



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 81

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## CANADA-FRANCE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Observation Mission  
of French Presidential Election

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Thursday, May 17, 2012

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[*Translation*]

### CANADA-FRANCE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

#### OBSERVATION MISSION OF FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, as President of the Canada-France Inter-parliamentary Association, I had the privilege of conducting an election observation mission for the second round of the French presidential election from May 2 to 6, 2012. The Canadian delegation was made up of five parliamentarians representing all the parties in both chambers, and included our honourable colleague, Senator Michel Rivard.

Canada's presence at the French presidential and legislative elections is very important. It is part of a longstanding tradition of diplomacy, cooperation and friendship between the two countries. These visits make it possible to maintain and strengthen this special relationship, which is characterized by a common language, culture and history.

After this experience, I can testify not only to the value Canadian parliamentarians gain from participating in this election observation, but also to the interest generated among the people

of France by the presence of Canadian parliamentarians at these historic electoral events.

The two main political parties in France welcomed the Canadian delegation very enthusiastically. The French presidential campaign and its results attracted and held the attention of many people around the world.

France, a great world power, plays and will continue to play a key role in the international community, particularly in Europe, given that the euro crisis and public deficits are affecting the entire world, including Canada, since we are currently in the process of negotiating a free trade agreement with the European Union.

The Canadian delegation witnessed first-hand a change in regime that will have both national and international consequences. Canada has much to learn from this most recent French presidential election, which had a voter turnout rate of almost 82 per cent and a high level of youth participation and which made effective use of social media.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to offer my most sincere congratulations to the Honourable Lawrence Cannon on his appointment to the position of Ambassador of Canada to France. As ambassador, he will undoubtedly extend the relationship of trust and friendship that Canada enjoys with France.

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