

Speaking Notes
The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate

On the Occasion of the Farewell Luncheon for the
Turkish Ambassador, His Excellency Rafet Akgunay

Pearson Building, Ottawa
June 5, 2012

Your Excellency,
Distinguished guests,
Friends, Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today to honour His Excellency Rafet Akgunay, who has served with distinction in Canada as Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey since April 2008.

Ambassador: your energy, leadership and diplomatic skills have reflected our common interests and shared values, and guided our relations bilaterally and multilaterally.

You can be proud of your achievements. Your hard work and tireless dedication to bringing our two countries closer have led, among others, to the signature of two important bilateral agreements, one on the avoidance of double taxation and the other on air transport.

The successful ministerial visits to Turkey of Ministers MacKay, Ritz and Van Loan, and the visit to Toronto of your State Minister for Foreign Trade are other examples where we greatly appreciated your guidance, support and dedication.

The opening of new consulates in Toronto and Istanbul are also important achievements, which will help to develop the promising commercial and economic ties between our two countries.

I would also like to thank you personally in making some of the arrangements during my visit to Turkey in January 2011.

We are sad today to see you leave. You have a number of friends here who will miss you very much. We have been privileged to work alongside a diplomat of your stature. I know all your Canadian colleagues feel this way.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I finish, let us raise our glasses in honour of Ambassador Rafet Akgunay.

Ambassador, we all wish you great success in your future endeavours and hope that you will return to Canada very soon.