

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION FOR
THE 222ND ANNIVERSARY OF ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE 3RD MAY**

**CHATEAU LAURIER, OTTAWA
MAY 6, 2013**

Your Excellency Ambassador Kosiniak-Kamysz

Excellencies,

Ministers,

Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Jak sie masz! [How are you?]

It is a pleasure and an honour to join you this evening as we celebrate the 222nd anniversary of the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791. This is generally recognized as Europe's first modern codified national constitution, as well as the second-oldest national constitution in the world.

In marking this historic day, we also recall the importance that this constitutional precedent set in the general governance of nations, and the pioneering role that Poland played in its development.

This is also an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between the government of Poland and its people, as well as Poland's relationships with other nations. Among others, I am pleased to say that Canada and Poland have maintained a strong and vibrant relationship.

On Sunday, we marked in Canada the Battle of the Atlantic. During the ceremony here in Ottawa at the National War Memorial, I reflected on the relationship which existed between the brave sailors of the Royal Canadian Navy and the heroes of the Polish Navy who guarded the trans-Atlantic, Murmansk, Malta and other convoys.

It was my good fortune to travel to Poland in 2007 where I met my counterpart, His Excellency Bogdan Borusewicz, Speaker of the Senate of Poland. When so many lives were lost in the horrific plane crash in 2010, Canadians grieved with their Polish friends. Later that year, during Speaker Borusewicz's official visit to Canada, the Senate took the extraordinary step of resolving into Committee of the Whole to permit him to address the assembled Senators. Speaker Borusewicz took that opportunity to thank Canada and Canadians.

Just last year, we welcomed the Prime Minister of Poland, His Excellency Donald Tusk, to Canada. There is no doubt that the strong relationship between Canada and Poland at all levels will continue to flourish for years to come.

In closing, on behalf of the Parliament of Canada I offer best wishes to the people of Poland and to all those gathered here this evening for the celebration of the anniversary of the 3rd of May Constitution.

Thank-you.