past projects. We will not be able to overcome the inevitable challenges without building momentum among Canadians.

We are proud of the oil sands and we have nothing to hide. But we need to go beyond transparency.

We will have to work closely with communities and First Nations affected by development to ensure they are consulted properly and accommodated where necessary to address the impacts of resource development. Governments must engage with affected communities and respond to their concerns.

We can't shy away from criticism and disagreement either. We must arrive at a consensus that includes all stakeholders. Too often we speak past each other and refuse to engage with those who see things differently. This has to end if we are to move ahead together. Sometimes different perspectives help us to see problems in a new light, and get us to solutions faster.

I'm thinking of NGOs in particular. We need an opposition viewpoint to truly understand how others perceive the impact our energy sectors will have, so we can proactively address our social license. But there must be meaningful dialogue, and not just an exchange of views.

We have already begun. Through

If we truly want Canada to be a global energy leader, technology champion and good environmental citizen, we have to reduce our market dependence on the United States.

the Clean Air Strategic Alliance, the Alberta government worked with NGOs and industry in creating a consensual framework to lower air emissions from the electricity sector.

We are also working successfully together at the national level to develop a comprehensive air quality management system for the country. The goal is to have a national standard for air quality that results in improved air quality for all Canadians.

This will not be easy, but if people put their differences aside and work towards a common goal and vision, results can be achieved. A truly national vision for energy that we can take to the rest of the world requires us to set our sights high.

We can achieve this. Canada can be a global energy leader, drawing sustainably on multiple resources in a way that benefits the world. We can be models for those dealing with similar issues abroad.

The world is in the midst of a great transformation in energy systems, one that will take a very long time. At every stage in this process, we can contribute with a variety of energy sources, with the innovation and technology to supply them sustainably and with best practices for how to use them efficiently.

We must ensure that our energy policy is integrated with our climate change strategy and our regional management policies.

And we need to invest in the necessary infrastructure to produce and transport our energy. In becoming a global energy leader, our aspirations will ultimately be realized in steel.

We will need new pipelines, refineries, electricity grid and technology to support our conservation efforts. We can't just aspire to them. We need to design and implement policies that will realize our objectives. Governments must collaborate to deliver policies to get infrastructure built at the right place at the right time.

The US State Department has decided that this is not the right time to proceed with the Keystone XL pipeline. It is disappointing to hear that, after more than three years of exhaustive analysis and consultation on this critical project, a decision will be delayed until 2013.

I understand that approval is a domestic matter, but the fact remains that Keystone XL is a key piece of infrastructure.

We remain steadfastly committed to this project. Alberta is an export-based economy and it is imperative that we find accessible ways of moving our product to market.

However, this is not just about Alberta. The same goes for all the provinces.



CP Photo

Alberta Premier Alison Redford at the Economic Club of Canada. She outlined her “vision for a national energy strategy.”

If we truly want Canada to be a global energy leader, technology champion and good environmental citizen, we have to reduce our market dependence on the United States.

Our success depends on exports and the prosperity they bring, but US demand is declining. We must have more customers for our products.

Asia’s star is rising, and it will dominate the 21st century. We can guarantee them national prosperity for a long time to come by supplying them with the energy they need.

Forging stronger links with Asia will be a key part of any Canadian energy strategy, but these links must extend beyond oil and gas to include technology for all forms of energy and its sustainable and efficient usage.

Asian nations are moving aggressively in all these areas because they

have no other way to meet demand. We would be smart to ally with them and learn from their experiences, even as we market our energy and technology.

In support of our vision for a national energy strategy, Alberta makes the following commitments:

We will listen and act together with our partners.

We will be truthful about how we are performing against our desired outcomes and make change when we fall short, balancing the oil sands’ needs against the intensive monitoring and compliance needed to protect the environment.

We will speak to those who need to know more before they make decisions. Whether they are in Kitimat or Kuala Lumpur, policy-makers and investors are shaping Canada’s energy future. We want to be at the shoulder of Canadian leaders as they tell our story and share our vision.

We will lead in an honest and transparent manner. We will come to the table with open hands, to offer our knowledge freely and willingly.

We will be confident in Canada, and the leadership we exert from Alberta.

The world is knocking on our door. It is time to stand up and show others how Canada can lead globally on all fronts, including energy supply, innovation and efficiency, as well as clean energy and addressing climate change. In partnership with Ontario and the other provinces, we can transcend our divisions and put aside our quarrels. Our shared prosperity — Canada’s future — is worth so much more.

Excerpted from a speech to the Economic Club of Canada, Toronto, on November 16, 2011.