

**SPEAKING NOTES
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SPEAKER OF THE SENATE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF A MEETING
WITH AMBASSADORS TO CANADA**

**NEW YORK, NY, USA
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Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen:

It is a pleasure to be with you this afternoon and I would like to thank all of you for taking time out of your exceptionally busy schedules to join me today. Gathered in this room is a group of extraordinary individuals with a wealth of international experience coming from a wide range of backgrounds.

There is no doubt that Ambassadors such as yourselves who have multiple roles representing your countries not only to Canada but perhaps also to the United Nations and the United States face unusual difficulties in fulfilling your mandates. The simple fact that you do not reside in Canada creates additional challenges when it comes to dealing with issues that may routinely arise.

This is an opportunity to share information about recent economic and political developments in your respective countries. At the same time, I would be pleased to discuss the situation in Canada. This visit provides a forum in which to renew contact with you and to build on the relationships between our countries and peoples.

In addition to diplomatic representation through your work as Ambassadors, the partnership built through the United Nations is an example of how multilateral organizations can bring individuals from different backgrounds together. Of course, our collaboration extends beyond the UN to a number of other international fora where we discuss issues of mutual interest and work to strengthen our diplomatic ties.

One of these forums is the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The IPU is a focal point for inter-parliamentary dialogue, and fosters the exchange of experience among parliamentarians of all countries. The IPU also works in close collaboration with the UN, its member states and other intergovernmental organizations on priority issues, including democracy, human rights, trade and sustainable development.

In October 2012, Canada will have the privilege of hosting the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec City. The Assembly's overall theme will address the challenges of citizenship, identity, and linguistic and cultural diversity in a globalized world. We look forward to hosting representatives from many countries from around the world in Quebec City, and hope to see some of yours there.

This meeting is a wonderful occasion to renew relations with Canada's partners in the diplomatic corps and to make new acquaintances. Even short visits afford an opportunity to learn more about one another and to further consolidate the friendship between our countries.

In closing, let me thank you once again for taking the time to meet with me. I trust that our discussions will be positive and productive.

Thank you.