



Statement on the Canadian Francophonie between the Government of Quebec and the Government of Nova Scotia

We seize this historic moment of the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017, to recognize:

- ♦ **the key role played by Acadians and Francophones in the founding and building of the Canada of today and their importance to Canada's future;**
- ♦ **that the Francophonie is one of the key features of the Canadian identity.**

We are committed to working, in collaboration with the other governments in Canada, towards the promotion, protection, longevity and vitality of the French fact.

Canada was built on the principles of cohabitation, linguistic duality and diversity. The presence of Francophones throughout the country, as well as the recognition that Quebec is the principal hub of the French language in Canada and that Quebecers form a nation within a united Canada, are an eloquent reflection of the fundamental contribution of the French fact to the Canadian reality.

The Québécois and Acadian peoples as well as Francophone communities throughout the country constitute the foundation of the Canadian Francophonie. Francophiles and newcomers also enrich and grow the Canadian Francophonie, making it more diversified and inclusive.

As the only Francophone State in North America, Quebec acknowledges its historic and special responsibility with respect to Acadian and Francophone communities and intends to continue to exercise collaborative leadership, together with the other provinces and territories, in order to support their vitality.

Nova Scotia has had an Acadian and Francophone population since the 17th century. It was one of the four provinces that united as a federation creating Canada in 1867. Nova Scotia fully intends to promote the development of its Acadian and Francophone community and wishes to preserve the French language, which enriches life in this province, for future generations. Nova Scotia committed itself to fostering the preservation and development of its Acadian and Francophone community by adopting the *French-language Services Act* in 2004 and its Regulations in 2006.

As a result, the governments recognize that they have an important role to play in this regard as well as with respect to their Francophone community, as the Francophonie is a precious heritage to be preserved and a richness to be shared and drawn upon.

Given the importance of government commitment and leadership with respect to the Canadian Francophonie, particularly as we approach the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017, and while taking into account the different provincial and territorial realities and in a spirit of solidarity and openness, and pursuant to the Quebec–Nova Scotia Agreement for Cooperation and Exchange with Respect to the Francophonie, we undertake to work closely together for the Canadian Francophonie, notably by:

- ♦ Promoting the French language and the Canadian Francophonie as key elements of Canada’s identity and a strength to capitalize on, namely through the presence of a national broadcaster that reflects regional realities and thus contributes to their development;
- ♦ Taking concrete action in order to ensure that the demographic weight of Francophones across Canada is maintained, namely through Francophone immigration;
- ♦ Encouraging the active offer of French-language services in order to enlarge the Espace Francophone in our country, particularly regarding access to French-language schools and health care services in French;
- ♦ Increasing intergovernmental cooperation through dialogue and collaboration between our governments, namely by fostering exchanges between young Acadians, Francophones and francophiles from Nova Scotia and Québécois youth, in order to support initiatives that meet the needs of Francophone communities and which have a significant impact on their vitality and development.

This Statement, signed at Halifax on the 5th of December, 2016, constitutes unwavering support and is a pledge for the future vitality and longevity of the Canadian Francophonie.

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and Francophonie

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