

Speaking Notes
The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate

On the occasion of a Cultural Gala
Asian Heritage Month

Fredericton, NB
May 22, 2010

Mrs. Verma,
Members of the Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here with you this evening and to convey greetings on behalf of the Senate of Canada. The Honourable Keith Ashfield, Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and a well-known New Brunswick Member of the House of Commons, also sends his warmest best wishes to everyone at tonight's event. The organizers of this Cultural Gala celebration of Asian Heritage Month have outdone themselves once again.

Formal recognition of Asian Heritage Month began in the Senate as an initiative by the Honourable Senator Vivienne Poy. Her resolution received the unanimous support of the Senate in December 2001 before proceeding to the House of Commons. Speaking in support of the motion during the debate, I said:

“In order to truly benefit from our diversity, we must first and most importantly all try to better understand and respect each other. The development of our society, as we want it, is based on such basic values.

“It is important, therefore, that we should not shy away from any effort to celebrate the various elements of our rich society such as that which is provided for by the present proposal to mark the many contributions of the Canadian Asian community.”

In the years that followed, I was proud to see community groups across Canada seizing on the opportunity to promote the diversity and richness of Asian culture during the month of May. The Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick has been one of the leaders in those efforts.

Celebrations during this month have given all Canadians a greater appreciation of Asian culture and the achievements of Asian-Canadians. It is a rich contribution to the diversity of our society.

Tonight’s gala event is an opportunity to experience a portion of that diversity and I hope everyone is enjoying it. It is all made possible by the volunteers, members of the Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick. Their efforts during Asian Heritage Month and throughout the year promote a better understanding and appreciation of the beauty and richness of Asian cultures and traditions. Please join me in thanking the Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick, the volunteers and the organizers for their work in making this another memorable year.

Thank you,

Merci