

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF A
PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

**SPEAKER'S DINING ROOM
23 APRIL 2013**

Your Excellency President Gjorge Ivanov,
Honourable Parliamentarians from Macedonia and Canada,
Distinguished guests:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Parliament and to the Speaker's Dining Room. This magnificent room has a number of interesting historical features, one of which is the presence of epigraphs carved into the woodwork. The one you see running along the top of the south wall reads *sapere aude*, which is Latin for "dare to be wise."

As a scholar of political history and philosophy, President Ivanov will have a particular appreciation for these words, which were crafted by the Roman poet Horace over two thousand years ago. They still have relevance today as they highlight the courage needed to try new approaches to address our current challenges, to find innovative ideas to solve the problems of today and tomorrow.

Canada has benefited from the wisdom of the many cultures that helped to shape our nation. Included among them were Macedonians who settled in Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, people who were proud to participate in the development of Canada. Immigrants played – and continue to play – an essential role in building this country and maintaining its strong multicultural identity.

Both our countries benefit from a growing trade partnership. In 2012, Canadian imports from Macedonia were valued at \$10 million, and exports to Macedonia totalled \$12.2 million. Since the Republic of Macedonia gained its independence in 1991, Canada has been working with the government and civil society to encourage political and economic reform in Macedonia. This included support for initiatives that promote human rights, democratic development, good governance, respect for the rule of law and capacity-building in the public sector.

In 2008, the Canadian International Development Agency officially closed its operations in the Republic of Macedonia, reflecting the significant progress that your country had achieved on these issues. Another example of your strong commitment to democratic principles and international peace is your participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and the Membership Action Plan. As a key contributor to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, the world has noted your support for this operation over the past decade.

In closing, on behalf of the Senate of Canada, I would like to raise a toast to the people of Macedonia and to His Excellency President Ivanov. May your time in Canada be both interesting and productive, may your travels take you safely home again, and may you always dare to be wise!