



November 6, 2023

House Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Opening remarks for the Study of the Situation at the Russia-Ukraine Border and Implications for Peace and Security

Bonjour et merci aux membres du Comité de m'avoir invité aujourd'hui.

L'Alliance canadienne du commerce agroalimentaire (ACCA ou CAFTA en anglais) est une coalition d'organismes nationaux qui militent en faveur d'un contexte commercial international plus libre et plus juste pour le secteur de l'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire.

Parmi ses membres, l'ACCA compte des agriculteurs, des éleveurs, des fermiers, des transformateurs, des producteurs et des exportateurs provenant des principaux secteurs du commerce tels le bœuf, le porc, les céréales, les oléagineux, le sucre, les légumineuses, et le soja.

CAFTA represents the 90% of Canadian farmers, producers, processors, and agri-food exporters that rely on access to global markets.

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has of course had very negative effects on global agricultural markets, global food security and nutrition. My knowledge of the dynamics of the war and its regional effects come only from reading the media, so I am not qualified to comment on these. However, I would like to underline a few points that the war has brought home from the perspective of Canada's producers.

The first point is that interrupting the free flow of agricultural products leads to worse nutritional outcomes for the world's poor. Trade is not just about farmers and people employed along the food supply chain. Trade also contributes to reducing food insecurity across the globe, including by buffering the impact of shocks such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Trade serves as the bridge to get food from where it is grown to where it is needed. In doing so, trade enables food security while creating economic opportunities for producers, farmers, and SMEs. Trade is also a key factor in the sustainable and efficient use of scarce global resources.

My second point is that the conflict has significantly undermined the global rules-based order, creating greater uncertainty for Canadian producers. This is difficult for middle powers like Canada that have depended on this rules-based order. CAFTA believes that Canada must continue to work to reinforce the multilateral trading system to keep markets open as much as possible, thereby limiting the knock-on effects of shocks such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Le dernier point que je voudrais souligner est que nous ne devrions pas répondre à l'incertitude mondiale en nous retranchant dans une coquille et en limitant nos relations économiques aux pays partageant les mêmes points de vue que les nôtres. La meilleure façon d'atteindre la résilience économique du Canada est d'ouvrir les marchés et non de les fermer. Par exemple, le Alliance agroalimentaire du Canada soutient fortement les efforts du gouvernement du Canada pour percer dans les marchés en croissance de la région Indo-Pacifique, notamment par l'ouverture du Bureau de l'agriculture et agro-alimentaire dans l'Indo-Pacifique à Manille.

Il me ferait plaisir de répondre à vos questions.