



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

Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release – Whitehorse, Yukon

July 6, 2018

23RD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE

KEEPING IN TOUCH: GOVERNMENTS CONTINUE TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie held their annual meeting under the theme “Keeping in Touch” on July 5 and 6, 2018. The 23rd Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie was held in Whitehorse, Yukon, a territory where the Francophonie is strong and vibrant.

“Access to services in French promotes the development of our communities across Canada. Intergovernmental cooperation, which is the cornerstone of our efforts, contributes to increasing services,” said the Honourable John Streicker, Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate of the Yukon Government and Conference Co-chair. *“We would like to collaborate more closely with our counterparts at other ministerial tables in order to advance priority issues for the vitality of Francophone and Acadian communities and for the benefit of all Canadians.”*

The Conference Co-chair, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage, noted that 2018 is an excellent year for the Canadian Francophonie. *“In March, our government released the **Action Plan for Official Languages 2018–2023: Investing in Our Future**. This is the biggest investment in official languages yet. The Action Plan outlines our government’s vision for official languages and responds to many of the priorities that attracted the attention of participants at the last Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie. I am delighted to discuss them with my provincial and territorial counterparts, as we work together to ensure that the Canadian Francophonie continues to thrive.”*

The Official Languages Act will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2019. The ministers mentioned that this occasion should be an opportunity to promote linguistic duality as a Canadian value, and recognize the benefits of our country’s Francophonie. They highlighted the importance of bilingualism for Canadians across the country.

During the meeting, the ministers had the opportunity to discuss a number of issues that are important to Francophone communities, including challenges concerning access to family justice in French. Possible solutions were explored, such as training for legal experts and various service delivery models.

The efforts made in conjunction with the ministers responsible for immigration show a commitment to developing joint action strategies. The ministers discussed the *Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec* and learned about potential solutions put forward by the community during the first Symposium on Francophone Immigration held in Calgary in March 2018. They plan on continuing their collaboration with immigration ministers and the dialogue with the community.

The meeting also allowed the ministers to see the work carried out on the Francophone Heritage, Culture and Tourism Corridor, which showcases tourist attractions related to the country's Francophone heritage and culture.

To wrap up their meeting on a vision for the future, the ministers reflected on innovations in service delivery and the role that technological change could play in improving French-language services. The discussion no longer revolves around online services available in just a few sectors of activity, but rather focuses on "digital government," capable of offering citizens a heretofore unprecedented level of quality, real-time services.

The Whitehorse conference was held on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and the ministers were welcomed by Kluane Adamek, Regional Chief for Yukon at the Assembly of First Nations. Ms. Adamek presented her vision of the bridges that exist and those to be built between Canada's Francophone and Indigenous communities.

The Government of Nunavut will host the next Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie on June 27 and 28, 2019, in Iqaluit. Nunavut's legislation recognizes the Inuit language, English, and French as the territory's official languages.

**Due to the recent swearing in of a new Cabinet, Ontario participated in this meeting as an observer and is not party to this communiqué.*

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, created in 1994, is the only intergovernmental forum that brings together the ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie. The Conference works for an open, dynamic, and diverse Francophonie that contributes to, and participates fully in, the growth of Canadian society. For more information, consult the website of the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie at www.cmfc-mccf.ca.

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