



## Speaking Notes

*Toronto, May 24, 2012*

**PAUL G. SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF VIA RAIL CANADA  
DELIVERED AT THE PANORAMA LOUNGE – UNION STATION – CITY OF TORONTO  
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

I am honoured to represent VIA Rail Canada here today, as we officially inaugurate our Panorama Lounge. Its completion marks yet another milestone in VIA's journey to transform services across the country, for the more than four million passengers who ride on our rail network every year.

Over the past five years, VIA has undertaken major improvements to its passenger rail system: to its trains, to its tracks, to its technology—and to its stations.

We are extremely proud of the confidence that the Canadian Government has shown in VIA, by contributing close to a billion dollars since 2007 towards these key capital improvements. Since 1977, when VIA Rail became a Crown Corporation, we have worked closely with the Canadian Government to maintain the rail link that originally brought our country together—from Atlantic to Pacific, and north to Hudson Bay.

Just recently, VIA finished restoration work at Vancouver's Pacific Central Station and has also invested in significant improvements to Winnipeg's historic Union Station. In October, we opened a new station in Smiths Falls. Projects underway in Belleville, Cobourg, Oshawa and Windsor are scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

And now, Union Station: the City of Toronto is contributing \$304 million towards the revitalization, of its station, with up to \$172 million from the Government of Ontario. The Canadian Government is providing as much as \$164 million, up to \$133 million from the Building Canada Fund, \$6 million from the Transit-Secure Fund and, I am pleased to add, \$25 million from VIA Rail ... some of which was dedicated to this new lounge.

VIA President and Chief Executive Officer, Marc Laliberté, and his team, in close collaboration with the City and Parks Canada, have indeed transformed this area, and now I would invite Marc to tell us a bit more about this restoration and the new space we are inaugurating today.

Thank you