



CANADA

PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A2

FEB 14 2017

Dear Mr. Shea:

I am reaching out to you following my recent visit to Sherbrooke, where I participated in a town hall meeting with citizens in January.

Following that event, many Canadians and organizations such as the QCGN wrote to me to share their concerns regarding our two official languages and my French responses to English questions.

First of all, let me be clear that my personal commitment to the rights of the English language minority community in Quebec and French language minority communities outside Quebec is unequivocal. I have stood up my entire life for our linguistic minorities across the country, and I will continue to do so as Prime Minister.

As for the Sherbrooke town hall, I would like to express my sincere regrets. Canada is a bilingual country, and as such, I recognize that I should have answered questions in the language they were asked, be it in Quebec or anywhere else in Canada. You can rest assured that I will do so in the future. I understand the importance of the Prime Minister of Canada speaking to minority language communities in their own language.

As you may know, I grew up in a house where both languages were commonly used. My mother is English-speaking and my father firmly believed in the importance of bilingualism, the historical importance of our two official languages, and the richness that resulted from their coexistence. I share these beliefs and our two official languages are part of my cultural heritage.

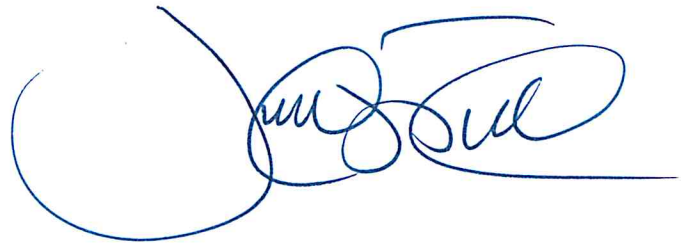
Mr. James Shea  
President  
Quebec Community Groups Network  
400-1819 René-Lévesque O Boulevard  
Montréal, Québec  
H3H 2P5

I want to reiterate my government's commitment to supporting our official language minority communities. We recognize the importance and role of these communities, like the Quebec English-speaking community, in our society. Indeed, they are part of our social contract.

I know that the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, has also heard you. As you know, she is currently preparing our government's first action plan on official languages. The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie and MP for Compton–Stanstead, is also a great ally. And so are your English speaking MPs from Quebec who came to me and stood up for your community.

You can count on them, just as you can count on me and all our Government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Trudeau', with a large circular flourish on the left side.