

Statement on Canadian Francophonie between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Quebec

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Quebec take this historic opportunity of the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017 to recognize:

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

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Quebec will work 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, and 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 Acadian and Quebecois people and Francophone communities across the country form the basic constituent of the Canadian Francophonie. Francophiles and Francophone newcomers enhance and expand the Canadian Francophonie, making it more diversified and inclusive.

As the only Francophone state in North America, Quebec acknowledges its historical and unique responsibility with respect to the Francophone and Acadian communities, and intends to continue to exercise collaborative leadership, together with the other provinces and territories, in order to support the development of these communities.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the Francophone and Acadian community's contribution to the social, cultural, and economic development of the province and its contribution to enriching life in the province. The Francophone community is a historical and valued component of Newfoundland and Labrador's society. The Government therefore fosters the community's inclusion and consultation. Similarly, the Government recognizes and understands the needs of the Francophone and Acadian community.

As a result, the governments acknowledge the important role they have to play in this regard and with respect to their Francophone communities, given that the Francophonie is a precious heritage to be preserved and an asset to be shared.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Quebec will work closely together with respect to the Canadian Francophonie, namely by:

- ♦ promoting the French language and the Canadian Francophonie as key elements of Canada's identity;
- ♦ taking concrete action to ensure that the demographic weight of Francophones is maintained all across Canada, particularly by means of Francophone immigration;
- ♦ encouraging the enhancement of services in French in order to expand the "espace francophone";
- ♦ increasing intergovernmental cooperation through dialogue and collaboration between our governments, particularly by promoting exchanges between young Francophones and Francophiles, in order to support initiatives that meet the needs of Francophone communities and that have significant impacts on their vitality, growth and development.

Signed in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, this 11th day of December, 2017.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR:

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
QUÉBEC:



Christopher Mitchelmore
Minister responsible for
Francophone Affairs



Jean-Marc Fournier
Minister responsible for Canadian
Relations and the Canadian
Francophonie