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LE CENTRE D'ACCUEIL ET D'ÉTABLISSEMENT DU NORD DE L'ALBERTA

Congratulations on Tenth Anniversary

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Thursday, June 6, 2013

THE SENATE

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[Translation]

LE CENTRE D'ACCUEIL ET D'ÉTABLISSEMENT DU NORD DE L'ALBERTA

CONGRATULATIONS ON TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, last Friday, May 31, the Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta in Edmonton invited the community to help it celebrate its 10th anniversary.

This centre is one of the key players in the area of immigration in Edmonton. In 10 years, the centre has built a reputation second to none for welcoming francophone newcomers who choose to settle in Alberta and helping them to get established and integrate into the community.

I would like to congratulate the centre's president, Marie Lafleur, the past presidents and past and present members of the board of directors, and all the members of the founding committee of the Association canadienne française de l'Alberta in Edmonton and the provincial ACFA for the invaluable contribution they make to ensuring that the centre runs smoothly. I would also like to pay tribute to the director, Georges Bahaya, who has been so committed and dedicated to setting up, developing and expanding the centre since it was founded.

Newcomers face a variety of challenges. They have to register their children in school, find a family doctor, look for work,

register for language courses and find housing. The list of needs is long, but they must be met if the newcomer is going to successfully integrate into the community. The centre has done a professional job and has been very successful in helping newcomers to build a new life in Alberta.

Fortunately, the centre has developed expertise in this area, which is demonstrated by the various programs and customized services it offers to direct newcomers to the appropriate resources. For example, in 2012, the centre welcomed over 700 francophone immigrants from 42 different countries throughout the world.

Honourable senators, demographic and sociological changes make immigration a key factor in the future and the vitality of official language minority communities. According to data from Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, between 2006 and 2011, the face of Canada continued to diversify: for the first time in history, more than one in five Canadians was born abroad, which is the highest proportion among the G8 countries.

It is important to welcome French-speaking newcomers in French. This will contribute to their well-being and their integration into our country.

I want to thank the centre and congratulate it on its invaluable contribution to the vitality of our francophone community.

Happy tenth anniversary to all the people at the Centre d'accueil et d'établissement who support newcomers with such dedication and generosity.
