

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF AN ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT
BY HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN**

**OTTAWA
FEBRUARY 27, 2014**

Your Highness,
Prime Minister,
Speaker Scheer,
Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of all present at this joint session of the Parliament of Canada, I wish to thank Your Highness for your thoughtful address to Parliament this morning.

Your Highness, your insight and leadership inspires us all to continue our work of humanitarian intervention throughout the global village. Your words today have underscored for Canadians the importance of humanitarian work as part of our national Canadian vocation as a caring and generous society. The lifelong commitment to the service of humanity exemplified by Your Highness is a beacon to all of us and is greatly admired.

During a 2006 inaugural ceremony to establish the delegation of the Ismaili Imamate here in Ottawa, Your Highness said:

“Even against the most daunting challenges, social and economic progress can and must be a shared experience, based on a cosmopolitan ethic and nurtured by a spirit of genuine partnership.”

Your Highness, these words convey the essence of our joint efforts.

We share many priorities in promoting social and economic progress, including maternal and child health, micro-finance and private-sector enterprise, particularly in regions in Asia and Africa. We also share a belief in the vital role that education plays, as you mentioned this morning, in eliminating the world’s knowledge deficit, in preparing the next generation to succeed and meet the world’s future challenges, and in matching economic development with human development.

Ours is a natural partnership in this area, based on Canada's reputation as a global leader in education and the long-standing tradition of the Ismaili Imamate in education development. Through collaborative projects involving several Canadian universities, we are undertaking important work to strengthen jointly the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in such areas as health and medicine, business and the humanities.

We are also working together to harness the potential of computers and high technology in the classroom and to strengthen primary education, especially for girls. Your ongoing efforts in promoting education for the benefit of the developing world are widely admired.

Canadians draw strength from your enduring commitment to these and other international development needs, even in the face of the most daunting challenges.

Your Highness, Prime Minister, the esteem with which we regard His Highness' commitment not only to educational development but to global progress

more generally is reflected in the unanimous adoption of a motion in both Houses of our Parliament in June 2009 to bestow honorary Canadian citizenship on His Highness.

Permit me to share another of His Highness' visionary statements, drawn from his address, in 2009, to a graduating class of the University of Alberta. He stated:

“In today’s community of nations, a country’s standing is no longer recognized simply by what it can achieve for itself, but just as much by what it can do for others.”

These words, hon. colleagues, are a powerful idea emanating from one of the rare, true, global, and most highly respected statesmen of our time. They set a high standard that we strive to achieve.

On behalf of the hon. members of the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada, we thank Your Highness for your visit, for your inspiring message this morning, and for your continuing efforts to make this world of ours a better place.