



# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

## PORT OF CHURCHILL WELCOMES FIRST-EVER SHIP FROM RUSSIA

**Churchill, Man.** – The Churchill Gateway Development Corporation (CGDC) is pleased to announce that the first-ever ocean shipment from Russia has arrived at the Port of Churchill.

A Murmansk Shipping Company vessel, the *Kapitan Sviridov*, will unload a shipment of fertilizer imported by Farmers of North America, a farm membership-based organization. Upon discharge of the fertilizer, the Russian vessel will be loaded with 20 000 tonnes of wheat destined for Italy – part of the Canadian Wheat Board’s largest wheat shipping program through Churchill since 1977.

“This is an historic event,” said Lloyd Axworthy, chair of the Churchill Gateway Development Corp. “This vessel represents the first shipment under the Arctic Bridge concept linking Russian and Canadian Prairie markets. It is an important step forward.”

Mike Ogborn, managing director of OmniTRAX Canada Inc., which owns the Hudson Bay Port Company and Hudson Bay Rail Line, called 2007 a “banner year” for Churchill.

“We’ve seen record wheat shipments, record northern re-supply shipments, the first domestic-bound grain shipment and now this – the first foreign cargo shipment imported through Churchill in years,” he said. “This season has been excellent demonstration of the possibilities for this northern port.”

Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) President and CEO Greg Arason said the expanded use of the port of Churchill was the result of hard work and a commitment to the port by all of its stakeholders.

“The CWB is pleased to have been involved in this event through reloading the vessel with quality wheat from the Prairies,” he said. “This is a good example of the innovation and cooperation that will ensure this port remains a viable shipping option for western Canadian farmers.”

Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification called the shipment a significant moment for the economy of Churchill. “The increase in use of the Port and the diversification of traffic are vital to this community. The Government of Canada will continue to ensure that through Churchill, Canadians are linked to the global marketplace.”

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Manitoba Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, Ron Lemieux, welcomed the ship's arrival as "a truly important event" for the Arctic Bridge initiative.

"I am pleased the port is moving further into its role as a strategic link in international trade by taking advantage of new markets and successfully diversifying shipments," Lemieux said.

Churchill Mayor Mike Spence said port employees and the town have been working hard to ensure smooth operation in such a busy year. "It is exciting for this community to see the results of some innovative ideas and gratifying that the importance of Churchill has been so widely recognized," he said.

Steve Ashton, Manitoba Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, said: "Linking Asian and North American trade markets through Churchill is an idea whose time has come and will help generate more jobs, of course in Churchill, and hopefully other economic spin-offs for Manitoba's north."

The Churchill Gateway Development Corporation is holding a welcoming ceremony at the Hudson Bay Port Company today at 11 a.m. Officials will be present from the Russian Trade Commission, the Murmansk Shipping Company, Churchill Gateway Development Corporation, Hudson Bay Port Company (OmniTRAX), Farmers of North America, the Canadian Wheat Board, the Province of Manitoba and Western Economic Diversification.

As the only deep-water ocean port in the Prairie region, Churchill is open from July to November, with four berths for the loading and unloading of grain, general cargo and tanker vessels.

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