

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A LUNCHEON FOR
PARTICIPANTS OF THE 10TH CANADIAN
PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR**

**SPEAKER'S DINING ROOM
4 JUNE 2013**

Speaker Scheer,
Mr. Preston,
Honourable Parliamentarians,

It is with great pleasure that I join my colleague Speaker Scheer and Member of Parliament Mr. Joe Preston to say how pleased we are to welcome members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to the National Capital Region. We are honoured to host the 10th Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar.

Perhaps the strongest point of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and its seminars is the discussions and exchanges between members. Exchanges such as this seminar help us to learn more about each other. They also provide an opportunity for the host branch to introduce delegates to the country's culture and history. Your visit to the Canadian Museum of Civilization tomorrow will undoubtedly provide a fascinating look into the many elements that made Canada the nation it is today.

One of the most impressive features of this seminar is the variety of perspectives that are present. Delegates represent a truly global spectrum of national, ideological and economic backgrounds. This diversity speaks to one of the major strengths of the Commonwealth, which lies in its ability to bridge divides and bring all parts of the world together.

This week, you will participate in workshops and seminars on topics of common interest, including political parties and parliamentary committees, as well as discussing important international issues such as democracy, human rights and development.

These topics deal with some of the central building blocks of a healthy democracy. I hope that through discussions with your colleagues, you will gain new perspectives and insights on policies and practices that you will be able to take home and put to good use.

There will also be opportunities for less formal discussions during the course of this week's full schedule of workshops and seminars. While today's communication technology allows us to bridge great distances in real time, nothing can replace the value of speaking with one another face-to-face.

Thank you all for taking the time from your busy parliamentary schedules to be present here in Ottawa. Let us meet, trade stories, experiences and ideas, and let us celebrate our common bonds.

I would like to take a moment to thank the organizers of this seminar for all their hard work. Without their efforts, events such as this would not be possible.

In closing, I want to wish all of you every success and I trust that your deliberations will prove to be interesting and useful.

Thank you.