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MARCH 20: INTERNATIONAL FRANCOPHONIE DAY

For the second consecutive year, March 20 will be International Francophonie Day in Canada, a day on which Canadians celebrate our being a part of la Francophonie, which comprises 47 countries and governments on five continents and includes more than 400 million people.

In the words of the Honourable Monique Vézina, Minister for External Relations and International Development: "Canada is very proud to belong to the international francophone community and to stand with it as a strong advocate of democracy, human rights, economic partnership and respect for national languages and cultures. Moreover, our membership in la Francophonie expands Canada's influence in the world and enables us to form special ties with the other member countries and governments."

The 1993 International Francophonie Day will see various events take place throughout Canada, especially in Quebec, New Brunswick and Ottawa. Mrs. Vézina will deliver a speech in the House of Commons on March 18 to underline Canada's contribution to la Francophonie at the international level.

In addition, Minister Vézina has invited Parliamentarians to join representatives of the diplomatic corps and Francophone associations for the inauguration of the Francophonie Room in the Parliament Buildings, and the awarding of the National Francophonie Award by the Honourable Monique Landry, Secretary of State.