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Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

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THE SENATE

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Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, two weeks ago, I had the privilege to travel to Paris for an event sponsored by the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association. Our colleague, Senator Serge Joyal, was honoured by the French Senate on April 7, 2009 at the French launch of the book entitled *France-Canada-Québec: 400 ans de relations d'exception*.

This book was published in connection with the symposium entitled "The Legacy of France in Canada over 400 Years", which brought together the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association and the Groupe interparlementaire d'amitié France-Canada. This symposium, which took place in two parts, first in Paris in March 2008 and then in Ottawa in November 2008, went beyond the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City and looked at relations between Canada and France since the exploration and colonization of North America. The meetings with our French counterparts helped strengthen the good relations we have with France, our sister nation.

The work done by my many colleagues who attended these events helped showcase Canada's Senate, and I want to thank all of them for their commitment to La Francophonie.

The success of this symposium, which was conceived by Senator Joyal, undoubtedly strengthened the ties that exist between our

two countries by virtue of the French language, culture, history and friendship. I should point out that an event of this scope could not have taken place without his vision, his initiative and his outstanding commitment.

His tireless efforts to forge stronger links between the countries of La Francophonie led to the publication of this book, which is not only academically excellent but visually stunning.

Some of the credit for the success of the symposium must go to Senator Bacon, Chair of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, who has diplomatically and diligently managed the association's projects.

A number of distinguished guests celebrated the launch of this book, including His Excellency Ambassador Marc Lortie; the chairs of the France-Canada associations, French Senator Marcel-Pierre Cléach and French parliamentarian and deputy speaker of the National Assembly Marc Laffineur; Anne Bernard, representing Quebec's delegate general in France; the contributors to the book; historians; professors and, of course, Senator Joyal and his co-author, Paul-André Linteau.

I am certain that this book will give all of us a better understanding and appreciation of the many reasons why France and Canada have such a lasting, sincere and rewarding friendship.