



CONFÉRENCE MINISTÉRIELLE | MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
SUR LA FRANCOPHONIE | ON THE CANADIAN
CANADIENNE | FRANCOPHONIE

Joint Press Release

For immediate release

October 13, 2006

YOUTH A KEY COMPONENT OF THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE'S VITALITY

Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie Reveals its Future Direction

OTTAWA – The Canadian Francophone identity can be reinforced mainly through targeted initiatives that are focused on young Francophones and Francophiles across the country. This was the main conclusion of the 11th Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, which was attended by the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for Francophone Affairs.

“It is vitally important that young Canadian Francophones participate in the economic and cultural development of our country,” said the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages. “The work we accomplished at this Conference clearly demonstrates that the federal, provincial and territorial governments share this belief, and are willing to co-operate to help young Francophones across the country become the leaders of a modern and dynamic Francophonie on the national and international stages.”

Following a consultation with Francophone organizations throughout Canada, the Conference produced a report on the main challenges faced by Francophones and recommended potential solutions.

The ministers responsible are proud of this report, entitled **The Canadian Francophonie – Issues, Challenges and Future Directions**, which identifies some of the Conference’s strategic priorities with regard to the Canadian Francophonie. They are also pleased with the way it was received by Minister Verner. The report, which is available on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat website at www.scics.gc.ca, puts forward three key themes:

- Contributing to the development of a mobilizing vision for the Canadian Francophonie as a whole;
- Actively promoting the Canadian Francophonie at national events; and
- Exercising leadership through measures aligned with federal, provincial and territorial priorities on matters related to youth and encouraging ministers responsible for immigration to adopt Francophone-related immigration initiatives, where appropriate.

.../2

“We are committed to ensuring the development of the French language on an economic, cultural and social level, and to foster the implementation of initiatives that will encourage young Francophones to celebrate and affirm their identity,” said the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs in Ontario. “The Canadian Francophonie is more dynamic than ever, and it is crucial that we continue our efforts to give all Francophone communities across Canada an opportunity to develop and significantly contribute to the country’s prosperity.”

The provincial and territorial ministers expressed their concern with the results of the recently announced Federal Expenditure Review. Minister Verner reiterated the federal government’s commitment to linguistic duality and the Canadian Francophonie. Furthermore, the provincial and territorial ministers agreed to work with the Government of Canada to identify ways that will promote the Francophone and Acadian communities and ensure the well-being of all Canadian citizens.

At the Conference, the Ministers agreed to work together with the country’s Francophone communities to undertake innovative projects in different key areas. For example, certain initiatives will focus on the vitality of young Francophones to foster a modern Francophonie and the growth of the French language throughout the country.

This Conference was created in 1994 as the Ministerial Conference on Francophone Affairs, and was renamed the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie in 2005 to better reflect its mandate. The objective of the Conference is to strengthen relationships between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, to improve the delivery of French services to citizens, and to reinforce the Canadian Francophonie.

The next Ministerial Conference will be held in Nova Scotia, in September 2007.

- 30 -

For more information:

Pascale St-Pierre
 Communications Advisor
 Office of the Minister of International Cooperation and
 Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages
 819 953-6238

Donald Boulanger
 A/Chief, Media Relations
 Canadian Heritage
 819 994-9101

Richard Martel
 Senior Policy Advisor, Francophone Affairs
 Office of the Minister Responsible for
 Francophone Affairs in Ontario
 416 460-5766

Charles Jean Sucsan
 Senior Manager
 Strategic Communications
 Office of Francophone Affairs
 416 476-5223