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Joint statement to Leaders from Canada's Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry and the United States' Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

From: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Statement

November 18, 2021 – Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden:

Science, technology, and innovation (ST&I) are fundamental to economic growth and competitiveness in global markets, as well as the future prosperity and security of Canada and the United States of America (U.S.). That is why we met most recently on November 3, 2021, to discuss Canada-U.S. shared priorities in ensuring the strengths of our ST&I ecosystems. We also discussed deepening cooperation in emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), as well as next-generation semiconductor technologies, for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Strengthening ST&I Cooperation

Canada and the United States are global leaders in scientific research. Canada-U.S. ST&I relations are strong and diversified, with extensive collaborations between academic researchers, governments and industry.

As our countries emerge from the pandemic and focus on increased resilience, security and economic growth, we see many mutually beneficial opportunities to explore, including: life sciences and biomedical research; clean and sustainable technologies and renewable energy; next-generation automotive technologies; space; Arctic research; cybersecurity and protecting national security; advanced semiconductors; and key emerging technologies, such as AI, quantum, and genomics.

It is a testament to the strength of our ST&I relationship that collaboration opportunities continue to be identified in a wide variety of areas, with hundreds of institutional ST&I arrangements and memoranda of understanding already in effect. We note the important ongoing work underway, including through the recent signing of the *Memorandum of Understanding between the National Science Foundation of the United States of America and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada concerning Research Cooperation* (the NSERC-NSF MOU), signed on June 15, 2021. This is the first formal partnership between the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), which supports fundamental discovery research in the United States and Canada. The partnership paves the way for new opportunities between members of the research community in both countries to build diverse and inclusive collaborations at the frontiers of science and emerging technologies. We look forward to seeing the positive results this is expected to bring to key areas of science and technology.

We are working to define a bilateral ST&I agreement that is intended to amplify our ST&I cooperation and help us work together to address the most pressing science-based priorities faced by our two countries. Officials are engaged in discussions to drive this work forward, with a view to concluding an agreement at the earliest possible opportunity.

Improving Participation and Equity for Improved Outcomes

We seek to create inclusive scientific research communities that engage and benefit underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized peoples to encourage their full participation in joint science activities. We are looking to tackle cross-cutting issues of common interest such as equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, and intend to build a foundation for change so that every person is able to fully participate and have an equal opportunity to succeed. Diverse perspectives and knowledge systems, including those of Indigenous Peoples, are important to foster innovative solutions and discoveries to combat the world's most pressing challenges.

Supporting a Science and Technology Roadmap to 2050

We recognize the importance and urgency of achieving our global climate goals. There is a need for rapid deployment of existing technologies and vigorous innovation to invent, develop, and demonstrate new technologies to combat the climate crisis. At COP26, both Canada and the United States committed to increased ambition that is expected to help further accelerate climate action to put us on a trajectory to achieve net-zero emissions as soon as possible and no later than 2050. Our governments are keen to move forward on achieving ambitious climate action, and we look forward to working together, with key likeminded partners, to achieve these goals.

Ending the COVID-19 Pandemic and Preparing for the Future

We intend to work together to get and stay ahead of the COVID-19 virus by continuing our investment in cutting-edge research and innovation so that global vaccines remain effective against variants while boosting our pandemic surveillance, expanding genomic sequencing, and enhancing rapid information sharing. To prevent future outbreaks from becoming pandemics, we intend to accelerate the development of transformative capabilities that build on G7 and G20 work in support of the 100 Days Mission. This Mission calls, among other things, for investing in innovation

now with the aim of making safe and effective vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics available within 100 days of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern being declared.

Enhancing Collaboration on Emerging and Critical Technologies

We intend to continue to support our respective scientific communities to help find solutions to some of society's greatest challenges, including through innovative and technological solutions. We intend to instruct our officials to meet and discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by emerging technologies, so that we are better equipped to capitalize on them and secure our future prosperity and security. We also aim to enhance our collaboration and engagement with allies so that emerging technologies are developed and used in ways that serve our citizens and respect shared democratic values and human rights.

Deepening Trusted Research Collaborations

We strongly support the principles of open science, including in international collaborations to maximize the contributions of science to the well-being, health and economy of our countries. We also recognize that researchers and their work are a growing target of foreign theft, interference, and espionage. In this context, our two countries remain committed to being trusted R&D partners and to working closely with partners and allies. Fostering stronger R&D engagement between academia and industry with our trusted allies is of mutual benefit to our economies and societies. We work together to advance our interests through several multilateral fora, such as the G7, the OECD's Global Science Forum, and multi-country dialogues, and intend to advance our shared understandings of open science and research security and integrity, to our mutual benefit.

Call to Action

At the core of our shared objectives are the collaborations between our science and innovation communities. We call on our researchers, and all ST&I actors to seek to:

1. **Expand collaborations on research and development** projects in areas of mutual interest and benefit;
2. **Support efforts to integrate stakeholders** from both countries into key research initiatives and in the global value chain for emerging technologies, and to foster matchmaking at selected events and initiatives;
3. **Share information and ST&I best practices** at the governmental, academic and industry levels; and,
4. **Build linkages** between science and innovation agencies to explore how best to support ST&I and foster partnerships between academia, government institutions, and industry with a view to converting advanced research into critical applications.

Moving Forward

We intend to advance a shared ST&I agenda to drive progress on key initiatives. For example, building on the NSERC-NSF MOU, we aim to launch a collaborative initiative to fund research projects in the areas of artificial intelligence and quantum science. The work funded through this call is expected to push the boundaries of new knowledge and provide a rich training experience for young researchers. We recognize that strong and sustained international collaboration between researchers, institutions, industry, and governments is necessary for our mutual continued success in science and research, and to advance the frontiers of exploration and innovation.

As the significant impacts of the pandemic continue, the importance of leveraging and supporting our entire ST&I community to secure a strong recovery is clear. Together, Canada and the United States can support a sustainable and resilient recovery by embracing and respecting the unique knowledge, perspectives, and needs of our diverse research communities. International science, technology, and innovation will continue to play an essential role in driving solutions to global economic, social, and environmental problems. We also aim to enhance multilateral ST&I collaboration to tackle these important challenges together.

We intend to meet regularly on these and other topics of importance to the bilateral Canada-U.S. ST&I relationship.

Minister of Innovation, Science,
and Industry

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Date modified:

2021-11-18