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## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

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[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

**Hon. Claudette Tardif:** Honourable senators, on Thursday, March 20, francophones in over 50 countries celebrated the International Day of La Francophonie. This international celebration was part of the sixteenth edition of the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, a major celebration of French language and culture, which took place from March 7 to 23. This year's theme was "a love of life, from yesterday to tomorrow."

In Alberta, over 6,000 francophones and francophiles gathered together at flag-raising ceremonies, performances, concerts and educational activities.

I am very proud to point out that, this year, for the first time in several years, the Franco-Albertan flag was flown at Edmonton's city hall for the duration of the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie.

• (1410)

The Mayor of Edmonton, Don Iveson, took advantage of the opportunity to recognize the vitality of the francophone community. I want to pay tribute to the City of Edmonton, which not only recognizes the history and heritage of its

francophone community, but is also making a tangible contribution to its development by helping to revitalize its French quarter. This commitment shows that the City of Edmonton really cares about its francophone community.

Honourable senators, I would like to reiterate that our Canadian francophonie is an invaluable asset for which we are known throughout the world. As Chair of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, I am honoured to represent our country and foster a collaborative relationship with France that enriches Canada's francophonie in all areas and benefits all Canadians.

The evolution of the francophonie in Canada is reflected in the quality of the French programs in our schools, colleges and universities, in an increasingly accessible network of French-language health care services across the country, in the arrival of francophone immigrants who choose to settle in our official language minority communities, in an artistic and cultural environment fueled by francophone artists and artisans, and in economic development generated by francophone entrepreneurship.

I want to pay tribute to all those who actively promote and raise the profile of the Francophonie. Let's show how much we care about the Francophonie by celebrating its richness and diversity.