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CANADA-BULGARIA RELATIONS

Statement by:
The Honourable Yonah Martin

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

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Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, it is an honour to speak about the importance of this year, 2021, which marks the fifty-fifth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and Bulgaria. Our two countries share a long-standing history that dates back to the 19th century and is founded upon mutual respect and value placed on people-to-people ties, cultural and academic exchange, political and diplomatic values and commitment to democracy and human rights.

Today, the more than 80,000 people of Bulgarian descent who call Canada home have established strong communities from coast to coast across Canada and have contributed to Canada's vibrant multicultural tapestry and the strengthening of our economy.

I am proud to serve as co-chair of the Canada-Bulgaria Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group, working alongside House co-chair Shaun Chen and fellow parliamentary colleagues in both houses of Canada's Parliament, as well as with our counterparts in Bulgaria, to further develop and strengthen Canada-Bulgaria relations.

June 30 marked the historic fifty-fifth anniversary of Canada-Bulgaria bilateral relations. Our countries enjoy mutually beneficial commercial relations that include trade, investment and cooperation on innovation, science and technology, to name a few.

In 2014, the Ambassador of Bulgaria in Canada, Svetlana Stoycheva-Etropolski, began her diplomatic post in Ottawa as Head of the Political Section and Deputy Head of Mission at the embassy. In 2017, we established the Canada-Bulgaria Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group. Ambassador Stoycheva-Etropolski was at the helm as *chargé d'affaires* and has served as head of mission ever since. I wish to commend Her Excellency Svetlana Stoycheva-Etropolski for her steadfast leadership and for the important role that she continues to play as the bridge between our two nations.

I have had the honour and pleasure of working closely with Ambassador Stoycheva-Etropolski, whose extensive private and diplomatic experiences — including a long list of achievements on the international stage — have served her country and our bilateral relations very well.

Honourable senators, please join me in recognizing the significance of the historic fifty-fifth anniversary of Canada-Bulgaria diplomatic relations. Thank you.
