

For Immediate Release

October 12, 2012

Liberal Statement on the Francophonie Summit

MONTREAL AND EDMONTON– Liberal Francophonie critic Stéphane Dion made the following statement today on the Francophonie Summit underway in Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):

"Prime Minister Harper must use his visit to Kinshasa for the XIV Francophonie Summit to set the record straight and reaffirm our leadership within the international francophone community. He must demonstrate Canada's unwavering commitment to the Francophonie, especially in Africa, where he has allowed relationships to erode over the past several years.

The Prime Minister must carry a message that is loud and clear to the president of the DRC, Mr. Kabila, that democracy is at the heart of our values, that we remain its unconditional defender and that he must employ all necessary measures to ensure that all who wish to exert their democratic rights are in no way denied."

Liberal Francophonie critic in the Senate, Senator Claudette Tardif, added:

"The Francophonie encompasses over 56 countries and 19 observers, representing upwards of 890 million people who share a common language, French. Canada has a proud Francophone history and, as a G8 country, it is imperative that it stand tall and lead the way in preserving this language which is a pillar of our identity."

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