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CANADA CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

The fourth annual International Day of la Francophonie will be celebrated on March 20 in Canada. This day provides Canadians and Francophones the world over with an opportunity to celebrate their membership in la Francophonie internationale, which comprises 47 countries and governments and more than 400 million people.

"March 20 commemorates the creation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT) in Niamey in 1970. The date is especially significant this year, since the ACCT is celebrating its 25th anniversary," said Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet.

"Canada can take pride in having helped shape the international Francophone community, making it a place where cultural and technical concerns are examined alongside the great political problems facing humanity," the Minister continued.

Mr. Ouellet added that Canada's membership in la Francophonie was an important international projection of its national personality, and that the Canadian government would spare no effort in helping the language and culture of its Francophone population to flourish, and to extend its influence internationally.

Mr. Ouellet has invited the representatives of the Francophone countries to a ceremony on March 20 at 11 a.m. in the Parliament Buildings, where la Francophonie prizes will be awarded, and where the model of a stamp commemorating the 25th anniversary of the ACCT will be unveiled. The Secretary-General of the ACCT, Mr. Jean-Louis Roy, will attend the ceremony.

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