

- Buenos días, good morning everyone.

- I would like to thank Mr. John Anderson, Ms. Lynn Costa, and the APEC SME Business Ethics for SMEs Forum for inviting me today. And thank you to Peru for hosting one of a series of very successful meetings which Peru is hosting as 2016 APEC Chair.

- It is my privilege to participate in the awarding of the APEC SME Ethics Lighthouse Award to Canada, with specific recognition of the leadership taken by Mr. Russell Williams and Ms. Chrisoula Nikidis from Innovative Medicines Canada to promote corporate social responsibility among small and medium-sized enterprises across the APEC region.

- I strongly believe that when companies operate in an economically, socially and environmentally responsible manner, it helps them succeed and I think that is a belief which is broadly shared in this room.

- As firms from the APEC region take advantage of global opportunities, there is a growing understanding that the incorporation of responsible business practices into investments and operations abroad not only benefits local economies and communities, but makes good business sense.

- Understanding this importance of doing business in an ethical and sustainable manner, the Government of Canada is committed to promoting responsible business practices.

- It expects and encourages Canadian companies and entrepreneurs working internationally to respect all applicable laws and international standards, to operate transparently and in consultation with host governments and local communities, and to conduct their activities in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

- Canada recognizes that action by industry alone may not bring about sustainable positive change in the absence of broader, coordinated efforts. The Government of Canada therefore works with interlocutors at international, bilateral and organizational levels on a range of activities which strengthen the environment affecting business abroad in a way that is conducive to advancing CSR performance and benefits on the ground.

- We work with the Canadian business community, civil society organizations, foreign governments, international organizations and communities, as well as other stakeholders to foster and promote responsible business practices, and thus support sustainable economic growth and shared value.

- I think APEC SMEs are uniquely positioned to be drivers of corporate social responsibility promotion efforts given their flexibility, adaptability, innovativeness and drive.

- All this being said, I would like to thank the United States and the leaders of this special initiative for all their efforts to develop a capacity-building program to strengthen ethical business practices among SMEs over the past six years.

- More particularly today however, I would like to thank Mr. Williams and Ms. Nikidis for not only their contributions toward APEC's efforts in this area, but also for representing Canada so well on the international stage.

- Their sustained leadership on the drafting of the Mexico City Principles for the Biopharmaceutical Sector in 2011 and their work as Co-Chair of the APEC Biopharmaceutical Working Group on Ethics since then, and all their mentoring efforts have been outstanding and truly worthy of recognition.

- Congratulations Mr. Williams and Ms. Nikidis, from Innovative Medicines Canada. This recognition is truly deserved. I wish you the best of luck in your endeavours moving forward and I am excited to see continued progress as we look ahead to the years to come. Thank you for representing Canada and Canadian business principles so well.