

**SPEAKING NOTES  
THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION  
IN HONOUR OF HER EXCELLENCY MIRIAM ZIV,  
THE OUTGOING AMBASSADOR OF ISRAEL**

**237-C CENTRE BLOCK  
JUNE 4, 2013**

Your Excellency Ambassador Ziv and Mr. Ariel Kenet,  
Speaker Scheer,  
Your Excellencies, the members of the diplomatic corps,  
Minister Baird,  
Senator Frum,  
Mr. Sweet,  
Honourable parliamentarians,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Senate of Canada, it is an honour and a privilege to be here tonight as we pay tribute to outgoing Israeli Ambassador, Miriam Ziv – a true friend to Canada.

Your Excellency, since being appointed as Ambassador to Canada in 2008, you have worked tirelessly to strengthen the bonds between our two countries. You first entered Israel's foreign ministry in 1972 and as its first female Ambassador to Canada, you are widely – and most appropriately – considered a pioneer in the field of diplomacy. Canadians appreciate your efforts to understand the regional dynamics of our country by travelling extensively from coast to coast and for taking the time to meet with representatives from Canada's provinces and territories.

Upon reflecting on your time with us, I am reminded of the teaching of the Hebrew philosopher Moses Maimonides: “One should see the world, and see himself as a scale with an equal balance of good and evil. When he does one good deed the scale is tipped to the good - he and the world is saved.” You have done many good deeds during your tenure.

During your time in Canada, it has become clear that you understand the importance of cultivating personal relationships. It was not surprising, then, that you were selected by *Maclean's* magazine as one of the “Power 25” for the year 2012. As the sole non-Canadian on the list, you earned the nickname “the dogged envoy” in recognition of your determined and steadfast approach to ensuring that the already close relationship between Canada and Israel was made even stronger. Canada has been fortunate to have had someone with your distinguished level of experience and drive at the helm of Canada–Israel relations.

At first glance, Canada is immensely different from your homeland. Our vast country is relatively new, sparsely populated, and has but a single neighbour. Yours is an ancient land with a large population and many neighbours. Despite these differences, Canada and Israel have come to know the number of ways in which we are similar. At its base, the Canada–Israel relationship is rooted in the shared values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Thanks to your enthusiasm, Ambassador, our unique partnership has evolved and we now cooperate in areas of commonality never before contemplated.

The origins of our relationship date back to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, and our two countries established formal diplomatic relations in May 1949. Since that time, the underlying strength of our friendship has been the far-reaching personal ties between us.

Canada has been home to a sizeable Jewish community for many years. Indeed, there have been Jews in Canada for nearly 250 years. In 1768, the Jews in Montréal established Canada's first synagogue, Shearith Israel. Many more came to Canada in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to escape persecution in Eastern Europe. By the outbreak of World War One, there were 100,000 Jewish Canadians. After the Second World War, about 40,000 Holocaust survivors settled in Canada. Later, more Jewish immigrants arrived from other parts of the world and today, around 350,000 Jews call Canada home.

The early Jewish immigrants soon established community and cultural organizations. From often humble beginnings, their children entered the professions, and Jews became active in all aspects of Canadian life. Among our best known are writers Leonard Cohen and Mordecai Richler, journalists Barbara Frum and Peter C. Newman, politicians David Lewis and Herb Gray, and business people such as the Bronfmans and the Reichmanns.

The personal connections established between our two countries have given way to bilateral cooperation spanning a wide-range of areas, including philanthropy, tourism, law, culture, business and education. Of course, we also cooperate at the parliamentary level, and the Canada–Israel Interparliamentary Group has actively facilitated goodwill between our parliamentarians since 1981.

Because of our formidable bond, Canada and Israel have been able to adapt to changing international landscapes. While international trade is an essential component of the global economy, the rise of terrorism has threatened to close borders. In December 2012, Ambassador, you personally signed the Canada–Israel Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement alongside Canada's Minister for Public Safety, the Honourable Vic Toews. The agreement, which strengthens our mutual capabilities to investigate and prosecute customs offences, signals that Canada and

Israel are committed to working together, to advance the prosperity and security of our two countries.

In closing, this evening's celebration is a testament to the respect we hold for each other as partners and allies. I now invite the assembled company to stand and raise a toast to Ambassador Ziv – thank you for all your hard work in ensuring positive and productive relations between Canada and Israel. I wish you a safe journey back to Israel and a well-deserved break before returning to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

L'chaim! (pronounced *KHAH-yeem*) (meaning "to life")

Now, Your Excellency, I present this gift of song, *Al Shlosa D'Varim* performed by Meghan Thompson, a gifted vocalist from my home province of New Brunswick.