

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE
31ST CANADIAN PRESIDING OFFICERS' CONFERENCE**

**OTTAWA
JANUARY 31, 2014**

Speaker Scheer,
Honourable Speakers of the Provincial and Territorial Assemblies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Canadian Parliament Buildings and to the Aboriginal Peoples Room for the 31st Canadian Presiding Officers Conference. Yesterday you had an opportunity to see the two Houses at work and to start to get to know each other better.

Today and tomorrow our focussed business sessions will allow us to explore issues that our deliberative bodies have in common, having in mind that this will enable us to learn from different approaches that may have been taken. Not surprisingly, security and precinct management will be among the topics under consideration.

One of the purposes of these conferences is to enable us to become better acquainted, with the special role we perform providing a commonality on which to build. The bonds of friendship which are formed create a more congenial environment that may lead to franker discussion. Meetings of this nature help us to better understand the mechanisms available to assist our assemblies in running their business.

One of the advantages of having our session in Ottawa is that it provides an opportunity to compare the two different bodies that make up the federal Parliament. There are some significant differences and you will soon find that the issues are similar but they may have to be dealt with in slightly different ways. The role of the Upper Chamber in our Parliament is a subject which will be considered in greater detail in one of the sessions to follow. Throughout our time together, some thought should be given to both the differences and the similarities between the two Chambers of Parliament and those of the other Canadian legislative assemblies. At times you may well find that the approach taken in one of our Chambers is better suited or more attuned to the requirements of your own.

Speakers of legislative bodies all share a great number of common issues, making it certain that our discussions will be fruitful and beneficial.

It is now my pleasure to invite my colleague the Honourable Andrew Scheer, Speaker of the House of Commons, to say a few words.