

For immediate release

QCGN Pledges Constructive, Positive Role in Process Launched Today by Premier

Montreal – June 1, 2017– The initiative launched today by Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard – establishing a non-confrontational process of mature reflection allowing Quebec and Canada to more constructively frame our future as a nation – received a rapid, positive welcome from the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN).

QCGN steps forward to encourage and enable this dialogue and take a constructive role in the process, known as Quebecers: Our Way of Being Canadian / Québécois – notre façon d’être Canadien. We note that the premier’s announcement and its accompanying document is an important but preliminary step in what will inevitably be a complicated, challenging journey aimed at achieving consensus.

“This is a positive first step, without artificial deadlines, presented and framed in a spirit of respect and of refreshing openness,” said QCGN President James Shea. “We look forward to helping develop and amplify this more inclusive, welcoming vision of Quebec that incorporates, recognizes and fosters the English-speaking community. This is a vision geared to enhance, encourage and enable our contributions to the province. Our many stakeholders will be delighted to give this process the time, attention, resources and energy it merits.”

“This initiative demonstrates a welcome degree of openness,” added QCGN Vice-President Geoffrey Chambers. “It provides a promising path for the further evolution of Quebec within Canada. Our Quebec is strong, confident and has all the tools it needs to flourish culturally, economically and politically, with our English- and French-speaking communities working shoulder to shoulder.”

“Strong connections with Canada, and our profound understanding and ability to bridge different cultures and different language groups, has always been one of our community’s core strengths. We will bring that to this process”, he said, “and as a community that finds itself as a minority

within a majority, we have a visceral understanding of the Quebec perspective and needs, one that we happily pledge to bring to this process with equal enthusiasm.”

In many different ways, he added, Quebec can and should serve as an inspiration, for Canada and for our troubled planet. “It is so easy to overlook the exceptional degree of quiet harmony in daily life that brings out the best of our English- and French-speaking communities as we work together,” Chambers said. “But we prove every day that our resulting whole is greater than the simple sum of our parts. “

From an organizational standpoint, a special QCGN committee will address the specific constitutional elements presented in the document.

The Quebec Community Groups Network (www.qcgn.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 53 English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

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