

Speaking Notes

**The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate**

**On the occasion of a reception for the
Olympic and Paralympic Athletes and Coaches**

April 22, 2010

Prime Minister,
Speaker Milliken,
Ministers,
Honourable Senators and Members of Parliament,
Athletes and Coaches
Distinguished guests
Mesdames et messieurs,

It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to Parliament. A very special welcome is extended to the members of our Olympic and Paralympic teams. This was the year when Canada and Canadians took such pride in our country. Our athletes did an amazing job. We are proud of the medal winners, but we are also proud of all those who participated so effectively.

The coaches did a magnificent job in preparing them for their events. Although there may be a few exceptional individuals who are able to compete at the highest levels without such support, they are few and far between. We owe the coaches a debt of gratitude for their incredible work.

A key part of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games is having an effective organization. Vancouver had it. The organizers and the thousands of volunteers did an amazing job. Those few media pundits who said or implied otherwise found themselves the objects of ridicule and rightly so.

Today, we congratulate our athletes once again on their remarkable efforts. They inspired our nation. Their accomplishments were recognized every day, in all parts of Canada, in all walks of life. The pride felt by Canadians across the country was almost tangible.

To help celebrate the tremendous success of our 2010 Olympic and Paralympic athletes, each of the medal winners will be presented with a Canadian flag today. These are no ordinary flags; each of these flags flew on Parliament Hill for one of the days during which the Olympic and Paralympic Games were held.

Thank you all for coming and I hope you will enjoy yourselves at the reception. Now I would invite my co-host, Speaker Milliken, to say a few words.