

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY MR. IGOR
IVANOVSKI, CHAIR OF THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR
COOPERATION WITH THE PARLIAMENT OF CANADA**

**SKOPJE, MACEDONIA
4 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Chairman Ivanovski,
Honourable Parliamentarians from the Macedonian and Canadian Parliaments,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of all members of our Canadian parliamentary delegation, I want to sincerely thank you all for your warm hospitality. A special word of thanks also goes to all those involved in planning this excellent event.

We are so pleased to have visited the Macedonian Parliament in the vibrant city of Skopje. It is always fascinating to see first-hand how other Parliaments function on a day-to-day basis and we have taken the opportunity to ask questions this morning. There will no doubt be many more during our luncheon together and throughout the afternoon.

Not only does the Parliamentary Group for cooperation with the Parliament of Canada promote closer ties between Macedonia and Canada, it also brings together parliamentarians from diverse backgrounds and interests for face-to-face discussions. Among the Macedonian parliamentarians that we have with us here today there are economists, academics, doctors, scientists, lawyers, and engineers. We could not have asked for a more well-rounded, and knowledgeable group of individuals.

Mr. Ivanovski, on behalf of the Parliament of Canada, I would like to thank you for leading the initiative for better ties between our two Parliaments. It is an important goal for each of our nations. Since Macedonia became an independent state, Canada has worked with both the government and civil society to help encourage political and economic reform in Macedonia. Canada continues to support initiatives that promote human and minority rights, democratic development, good governance, respect for the rule of law, public sector capacity building, conflict prevention, peace-building, and security sector reform.

Over the years, relations between our countries have evolved from a primarily trade-based relationship into a full-fledged partnership, marked by flourishing cooperation on an expanding range of political and economic issues. A number of Canadian companies and investors are looking for trade and investment opportunities in Macedonia in areas that include transportation, information and communication technology, agri-food, tourism, mining and environmental technologies, construction, and real estate.

Canada and Macedonia can take pride in the quality of their relations and the friendship that has developed between the peoples of our two countries. By coming together on occasions such as this, we gain a better appreciation for the value of our long-lasting friendship. We look forward to an enjoyable afternoon and many productive and positive discussions to come.

In closing, allow me to thank the Parliamentary Group for cooperation with the Parliament of Canada once again for your kind invitation and warm reception.

Cheers!