

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

ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION FOR
HIS EXCELLENCY, SECRETARY GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

OTTAWA
MAY 12, 2010

Your Excellency Ban Ki-Moon,
Your Excellencies the Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Honourable Ministers,
Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin these brief remarks by thanking all present for joining us this afternoon in greeting His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Mr. Secretary-General, Canadians admire and appreciate the wise and prudent leadership that you give to the United Nations. We greatly value your steadfast dedication as the head of the UN and we thank you for your steady hand in helping the global community to respond to a number of critical challenges.

Mr. Secretary-General, you have been an excellent guide in helping to galvanize the international community towards collectively facing major global economic, environmental and security threats.

It is therefore that, as Canadians, we are so pleased and honoured that today you could be in our national capital and to have met with Her Excellency the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and members of the government of Canada, as well as some members of civil society in Canada. We in Parliament were delighted to receive you in the House of Commons and in the Senate.

As a founding member of the United Nations, Canada and Canadians have been committed to participating in and growing the work of the United Nations. On a personal note, it has been my good fortune over the years to spend time at the United Nations and its family of organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). It is encouraging to have seen how the United Nations, notwithstanding many complex challenges, has matured since my days at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) as a visiting scholar.

Mr. Secretary General, Canada is particularly grateful for your very personal and sustained effort in helping to alleviate the suffering of the Haitian people following the devastating earthquake that shook Haiti this past January. The loss of UN personnel at the outset amplified both the tragedy and the problems in dealing with the aftermath. It was a difficult time and we mourned with you even as you and the United Nations worked to mobilize the resources required. It is a tribute to the United Nations and the international community that so much assistance from so many different countries was forthcoming.

As a founding member of the United Nations, Canada has a long and proud history of active participation, particularly in the areas of peacekeeping, human rights, and development. Most recently, Canada's contribution has been focussed on efforts in Afghanistan, Sudan and Haiti. We celebrate the central role of the United Nations in promoting peaceful relations, in providing assistance whenever and wherever it is required, and in working to achieve stability and prosperity throughout the world.

Mr. Secretary General, Canadians and successive governments in Canada attach great importance to serving the fundamental objectives of the United Nations. As part of our continuing support, Canada is a candidate to be a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2011-2012 term and is looking forward to even deeper engagement on these and other security issues.

Canada will be the host of the upcoming G20 meetings in Toronto, and we are pleased that Your Excellency will be participating together with our other G20

counterparts. You will provide a broad perspective from the UN's diverse membership and give voice to the concerns and interests of the poorest and most vulnerable in the wake of the global financial and economic crisis. We look forward to your thoughtful and important contributions to this meeting.

Your Excellency, we are honoured to host you in our Nation's capital today. On behalf of the government of Canada and Parliament, I would like to reaffirm our commitment to multilateral cooperation at the United Nations, and wish you continued success in your role as Secretary General. We are delighted that you have taken this opportunity to be with us here today in Ottawa.

Thank you.