

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A FAREWELL RECEPTION FOR
HIS EXCELLENCY ZENON KOSINIAK-KAMYSZ
THE DEPARTING AMBASSADOR OF POLAND TO CANADA**

**SPEAKER'S DINING ROOM
JUNE 19, 2013**

Your Excellency Ambassador Kosiniak-Kamysz and Mrs. Kosiniak-Kamysz,
Speaker Scheer,

Your Excellencies, the members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Ministers,

Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,

Mr. Lizon,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen:

Dzień dobry.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Parliament and to the historic chambers of the Speaker of the Senate, where we are gathered today to recognize and celebrate the work of His Excellency Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, Ambassador of Poland to Canada, to thank him for his diplomatic service, and to wish him well on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Your Excellency, since becoming Ambassador, you have been a strong advocate for Polish interests in Canada and have worked tirelessly to strengthen bilateral relations between our two countries. Your time as Ambassador has been very fruitful and has expanded on the solid and growing bilateral relations that Canada and Poland enjoy.

Our nations have a special relationship. Canadians have great admiration for your country and your people, and we are proud to consider ourselves as your friends. This friendship is built in large part on the historical and personal ties that bind us. Even though our countries are geographically far apart, the ties between us are of long duration and run deep. There were Poles in Canada as early as 1752 and Polish families first settled in Ontario in 1858.

In the early 20th century, thousands of Polish immigrants made the long journey across the Atlantic Ocean and settled in Canada. Successive waves of immigration over the years have given rise to vibrant communities across this country. Today, there are almost one million people of Polish heritage in Canada who enrich our country with their unique culture.

These numbers alone say little, however, about the impact that Poles have had on Canadian society. They played a significant role in developing Canada's mining, forestry and agricultural industries. Today, Polish-Canadians hold prominent positions throughout Canadian society, including in the media, politics and in the business community. Their hard work and perseverance have contributed to making Canada a prosperous and diverse country.

Close personal ties have helped ensure that relations between our countries are warm and enduring. They have been strengthened by the diplomatic service of Ambassador Kosiniak-Kamysz. His countrymen should be very proud of the work he has done in Canada.

On a personal note, it was my good fortune to lead a parliamentary delegation to Poland in the summer of 2007, where I met with Speaker Bogdan Borusewicz. During my time in Warsaw, I also had the distinct pleasure of meeting His Excellency Jaroslaw Kaczynski, who was Prime Minister at that time. The sad news of his brother's loss, along with his brother's wife and many other leading

figures in Poland, touched Canadians deeply, and resulted in a national day of mourning in Canada on April 15, 2010.

Speaker Borusewicz subsequently visited Canada, enabling me to reciprocate his hospitality and share in the moving reception with the Polish Canadian community at the Museum of Civilization. Personal connections are the ones which have the greatest meaning and which bind both individuals and nations together, to the benefit of all.

Your Excellency, on behalf of all gathered here this afternoon, I offer my best wishes to you in your future endeavours. It is my sincere hope that you will continue to remain engaged with Canada and will return to visit us soon.

Thank you.