

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A DINNER
IN HONOUR OF A VISITING GERMAN DELEGATION**

**OTTAWA
SEPTEMBER 8, 2011**

Your Excellency Hannelore Kraft,
Members of the delegation,
Your Excellencies the Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Minister Menzies,
Minister Fast,
Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons
Ladies and gentlemen:

Guten Tag. Ich möchte Ihre Exzellenz und die ganze Delegation im Namen des kanadischen Parlaments willkommen heißen. Ihr Besuch wird die Bande zwischen unseren Regierungen und unseren beiden Nationen weiter stärken.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Parliament of Canada and to Ottawa. I would like to begin with a special word of thanks to President Kraft, President of the Bundesrat, for taking the time to visit with us.

Your Excellency, your biography speaks for itself. You have been involved in public life for over a decade, during which time you have served with distinction at both the state and federal levels. It is a privilege to learn from someone with your considerable experience.

It is always interesting to meet with parliamentarians from other federal states. Although our parliaments are different, there are interesting parallels between the German and Canadian systems. Both are federal systems with bicameral parliaments, and although the members of our upper houses are chosen differently, your Bundesrat and our Senate serve to represent regional interests at the federal level.

Germany and Canada enjoy close and friendly ties. German immigration to Canada goes back to the earliest years of European settlement, and there were

Germans in New France and in Nova Scotia over 250 years ago. Our latest census showed that over 2.7 million Canadians claim some German ancestry, including some 180,000 immigrants from Germany.

Today, our partnership continues to grow stronger. We maintain a healthy trade relationship, cooperate in numerous international organizations, and undertake cultural and academic exchanges. Our armed forces train and work together as NATO allies. We visit each other's country as tourists and we enjoy each other's music, films, and books. All this amounts to a multifaceted dialogue between our citizens.

Parliamentarians play an important role in this relationship. Through exchanges such as these, we are able to share views and perspectives and learn about recent developments in each other's country. They allow us to build on the relationship that our peoples have developed and give us the chance to engage openly to find solutions to difficult problems.

As two of the world's most advanced economies, Canada and Germany have an opportunity, as well as a special responsibility, to respond to global challenges. This is particularly true during this time of global financial unease, when it is important that our countries work together to put forward ideas and solutions to the international concerns that we face.

Nothing replaces face-to-face contact as a way of sharing ideas. The better we understand each other, the better we will be able to work toward the goals we have in common.

In closing, let me thank you once again for taking the time to visit us. I look forward to what I know will be positive and productive discussions today and in the future. In keeping with the occasion, I now propose a toast to long friendship and excellent relations. Prost!