



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 150 • NUMBER 22

LA JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

THE SENATE

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

[Translation]

LA JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Hon. Claudette Tardif: Honourable senators, every year on March 20, we celebrate the International Day of La Francophonie. More than 270 million francophones on five continents celebrated the French language and French cultures under the theme “The power of words.”

There are some words that are more evocative than others of the essence of the human condition, words such as “freedom,” “equality,” “solidarity,” “fraternity,” “diversity,” and “universality.” These words connect and unite us.

Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of La Francophonie, hopes that the words express, and I quote:

... our desire to live together freely and peacefully, to act together in solidarity, and to dream together of the future, fraternally.

On March 4, I was proud to participate in the Franco-Albertan flag raising ceremony in Calgary. This annual ceremony, which takes place in 35 regions in all parts of my province, is very important to all francophones and francophiles.

There are 240,000 Albertans among the 10 million Canadians who make French part of their daily lives. Our Canadian francophonie is an invaluable asset that distinguishes us around the world.

The 2016 Rendez-vous de la Francophonie celebrations are being held across Canada from March 3 to 23. This year’s theme is “Francophonie in 3D: Diversity, Dualism, and Dynamism.” Diversity is a fundamental characteristic that makes Canada strong and connects us to one another. Linguistic duality refers to our country’s two official languages and the historic agreement between the two founding European peoples. Dynamism describes the vitality of the francophone communities in Canada.

The festivities to mark the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie and the International Day of La Francophonie remind us all that French is alive and well. It’s a language of pride, culture, science, reflection and innovation. French is thriving around the world and is used in many cultures and societies.

I pay tribute to all those who give a strong voice to the French language.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!