

provincial associations united to form a single federation, that of the Francophones outside Quebec.

As Minister for External Relations, hence minister responsible for international Francophone institutions and for the Summit of French-speaking nations, I want to assure you that I shall lend an attentive ear to any suggestion or request from the Federation, and from other associations of Francophones outside Quebec, regarding the Quebec Summit.

Prior to the Paris Summit, my predecessor in this portfolio, Mme Monique Vézina, had invited various Canadian Francophone associations and personalities to attend a working session. The Prime Minister subsequently invited the then President of the Federation of Francophones Outside Quebec, Mr. Gilles Leblanc, to join the Canadian delegation to the Paris Summit.

Last 11 December, I myself met with the executive committee representing some 40 Francophone organizations. That meeting gave us an opportunity to examine a variety of avenues for involving Francophones outside Quebec in the Québec Summit. I intend to continue that dialogue and those consultations with all diligence.