



## **Memorandum of Understanding between Acadians in New Brunswick, English-speaking Quebecers and Franco-Ontarians**

Press Release

For immediate release

**Ottawa, July 2, 2019** – The *Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick* (SANB), the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) and the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario* (AFO) have signed a historic memorandum of understanding to protect and promote the language rights of official language minority communities. This partnership is the first of its kind in Canada.

Building on the strong support and solidarity expressed in recent months in the wake of government decisions and announcements that have sorely tested Canada's official language minority communities, this memorandum of understanding will foster cooperation and bring the three partners closer together.

“Although the specifics of our situations may differ, our rights are fundamentally the same. Together, we will write the next chapter of language rights to ensure they are respected all across Canada,” said Carol Jolin, President of the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*.

The memorandum of understanding is intended to strengthen coordination between the three organizations, which represent more than 2.4 million people – nearly 90 per cent Canadians living in official language minority communities. The memorandum of understanding formalizes their desire to work together to make official languages an important issue during the next federal election campaign and to protect the language rights shared by the different provinces.

“We want our governments to realize that an attack on the rights of one of our communities is an attack on us all. We will remain united in the face of any assaults on linguistic duality, a fundamental value of our Canadian identity,” said Geoffrey Chambers, President of the Quebec Community Groups Network.

The partner organizations maintain that the Government of Canada must be a leader when it comes to language rights. They have joined forces to defend the rights and interests of linguistic minority communities.

“Modernizing the *Official Languages Act* of Canada, maintaining the right to manage education from early childhood to university, and ensuring essential services are offered in minority official languages: these are just some of the priorities identified by francophones in Ontario and New Brunswick, as well as anglophones in Quebec,” said Robert Melanson, President of the *Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick*.

### **For further information:**

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